

FIVE STEP GUIDE TO REPAIR CAFÉ



change 

WELCOME

“Welcome to the ChangeX Repair Café guide! We’re delighted you’re thinking about organising a Repair Café in your community.

Here you’ll find all the information, practical tips and resources you need. There is someone to help you at each stage of the journey so don’t be afraid to get in touch!”

**Martine Postma,
Founder of Repair Café**



Introduction to the Idea

What is Repair Café?

We throw away vast amounts of stuff - stuff which could get a new lease of life after a simple repair. Lots of people have forgotten that they can repair things themselves or they no longer know how. Repair Cafés are free meeting places where people come together to repair things together. In a local Repair Café, you’ll find tools and materials to help you make any repairs you need on clothes, furniture, electrical appliances, bicycles, crockery, appliances, toys, etc. You’ll also find expert volunteers, with repair skills in all kinds of fields. Visitors bring their broken items from home and in the Repair Café, they start making their repairs with the specialists. It’s an ongoing learning process.

Repair Cafés help people in the community whose skills may not always be valued to get involved again. It helps neighbours from different backgrounds connect with each other and allows valuable practical knowledge to be shared.

Why is it important?

By setting up a Repair Café in your village, town or city, you can actively contribute to a more sustainable society.

You can help create a society where everyone can find a place, where repair expertise is cherished and passed on, and where valuable raw materials are used in a responsible way.

The Repair Café Foundation has the following goals:

- a) to bring back repairing into local society in a modern way;
- b) to maintain repair expertise and to spread this knowledge;
- c) to promote social cohesion in the local community by connecting neighbours from different backgrounds and with different motives with each other through an inspiring and low-key event.

The background

The Repair Café concept comes from the Netherlands. It was formulated in 2009 by Martine Postma, at the time an Amsterdam-based journalist/publicist. She hit on the idea of setting up low-key meeting places nationwide where neighbours could repair their broken items themselves supported by specialists and in a relaxed atmosphere. There are now 1500 Repair Cafés globally.

STARTING A REPAIR CAFÉ

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

TIME



You'll need about 4 hours a week to get your Café up and running, and a full day on the day of your Repair Café event.

PEOPLE



You'll need a team of 3-4 people to help you start your Café, plus some volunteer fixers and helpers for the day of your event.

FUNDING



You'll need to raise approximately €200 for insurance (price depends on type of items being fixed and number of fixers).

Who typically starts a Repair Café?

Someone who:

- enjoys bringing people in the community together
- has an interest in DIY
- is passionate about the ethos of Repair Café

5 Step Summary

- 1 Complete your 30 Day Jumpstart Challenge
- 2 Find a space
- 3 Find specialists in your area
- 4 Register with the Repair Café Foundation
- 5 Plan and hold your first Repair Café

Support and Additional Resources

Support from ChangeX: Call us on (086) 468 5361. Email: hello@changex.org

Contact Information for Repair Café Foundation. Email: info@repaircafe.org Phone: +31 20 223 25 86

Download Repair Café starter kit: <https://repaircafe.org/en/shop/>

STEP 1: COMPLETE YOUR 30 DAY CHALLENGE



The 30 Day Jumpstart Challenge has been designed to get your project off to the strongest possible start by building momentum in the first month.

Understand the challenge

Watch the short welcome video on your ChangeX page and read this page.

Learn more about the idea you're starting

Your '5 Step Guide' includes all you need to know about the specifics of starting your project.

Find 3-5 interested people

You already have your own project page on changex.org. Use it to share the project with others and recruit your first supporters.

Set up a casual kick-off meeting

Host a meeting at your home, in a pub or in a café and come up with an action plan along with your team. You can use your ChangeX page to set up an event and invite people.

Give us a heads up that you are up and running

At your event, take a team picture and agree the first step you will take as a group to get started.

STEP 2: FIND A SPACE

After completing your 30 Day Challenge, hopefully you'll have a small team on board to help you get started with your Repair Café.

A key action in getting your Café up and running is to find a venue. Repair Cafés usually take place every couple of months, for a full day.

A key principle of the Repair Café is that it should, if possible, be free of charge to attend, so it's preferable that you source the venue free of charge. Repair Café is an activity both for and by neighbours, so it's best to choose a place that is lowkey, easily accessible and in the heart of a residential area.

It needs to be big enough to accommodate a number of tables, where various repair experts can sit with visitors to repair items. They need to be big tables to have room for all the experts' tools. Some examples of suitable venues are community, sports or church halls. You can also try local businesses that make space available on weekends and get their employees involved all at once.

Insurance

To run a Repair Café you will most likely need to have public liability and possibly product liability insurance. JLT Ireland insurance company provides cover to Repair Cafés on a case by case basis. JLT suggest talking to your local LEADER organisation or other community group, who may be able to add the Repair Café to their existing public liability cover, or else the venue you're using might be able to provide this insurance. Whether you need public liability insurance depends on what is being repaired at the Repair Café and the risks associated.

Insurance costs depend on the number of Repair Café volunteers and what type of insurance you purchase, but should be about €200 for each insurance type. One condition of the cover is that for electrical items, it will be necessary for at least one of the volunteers to be PAT qualified.

Support and Additional Resources

Insurance contact: JLT Insurance: (01) 202 6000. Point of contact: Tom O'Leary - Direct Line: (01) 202 6018
LEADER local action groups: <https://www.pobal.ie/Publications/Documents/Local%20Action%20Groups%20and%20Implementing%20Partners.pdf>

“Reducing waste was something close to my heart, and Common Ground, a community group here in Bray, is an amazingly fertile place to get ideas off the ground. I suggested the idea of a Repair Café and was immediately encouraged and helped to start it up”

Toby Steele used an existing community space to start his Repair Café



TIPS



- Now is a good time to get in touch with your mentor, who has done it all before and can give you some tips & advice.

- Lots of Repair Cafés get up and running without insurance to start, so don't let it put you off! There is very little risk involved in repairing items such as wood work, bicycles, clothes and jewellery.

STEP 3: FIND SPECIALISTS IN YOUR AREA

The next step is to find the right experts to lend a hand making repairs at your Repair Café! It's impossible to repair toys, printers, or hair driers without the people who know how to do it. It's also challenging to do so without some vital pieces, like power and tools.

Usually one will lead to the other. If you can hook up with the fixers in your community, chances are they will have some of the tools needed and/or point you in the right direction to locate them.

Start small - ask your neighbours, relatives or friends who have an interest in DIY to help. Just using your own network you can go a long way in manning all the basic stations in the Repair Café.

Next, look up local Employment Services and Employment Programmes, to find people who may be retraining in electrics, carpentry, plumbing or metalwork and might be interested in volunteering their time to help out at your Repair Café. Pay a visit to craftspeople in the neighbourhood as well. You never know, a furniture maker might like to attend a Repair Café as a carpenter (and advertise his own furniture workshop at the same time). Or perhaps the tailor around the corner would like to get involved. Get in touch with institutes for professional education. By taking part in Repair Café, students on various courses (technology, woodworking, fashion design) could gain additional practical experience.

Last but not least, you can try to find people through volunteer networks such as charity shops or you can approach local associations like a carpentry club, a computer club or a local Men's Shed.



TIPS



Try putting up signs in local shops, community halls, churches or doctors waiting rooms - to get the word out to more isolated people in your community, who will gain most from the interaction at a Repair Café, and may even have unused skills they would be happy to share!

STEP 4: REGISTER WITH THE REPAIR CAFÉ FOUNDATION

Now is a good time to officially register your Repair Café with the Repair Café Foundation and download your Repair Café starter kit. The starter kit contains all sorts of materials, tips and branding to assist in setting up and running your Repair Café, including templates for posters and flyers and guides for fixing all categories of items. Registering also means your Repair Café will be added to a worldwide map of Repair Cafés.

The Repair Café Foundation suggest a donation of €49 to download this pack, but the donation amount is up to you. The donation helps to support the Repair Cafe Foundation to continue its work.

TIPS



You'll be joining Repair Cafés all over the world, from Ghana to Japan and from Turkey to New Zealand!

Register your Repair Café with the international Repair Café Foundation here:

<https://repaircafe.org/en/shop/>



ORGANISE YOUR OWN REPAIR CAFÉ

The tried and tested Repair Café manual

www.repaircafe.org



STEP 5: PLAN AND HOLD YOUR FIRST REPAIR CAFÉ

Now that you have everything ready, pick a date (weekends are best) and start planning your first event!

You will need a few volunteers to help your organising group out on the day; to set up tables, sign in people, pick up donated food, and be there to help deal with logistics and spread good repair vibes on the day of the event! Lean on family and friends for these roles at first, and then try to recruit at your first Repair Café for subsequent Cafés.

Food provides not only the necessary energy for hard-working handy people and visitors but it's the glue that binds the community together. Make sure you have tasty donated treats lined up from local businesses or ask each of the organisers and volunteers to bring a dish of their choice. Tea/coffee and biscuits is a great place to start.

Get the word out there! This can range from emails to your personal networks to contacting local community groups, businesses, or even your local newspaper or radio station. Give this job to the person on your organising team with the most local connections and/or experience with media.

From active participants eager to learn how to fix their own things all the way to people who just want to get their toaster toasting again, expect to accommodate a whole spectrum of people. There will be lots of neighbours to meet and stories to share. Enjoy the day, take lots of photos and then start planning the next Repair Café!

TIPS

Make sure you publicise the kind of repairs you're prepared for. For example, if you have tailors with sewing machines, you can give the green light to visitors with clothes in need of stitching. This saves people turning up with items you don't have experts there to fix.



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