



How to plan and run a swish (clothes swap)

This guide has been created to help you organise and run a swish, possibly as a fundraiser.

What is a swish?

A swish is basically a 'clothes swap'. That is, a group of people come together and bring the clothes they no longer wish to keep (cleaned, of course). The clothes are organised into categories (dresses, trousers, etc) and once this is done attendees can select 'new' clothes to take home with them. It's a great way to get a whole new wardrobe that's easy on your wallet and great for the planet :)

Venue

Make sure you choose a venue that's easy to access, and quite centrally located. Ideally a good sized hall, with a kitchen (if you're doing any refreshments), and somewhere people can try on clothes. We have used halls with a stage (we draw the curtain and use it as a communal dressing room), and another time we set up a gazebo with sides at one end of the hall.


Volunteer roles

Running an event like this is much easier with a team of volunteers. You will need people to help with the following:

- booking the venue
- promotion of the event (publicity), including designing a poster
- making labels for clothing categories, as well as donation signs, etc
- bringing equipment to and from the event (clothing railings, coat hangers, etc)
- setting up the equipment and the venue: railings, signs, tables
- sorting clothes into categories at the beginning, and keeping the railings tidy during the event
- welcoming people, explaining how the event works, managing donations and signups at the door, taking a headcount
- packing up after the event and loading any leftover clothes into bags to take to a charity shop.
- if you're also having a cafe, then you'll need bakers, servers, etc


Promotion of the swish

Proper promotion of an event is very important. Make sure you start promoting it *at least* six weeks beforehand, to allow people to get it into their calendars. Create a really eye-catching poster with all the key information written clearly: date, time, location, cost, what to bring to the swish, will there be refreshments, etc.

 Cambridge Carbon Footprint shared their event. Published by Lizzie Erwood [?] · 9 November 2015 ·

Tonight on BBC1 at 9pm, 'Hugh's War on Waste' is highlighting issues caused by our throwaway culture. In the UK we throw away 7 tonnes of clothing every 10 minutes. Good clothes are being binned as rubbish, and 500 million individual garments are being consigned to landfill or incinerated every year.

On Saturday, CCF and the Cambridge Ladybirds WI are holding a clothes swap (swish) to encourage people to swap their unwanted clothes instead of throwing them away. Please come along!



14 NOV Clothes Swapping Party (Swish)
Sat 14:00 · Cambridge Unitarians · Cambridge, ...
50 people interested · 42 people going

Put up posters in public spaces like libraries, schools, halls, local shops. Also email it to organisations, community/social groups, or people you know would like to support it, and ask whether they can display it at work or email it to their members. Social media is an easy and very effective way of publicising an event: schedule regular (once a week, for instance) notices, and ask your friends to share the event as well.



← I am a newcomer to politics...

Open Eco Homes 2015 →

The Summer Clothes Swap Party

25 July 2015
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm St Andrews Street Baptist Church,
43 St Andrew's Street, CB2 3AR

CCF are partnering with Cambridge BID to bring Cambridge its very own Clothes Swap Party. Bring your unloved garments and swap them for some pre-loved treasures on Saturday 25th July. Bring your items in at 1pm and enjoy tea and cake whilst a team organises a swapping bonanza that kicks off at 1.30pm.

1.00pm: Drop off your clothes, shoes, accessories

1.30pm: The swap shop opens and ends at 3pm

Entry is free – though donations are very welcome. This event is a fundraiser for Cambridge Carbon Footprint. All excess goods will be donated to charity.

No booking required.



The Summer
Clothes Swap Party

St Andrews St Baptist Church Men Hall 43 Andrew Street, Cambridge More information can be found at www.cambridgebid.co.uk	Saturday 25th July Between 1 - 3pm Drop off at 1pm Bring your unloved clothes to preloved@ccf.org
	

Equipment needed at the event

- Posters to put up outside the venue
- Stationery such as pens, clipboards, blue tack, tape, drawing pins,
- Labels for clothing categories
- Clothes railings and coat hangers
- Mirrors
- A makeshift changing room if there's none at the venue (small gazebo, for instance)
- Chairs and tables for the cafe, and also tables for sorting clothes and laying out trousers, shirts, knits, etc.
- Refreshments: tea, coffee, sugar, milk, cakes, napkins.
- You might also like to decorate the venue with bunting, tablecloths and little vases with flowers.

At the event (timing & setup)

- Allow at least an hour before the advertised time to set up the venue. Have 1-2 tables by the front entrance (for signup sheets, information, donation bowl, etc) with a volunteer to welcome people as they arrive. Allow at least two tables where people can leave their clothes - volunteers can take the clothes from here and sort them into appropriate categories: dresses, jackets, blouses, skirts, work well hanging on railings; trousers, knits, shirts, accessories, and kids clothes work well folded on tables
- When the event begins, schedule in at least 30 minutes for volunteers to sort the clothes into categories. Participants can go and come back or preferably sit and drink tea/eat cakes and/or browse your leaflets and info if you have some.
- When clothes are sorted and just before the actual swish begins, it's nice for one of the organisers to give a brief introduction to the swish. Explain how it works, why you're doing it, and whether it's a fundraiser (draw their attention to the donation bowl). Thank them for attending. Declare the swish open!
- An hour is generally enough time for the swish to take place, but be prepared for some people to stick around a little longer.
- Leave at least an hour at the end to pack up the venue. Make sure you leave it as you found it. Take any leftover clothes to a charity shop.

Money matters

A swish could be done for free amongst friends...but swishes also make excellent fundraisers. You could charge a small entry fee, though CCF has never done this. We generally ask people to leave a small donation per item they take home, ie: 50p for dresses, trousers, jackets and shoes; 20p for shirts, accessories or children's wear. Some people find it strange that they bring clothes and still have to pay to take some away, but most don't mind if they understand the money is going towards a good cause.

However, our biggest earnings are generally made at the cafe that we set up during the event...see below:

Cafe

Having basic refreshments such as tea and coffee at the event is a great idea, as people will be waiting around after dropping off their clothes. If you have the room and the volunteers to do so, then baking a few cakes or biscuits can be really popular. Set up some tables and chairs, write labels with the name and ingredients of each cake, and have a set price for drinks and/or food. A special deal for tea and cake is always popular. If you want to go the extra mile then have a think about gluten free/nut free/vegan options.

