



CRAFT CLUB

**How Craft Can Inspire
Your Community**

What is Craft Club?

Craft Club is a national campaign from the Crafts Council that champions craft groups in schools, community centres, libraries and anywhere else you can bring people together to share craft skills.

The Crafts Council is a national charity advancing craft and making in the UK. We believe everyone deserves access to a full range of fun and rewarding craft opportunities in their community. We showcase the amazing work of existing Craft Clubs across the UK and help them flourish by offering advice, resources, events and inspiration to get them making.

**“It's just started and is growing steadily.
I really enjoy leading it!”**

Craft Club leader, 2017



Craft Club skills sharing workshop, April 2017

Why Sign Up?

Craft Club provides:

- 1) Access to craft tutorials by practicing makers and artists**
- 2) Practical learning resources for group leaders on subjects such as working with volunteers, planning activities for different abilities, and risk assessment.**
- 3) A quarterly e-newsletter full of craft ideas, prizes and featured makes, plus four booster newsletters sharing recent projects from Craft Clubs and top tips for running your club.**
- 4) Personalised advice over phone or email.**
- 5) Regional Craft Club skills-sharing events, workshops and talks.**
- 6) Access to the Craft Club Loan Box, containing pieces by established makers from the Craft Council's handling collection, workshop materials and session plans.**
- 7) Crafty giveaways and opportunities to win prizes.**
- 8) Most importantly you'll be part of a national network of like-minded crafters who connect with each other over social media and at skill sharing events.**

(p.s. it's free!)

Why Run a Craft Club?

“I’m proud of the **community** we have created and the **confidence** that people are gaining from attending”

“We care about each other and have a ‘**let’s have a go**’ mentality”



Stratford Picturehouse Knitalong, 2016

In our 2017 survey **41%** of Craft Club leaders reported that without Craft Club their members would be socially isolated, **49%** said that members would not otherwise have a chance to engage in the arts, and **29%** reported that their members attended for therapeutic purposes.

School budgets are stretched and many schools are finding that art and craft activities are getting squeezed out of the curriculum. While the Crafts Council advocates for government support for improved craft education, a local Craft Club is a great grass roots opportunity for children to learn, grow in confidence and develop craft skills.

There are many benefits to offering craft activities to your local community:

- Craft encourages us to think, learn and create in new and innovative ways.
- It can open up career progression routes: practical learning is often considered lesser than academic study, but craft contributes £421 million to the UK economy each year.
- Crafting together reduces social isolation, and can provide low-pressure opportunities for people who experience social anxiety.
- Making with the hands is stimulating to the brain, delivers greater cognitive development and can improve levels of achievement across all subjects¹.
- Craft can be good for relaxation and studies have shown that crafting can be a great way to manage mental health and improve wellbeing².
- Craft can help boost confidence as people learn new skills and ways of expressing themselves.



UpCycled Brush Making Tutorial

¹ Haptics in education: Exploring an untapped sensory modality (J Minogue, 2006)
² All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing : Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing - Second Edition Craft and Wellbeing (Crafts Council, 2011)

How Do I Get Involved?

As long as you are enthusiastic and organised, starting a Craft Club can be simple. You'll need to find a venue and a few willing volunteers. Think about how often you would like to meet and what time would suit most people. Start spreading the word about your club and sign up new members!

Step 1:

Visit our website at www.craftclub.org.uk and sign up to receive our newsletter and register your Craft Club if you have one.

Step 2:

If you'd just like to join a Craft Club, you can use our listings to find a club your area. Use our Facebook group to see if other Craft Clubs are meeting near you.

Step 3:

When you register your Craft Club, we'll post you your starter pack including stickers, printed tutorials and a poster so you can add your meeting times and advertise your club.

Step 4:

Make use of our Craft Club resources for some activity ideas- we publish tutorials by practising makers, as well as practical resources on running your club. We share inspiration through the newsletter and have a host of ideas to help you on Pinterest, Facebook and Twitter.

Step 5:

Recruit a group of volunteers by reaching out through your networks. You might wish to contact parent groups, local community centres, WI federations, libraries or just a group of likeminded friends.



Step 6:

If your Craft Club works with children or vulnerable adults, we can provide guidance on DBS checks and safeguarding.

Step 7:

Communicate with your volunteers about times and dates of your club and what materials you need for your first session.

Step 8:

Launch your first Craft Club! Reflect and make note of your club's progress and share your feedback with volunteers.

Step 9:

Don't forget that Craft Club is a national network, so get involved in our Facebook group to connect to other Craft Club members and share what you've been making! We are also on hand via phone or email five days a week to provide practical and creative advice on running your club.

Get Social!

We're very active on social media, you can find us on:

-  @CraftClubUK
-  @Craft Club UK
-  craftclubuk

most of all:
have fun!

What Can We Do in Our Craft Club?

There are a whole range of activities that Craft Clubs can do. Ask your members if they have any crafts they would like to learn or skills that they could share.

Your group may want to focus on just one craft discipline or explore lots of different ones. One Craft Club in Coventry specialises in woodcarving, another in Burnley specialises in 3D printing! Many clubs prefer to work on individual projects in the company of others and some complete group projects for charitable causes.

How can we get materials and equipment?

ScrapStores nationwide provide discounted scrap materials - they also make great Craft Club venues! Encourage your group to bring spare materials and do regular craft swaps. Craft is all about clever use of materials and you'd be amazed what your members might make with scrap fabric, metal and paper. You can also contact local craft suppliers to see if they have left over stock they might be willing to donate or provide a discount on.

If you're looking for specialist equipment such as 3D printers or sewing machines, we can help you find a local library or makerspace where you can access this equipment.

Can we charge people to take part?

You can ask members to make contributions to cover your costs but Craft Clubs should not be run as a business.

How can we encourage people to join or volunteer with our Craft Club?

- Promote your club on sites such as Twitter or Facebook. You might be surprised at how many of your friends and family are just as crafty as you are, or willing to try something new.
- Ask local community centres, cafés or art suppliers whether you can put a poster or sign in their window or on their notice board.
- Ask your venue to promote your club through their website, social media or even by placing flyers near entrances or exits. It doesn't hurt to ask and a successful Craft Club can attract more people to their venue.



Where can we hold a Craft Club?

- Museums or libraries are great places to approach to hold your group, as they often have a dedicated workshop space available and existing visitors.
- You might want to approach your local community centre, or other local space serving the community.
- You could hold a wellbeing based Craft Club in a therapeutic setting, such as a day centre or retirement home.
- Sometimes coffee shops and cafés are also happy to be venues, but your club might have to agree to buy food or drinks.
- We'd love to help more schools, universities and youth settings host their own Craft Clubs for children and young people.

Craft Club Leader Role Description

As a Craft Club leader, you will already have craft and making skills, but what other qualities are important?

- Organised - forward planning is a must!
- Encouraging and willing to help
- A clear and patient communicator
- Considerate of other's safety and wellbeing
- Enthusiastic



What you can expect

Leaders usually give a few hours of their time on a weekly basis to make a club happen. This involves time getting to and from the venue, as well as time to prepare materials plus the session itself which may be between one and two hours.

The more help you can get from fellow crafters and volunteers the easier it will be for your club to run smoothly.



What will you get from it?

Craft Clubs are a great way to meet new people and make new friends. It's always such a surprise how many crafty people are in your community!

Helping others be creative can be rewarding on many levels. Many Craft Club leaders are retired from professions such as teaching or community work, and running sessions can be a great way of keeping active and social.

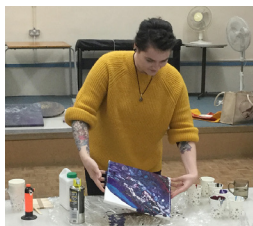
If you are an existing community centre or organisation, having arts and crafts provision can open new avenues of funding and support from arts foundations and your local authority.

If you're at the start of your career or studying, organising community activities is a great CV builder and shows employers that you are self-motivated and organised.

Friends and Family

Craft Club embraces all everyday crafting in the UK. That means that if you and a group of friends or family get together to craft at home on a regular basis you can still register as a Craft Club!

Case Study: Articulate Bath's Art & Craft Club



Images courtesy of Articulate Bath Art & Craft Club

In 2010 the four founder members of Articulate saw a real need in their local community for somewhere for people to come together to get to know their neighbours and develop a real sense of community spirit. When they decided to focus on art and craft they had no idea that the breadth and depth of skill and passion for creativity as an activity would be so great: as of late 2017 the club has 94 members!

Entirely volunteer led, the group runs a huge range of art and craft activities through low-cost workshops. Members also share their existing knowledge with each other informally. The confidence and skills gained from attending the club have helped some members develop their own craft-related businesses and go on to undertake qualifications.

Find out more at www.articulatebath.com

For more information on Craft Club email participation@craftscouncil.org.uk

The Crafts Council's goal is to make the UK the best place to make, see, collect and learn about contemporary craft www.craftscouncil.org.uk



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