



MS WE JOINED THE MOVEMENT

DO IT YOURSELF FUNDRAISING



What is MS?

Movement is all around us, our bodies and minds in constant motion, connecting with and expressing ourselves to the world. It is so much of who we are, it's easy to take movement for granted. Multiple sclerosis stops people from moving.

Every hour in the United States, someone is newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system.

- MS usually strikes adults in the prime of life – between the ages of 20 and 50.
- 75 percent of people with MS are women.
- MS affects more than 400,000 in the US and 2.5 million worldwide.

National MS Society

The National MS Society is a collective of passionate individuals who want to do something about MS NOW. Together we are the MS movement.

Western Pennsylvania Chapter

The Western PA Chapter, established in 1956, is a chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS). The Chapter provides programs and services to more than 7,500 individuals living with MS and 18,000+ family members affected by MS in 26 counties in western Pennsylvania. The Chapter strives to help people become knowledgeable about MS, learn to manage the disease and its symptoms, and achieve or maintain maximum independence.

A wide range of programs are available to people with MS and their families, including education, advocacy, information, peer support, financial assistance, and therapeutic recreation.

Do you know someone with MS?

Studies show that early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can reduce future disease activity and improve quality of life for many people with multiple sclerosis. Talk to your health care professional and contact the National MS Society at: www.nationalMSSociety.org or 1-800-344-4867 to learn about ways to help manage multiple sclerosis and about current research that may one day reveal a cure.

About this Guide

Please use this planning guide simply as a tool to help organize your event. Not all tips need to be followed as some tips may not be appropriate for certain events or you may want to keep your event's scope limited the first time around. Please let us know if you have any questions that you come across during your planning process.



Getting Started...The Plan

The More the Merrier - and Easier

Recruit a few friends, peers, family members, or community leaders and create a committee to help you steer and organize the event. No one person can single-handedly run a successful fundraiser; it takes a group of motivated individuals who are passionate about supporting your efforts.

- The more people you can get engaged in your idea or vision the better...it's easier to find fun in numbers...the more the merrier...two heads are better than one!
- By getting more people involved, you will be creating more awareness of the event, have access to more networks, contacts, and opportunities, and prevent yourself from becoming overextended.
- By dividing and conquering, more attention and focus can be put into multiple areas of the event planning. A good committee will help you delegate tasks and save you time. Make sure to hold regular meetings to monitor the group's progress and communicate regularly between meetings.
- So, don't be afraid to ask. Most people are more than willing to help you organize your event and are just waiting for you to ask. So be bold and surround yourself with a great committee!

Shoot For the Stars

Determine the overall goals and objectives of the event. Keep these objectives in mind to help you focus your event.

Fundraising

What is the goal amount or % of proceeds that will benefit NMSS?

Awareness

Will the effort increase awareness among others of MS and NMSS?

Will it draw attention to our cause?

Recruitment

Will the event motivate others to take action?

Will the event motivate others to become volunteers?

Develop Your Timeline

Create specific timeline (and try to stick to it).

- Set realistic dates and goals for when you will accomplish each of your goals to make the event successful.
- Make sure to record the name of the committee members or volunteers responsible for meeting specific goals.
- Remember, that it is better to finish your to-do list earlier than later so make sure that you allow enough time to complete tasks well in advance of the event.

The Possibilities Are Endless

Determine what kind of fundraising event you want to organize. The best ideas are exciting yet feasible! The possibilities of fundraising event ideas are endless. Here are a few to consider; however, a fundraising idea library is available in the online DiY Event Resource Center.

For the Workplace

Dress-Down Day – Employees pay a fee to go casual for a day in the office.

Sell home baked goods or other treats in the office break room.

Persuade your employer to donate a portion of sales

Soup and Salad Day – Ask co-workers to bring in soups and salads to sell during lunchtime.

Host a Health Fair at work, charging a modest fee.



Other Fundraisers

Organize a Yard Sale...ask friends, family, and neighbors for unwanted items.

Host a benefit *Sports Tournament* (softball, kickball, volleyball, darts, etc.)

Organize a Home or Garden Tour

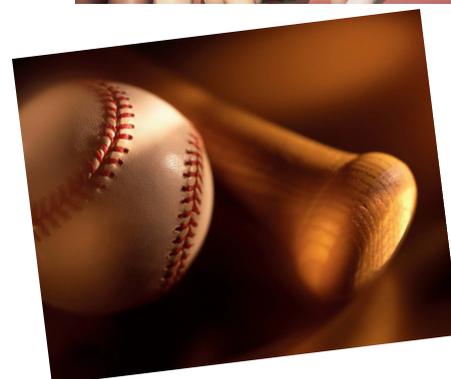
Hold a *Wine or Beer Tasting*

Organize an Auction (online, silent, and/or live)

Organize a benefit Fashion Show, partnering with a local boutique

Host a *Trivia Night or Bingo*

Take advantage of the things you and your committee are already involved in: hobbies, interests, successes or experiences with certain types of fundraisers in the past.



Try to find a fundraising event type that will not directly compete with other successful and long-standing benefit events in your area.

You can plan a low-key event such as a bake sale, car wash, or yard sale. Or you can hold a large-scale event such as an auction, trivia night, or gala. The scope of your event should depend upon the amount of planning you are able to perform, the amount of time available, and the availability of people willin to loan you the fudns for large deposits or up-front costs.

Timing Is Everything

Keep these things in mind when determining the time and date of your event.

- Choose a date far enough in advance to give you ample time to prepare.
- Be aware of conflicting local and/or national events.
- Make sure to consider holidays and other busy times of the year for your attendees.
- You could coordinate your event with a significant date or time of year.
- Consider hosting an event in March during MS Awareness Week!



Keep An Eye On Your Budget

Set realistic goals around attendance, revenue, expenses, etc. Make sure to consider any up-front or significant fees. Develop a good, detailed budget early to save time and avoid headaches (and make sure to stick to it). The goal is to maximize revenue while minimizing expenses and to create a budget that will ensure you make a profit.

- Estimate attendance, cost of decorations, refreshments, printing, mailing expenses, food/drink, location, give-aways, supplies etc.
- Determine what items could be donated.
- Determine the overall cost per person and then determine the ticket prices to ensure attendance and a profit.
- A Sample Budget Template is available at the online DiY Event Resource Center.
- Consider significant up-front costs and deposits that maybe required to reserve the location, caterer, and DJ or other service provider.
- Have a plan for paying expenses until sponsorship money is received... maybe a family member or friend would be willing to "front" the money until sponsorship starts coming in.
- Start to create incentives for committee and volunteers to encourage tickets sales, donated items, and sponsorships.
- A little motivation can go a long way towards motivating your committee and volunteers to stay on course.



Make It Memorable

Determine the theme or "feel" of the event...this will help you to create the event's branding. Most DiY events are successful because they are unique and memorable beyond the day of the event. Unique events create a following of attendees who cannot wait to attend your next event and have few choices for attending another similar fundraising event in the meantime.

- Will it be a themed event or an upscale event...Will attire include Bermuda shorts or black ties?
- Will the event be held on a significant date or in a month that could be used to your advantage when determining a theme?
- Start thinking about what you'd like included in the event...will there be a speaker (maybe even a local celebrity)? Will you show a video? Will there be live entertainment? Is someone going to share their MS story?
- What are you going to want people to do throughout the event? Will there be an auction, raffle, etc? Will people primarily socialize?



Location Location Location

Find a venue that will help you meet your goals and objectives, is within your budget, and will give the event the atmosphere that you are looking for.

- High venue costs will cut into your donation.
- Tap into the committee's or volunteers' networks.
- Explore opportunities to get facility fees fully or partially donated since your event is benefiting a charity.
- If appropriate for your specific event, contact local Lions Club, American Legion, town halls, galleries, schools, and churches for large spaces that may be available for little or no cost to you.
- Book the venue as far in advance as possible to reserve your desired date.
- If charging an admission charge, consider facilities that make it easy to control entrances/exits.
- Remember that outdoor venues can become expensive if additional lighting, tents, barricades, port-a-potties, etc. are required.
- Make sure to inquire about any restrictions on occupancy limits, bringing in outside food/drink, sound, decorations, etc. Non-academic spaces usually have fewer restrictions.
- Ensure sufficient parking is available, especially accessible parking.

Finalize the date and complete an agreement with the venue, reserving that specific date. You may be able to negotiate deposit payments if you mention that it is a charitable event.

Get The Word Out

There is a wide variety of ways to let people know about your event from flyers and brochures to email and Facebook. Be sure to utilize all available avenues to promote your event.

- Start to create your guest list.
- Exhaust all of your networks in addition to volunteer networks.
- Create and send out Save the Date postcards or e-mails to those people that you absolutely want to be at your event...the postcard or email should say that the invitation will follow.
- Create flyers, posters, invitations, and brochures for the event.
- Make sure to tap into your and your volunteers' networks to find someone that may be willing to do graphic design and layout without charge.
- Any honoree names should be prominent on the invitations and committee members should be listed in addition to a description of NMSS, sponsors, and major donors.
- Ensure that NMSS & sponsor logos are properly utilized and meet the Chapter's marketing & branding guidelines. DiY event logos are available at our DiY Resource Center.
- Mail out invitations no later than two months prior to the event.
- Market event through social networks, online calendars, grassroots, etc.
- Make sure to follow the Chapter's marketing and branding guidelines.



Your New Best Friends - Sponsors & Volunteers

Start looking for sponsors...the most successful sponsorships are those that benefit both the company and the NMSS.

- Create comprehensive sponsorship packages...decide what the benefit would be to becoming a sponsor.
- Get creative in your sponsorship opportunities...a different company could sponsor each round of questions for a trivia night...you could even invite a company representative to read the questions for the round and give them special table placement. Or for a scrap booking party, find a photography company to be a sponsor and then their photos could be displayed in all of the demonstration pages. Ask an auto dealership or auto detail company to sponsor valet parking!
- All expenses or specific aspects of an event can be underwritten by sponsorship as long as recognition is provided on a sign, in the event's scripts, on programs, etc.
- Don't be too afraid to ask for donations...be proud...you are supporting a great cause and you will never know that someone wants to sponsor your event if you don't ask.
- It is usually better to introduce yourself in person to a potential sponsor than through email or mail.
- Make sure to follow-up with each potential sponsor with a professional proposal and phone call or visit.
- The worst someone can do is say no - you'll never know if you don't ask.
- Identify areas where additional volunteer help is going to be needed for planning and running the event.
- Encourage committee members to recruit both sponsors and volunteers who are willing to lend a hand the day of your event.



Creating The Menu

Determine the food and drink menu for your event.

- Remember, this is a fundraising event. In many cases it is OK to provide some items free of charge, but then to ask for individuals to pay for extra items (i.e. cover beer, wine, and soda for the event but offer mixed drinks for purchase).
- Consider your general audience when selecting meal options to determine if any potential traditions, religions, or lifestyles would limit meal selections (i.e. Kosher)
- It is always a good idea to plan for a few guests who require vegetarian or gluten-free meal options.
- Make sure food and drink contribute to the overall "feel" of the event.
- Make sure to obtain a few proposals from outside caterers so food costs do not become excessive.
- Ensure that you have a full understanding of service fees and gratuities.
- Work with your caterer to determine the appropriate amount of labor (servers, bar staff, etc).
- Some venues will allow you to bring in donated food or drinks while others will not, so make sure that you fully understand any restrictions prior to reserving the space.
- Contracts or agreements are in the case of donated food or drink so that both parties understand that a commitment has been made to provide food or drink items free of charge.
- If alcohol is to be served, ensure that sufficient procedures are in place to verify age and to prevent over-consumption. It is best to let trained bartenders verify age and determine intoxication to reduce your event's risk.

It's In The Details

Reserve any services, technical or other, that will be required for the event (sound system, sound professional, projector & screen for pictures or videos, valet parking, coat check, security, etc.)

- Contracts or agreements are a necessity in order to ensure that the service provider is aware of the date and time of the event, in addition to their identified obligations.
- Contracts or agreements are especially helpful for service providers who are donating services.
- Analyze potential safety and security hazards for the event and create a plan to prevent unusual injuries.
- Contact local law enforcement for procedures you may need to follow for public venues.
- Identify whether additional liability insurance is going to be necessary to cover injuries due to high-risk activities (rock climbing, sky diving, etc).
- Create a Back-Up plan, especially if event is outdoors. What will happen if inclement weather strikes?
- Also, have a Back-Up plan for any area of the event planning that has been difficult to secure in the event that the original plan falls through.
- Confirm venue, food, drink, services, speaker, etc. and that contracts and agreements have all been signed and received.
- Start to organize volunteer needs for day-of roles and responsibilities.



Say What?

Determine the script or agenda for the event. It is always good to provide talking points to anyone who is speaking and seems unsure of what they are to say to avoid a silent episode of stage fright.

- Remember, at events, people do not like too much talking so spread powerful messages throughout the evening and make sure that anything spoken is precise and heartfelt.
- It is always good to include a story, specific examples, and powerful messaging to encourage attendees to make a donation or further engage in whatever it is that you are asking them to do...you got them there so don't be afraid to ask them to support you and your goal of a world free of MS.
- An MS Ambassador or Speaker's Bureau Volunteer is a powerful tool and is free of charge to you! They can provide whatever speaking role you need them to play in addition to setting up and supporting an NMSS table.
- Check the online DiY Resource Center for talking points commonly used at events.

Day Of Event

All of the prep-work is done and it's the day of the big event. It's a good idea to create a checklist of things to do and vital items you'll need.

- Schedule a meeting with your volunteers well in advance of guest arrival.
- Communicate any last-minute changes or additions to your volunteers, as well as identifying and troubleshooting any problem areas.
- Ensure event is running on time and that all speakers have arrived and understand their role for the event.

- Identify a designated volunteer, whom you trust and can be relied upon to make good decisions, to troubleshoot any problems or answer any questions that volunteers may have.
- Make sure to greet your guests...let the volunteers focus on their roles while you thank guests for attending and encourage them to participate in the event's activities.



After The Event

You pulled it off, but yet, there's still more to do.

- Thank attendees and volunteers through an email or personal note.
- Thank sponsors through a personal note.
- Host a wrap-up celebration with your volunteers where you can discuss the event's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A Debrief Meeting template is available through the DiY Resource Center.
- Ensure all expenses are paid and that proper documentation is retained to support use of revenue.
- Organize and save the attendee list in order to make sure they are invited to next year's event.
- Submit proceeds to NMSS with deposit form along with any borrowed or unused items.
- Be proud of the great work you did to help families affected by MS... BRAVO!

Utilize the Chapter

We are here to help and have resources for you.

- We may be able to promote your event in an upcoming publication or online so forward your event date and venue information to a NMSS staff member.
- Forward promotional images and files to NMSS so the event can be fully promoted through the DiY Event Calendar and web pages.
- Create a personalized web page through the NMSS site where people can go to view event information (FREE OF CHARGE TO YOU!)
- Credit card payments can be accepted through your web page (please note that credit card payments go directly to NMSS and will not be refunded to cover event expenses).

Personalized emails can also be sent from your personal page by uploading your contact list or address book.

- If you'd like an MS Ambassador to be present at your event, request an ambassador at www.nationalMSSociety.org/PAX Volunteer g Awareness & Public Education g MS Ambassadors g Tell Us Where to Go.

DIY Fundraising Guide - Ideas to help you get moving!

“Do It Yourself” Elements & Year-round Ideas

These ideas that can work alone as a fundraiser or could work well in combination with other fundraisers, including community partnerships.

Raffles: Raffles raise funds through the sales of tickets, or chances, to win a particular prize. They can be a great fundraiser because of the low cost and high profit potential. Ask local businesses to donate complete baskets, individual prize items or gift certificates. Legal restrictions about raffles vary by location so research applicable state and local laws thoroughly. Find out more about Raffles stepbystepfundraising.com/how-to-organize-a-affle-fundraiser/

Auctions

- Silent auctions are often added on to other events such as dinners and galas. They are great ways to increase your fundraising revenues at these events. Silent auctions are often very popular with attendees, especially if there are some great prizes. Find out more about Silent Auctions stepbystepfundraising.com/the-five-essential-elements-of-a-successful-silent-auction/
- Online Auctions for charity can be a good way to raise funds for a non profit organization. There are several ways to set up an online auction. Find out more about Online Auctions stepbystepfundraising.com/an-introduction-to-online-auctions-for-charity/
- Sports Collectibles From Upper Deck Drive your auction by offering Upper Deck products. Generate spirited bidding activity and better fundraising results with a wide range of products that feature the biggest names in professional sports and with their “No Risk, No Hassle” program there’s nothing to lose. Call 1-800-422- 8956, email at charity@upperdeck.com or visit the Auction Resources Page for more information: fundraisers.com/servicesdir/upperdeck.html

Once you’re used to conducting this fundraiser it can easily be run multiple times a year to take advantage of the seasons. Your supporters will also get used to purchasing their seasonal flowers from you. You’ll need to work out with the nursery if they will deliver the flowers to you or if you will need to pick them up. Make sure you pick them up in a heated vehicle so that the cold does not shock the plants in the winter.

Solicit Direct Donations:

- Letter Campaign: Via email or snail mail Know your donors & what their preferred method of communication.
- Coin Collections: It all adds up and remember a little bit can go a long way if everyone chips in!<http://stepbystepfundraising.com/change-coins-into-fundraising-success/>

Don’t forget to utilize your online participant center, even if you are fundraising in other ways. Plenty of friends and family will offer you direct support if you have to do is tell them about what a great cause you’re walking or riding for! Visit nationalMSSociety.org/PAX and your event to find example of fundraising letters.

Flower Sales: Spring tulips, Easter lilies, fall mums, and poinsettias are all seasonal flowers that could be a great fundraiser for your group. Find a local nursery that will wholesale flowers to your group so that you take advantage of lower prices. This fundraiser works best as a pre-order, but you should have some extras on hand for last-minute sales.

Dinner Fundraiser: Dinners are one of the most popular, tried and true events and there are actually many ways to hold a dinner fundraiser. The menu can be anything from burgers and fries to a gourmet black tie dinner or anything in between. Dinner fundraisers aren’t just limited to “dinner time” either. You can host a breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea or brunch meal. To make a dinner fundraiser most successful schedule a program that will draw in more people. A musical performance, play, speaker, fashion show or dance will draw in more participants. Hosting additional fundraisers such as raffles and auctions will help raise more money.

Trivia Night: A Trivia Night fundraiser is a fun way to raise money or awareness for your cause. Most Trivia Nights are held at a restaurant or pub so they are great for a group of 10 to 50. It's very scalable so it can be an even larger event too. You'll raise funds by charging admission and having extra fundraisers such as raffles and auctions. Go to the Trivia Night Event Wizard & it will create a professional, custom trivia game to use at your fundraising event 3streetstrivia.com/host/wizard.php. Learn more about trivia nights at stepbystepfundraising.com/trivia-night-fundraiser/.

Beef & Beer: A beef & beer is a popular community fundraiser that attracts large crowds of adults. Depending on the time of year you can rent out a local facility like a fire hall, host one in your house or backyard. Invite people to enjoy a spread of food like burgers meatballs, roast beef sandwiches, side dishes and desserts. Don't forget to have drinks and entertainment like a DJ or band. Make sure everyone is over the age of 21, if you're going to have a large crowd it is often wise to hire a cop to supervise the event.

Run a Betting Pool: Office pools or betting pools amongst friends are fun and competitive ways to fundraise. Pick what type of pool you want to organize, reality TV, award shows, baby names, Super Bowl, March Madness, Masters, or any other type of sports playoffs. Then decide on the set up and size. One of the most common is the box set up with 100, 50 or 25 boxes in a grid where each box is sold for \$5 or \$10.

Whatever type of pool you choose, make sure you're following the law and your office rules. The legality of a pool depends upon the state you are in, whether or not all the money put into the pool is paid out, or whether a cut is taken can determine the legality. You also must be aware of your company's policy on running office pools; some companies forbid them and others encourage them. Generally if you are playing for prizes, instead of cash, it's more likely to be allowed.

Your pool can operate as a fundraiser in various ways. After finding out what your state laws and company policy are regarding pools then determine how funds will be raised and how the winner is rewarded. A portion of money made from the pool can be used as a prize & the rest can be donated or all funds received from the pool can be used as a donation and the person organizing can arrange for prizes to be given to the winner.

If you choose to print out your pool and do it personally you can find a plethora of pools on PrintYourBrackets.com/officepools.html or use then free online system at funofficepools.com. When running a pool, try to collect money from people BEFORE the pool starts or as soon as people sign up. Make sure you keep really good records about who has paid and who hasn't so you don't end up at the end of the pool short on prize funds.

Bake Sale Variations: Cupcake Extravaganza: Have a bake sale or be more creative and hold a cupcake Extravaganza. Sell all different types & flavors of cupcakes. Learn more at blogher.com/cupcakes-good.

Cake Walk: A Cake Walk is another popular variation of a bake sale; it's similar to musical chairs. People purchase a ticket to participate in a round of a cake walk, and the winner gets to select a cake. (ehow.com/how_2073391_organize-cake-walk.html)

Getting Started

- Find a location to hold the cake walk. Select a school gymnasium, park or community center, with plenty of space for participants and cake tables.
- Ask for cake donations from community members and local bakeries or grocery stores. You'll need at least ten cakes to make a decent profit.
- Mark off a large square on the ground with tape or chalk. Divide the perimeter of the square into 20 smaller squares (five on each side). Number each smaller square 1 through 20.
- Place scraps of paper, numbered 1 through 20 in a basket.
- Sell tickets for one round of your cake walk. Ticket prices should be between 25 cents and one dollar. The more cakes you have, the more rounds you can have.

Conducting the Cake Walk

- Organize participants into a group of twenty. Every person should stand on one of the numbered squares.
- Play lively music and instruct participants to walk around the square until the music stops. Then each participant should stop on a numbered square.
- Pull a number from the basket. The person standing on the corresponding numbered square is the winner and gets to select a cake to take home.
- Organize a new round; participants buy a numbered square once more. Continue until all the cakes have been sold.

Marathon Madness

Making your fundraising event a marathon of some sort adds an extra element of excitement and competition. It's easy to raise awareness about your cause and to receive publicity since a "thon" is more unique than most fundraisers.

The types of "thons" you can have are limitless, be as wacky and creative as you can or pick something like a hobby or sport you're involved in. Most people know about marathons or walk-a-thons but have you participated in a dance-a-thon, swim-a-thon, skate-a-thon, beard-a-thon, or a paddle-a-thon? Can you dream up?

Three "Thon" Tips:

Timing: The length of the "thon" is up to you, it could be anywhere from 6 to 8, 12 or even 24 hours long. Most people could probably participate for 12 hours with breaks. If doing a 12 or 24 hour event, you may want to separate teams into shifts or a few hours at a time.

Teams: Depending on your event, it's a good idea to have participants sign up in teams of 2 or 4 people and charge a flat registration fee per team. It's more exciting to participate in events when you're on a team.

Take Five: Refreshments and food must be available the entire event in order for everyone to be well hydrated and maintain strength. There should be other activities going on throughout the "thon" for participants to do when they're taking breaks. Extra diversions will help keep the energy high and the participants engaged. Ask local bands to play or invite a radio host to broadcast live. Hold mini contests or games for the people who may not be the best at what your "thon" is.

Miniature Golf-A-Thon: Get out your putters and little mini pencils, it is Miniature Golf time. Find a local miniature golf course that is willing to donate their facility for the day. You may want to find a course that is lit up at night if you decide on having a 24- hour marathon. Set a rain date in case of inclement weather. Split your group into 4 person teams, observe all rules of the game and have fun.

Set a price per team that will cover all costs of the event and still bring in a substantial amount of money for the effort you're putting into the event. Have your group members seek sponsors willing to donate money in exchange for them playing golf. Find local restaurants that will bring in food and drinks for your group to eat. Contact your local media; they may want to cover your story which could increase your donations.

Hosting a Bowl-A-Thon: Start planning your bowl-a-thon by making arrangements with a bowling alley to rent a group of lanes or the entire building, depending on the amount of participants. First ask if they'd be willing to donate the lanes for your cause or charge you a discounted price. You may have to pick a night that is slower for business if they're donating the lanes.

Fundraising An easy way to price the event is by having people participate in groups or teams of four and charging a registration fee per team. Registration fees will vary depending on the length of your event, whether or not refreshments and food are included, if there is additional entertainment, you may want to charge around \$60 a team if you're offering more than just the bowling and closer to \$40 a team if the registration only covers the

games. Encourage people to sign up early offer a preregistration fee that is cheaper than signing up the week of or day of your event.

Prizes Give out prizes or awards for participants of all ability levels, like highest score, lowest score, most strikes, most gutter balls, best team overall, or most team spirit. Prizes can be gift certificates, awards or fun home made trophies.

Tournament Hosting 101: Host a tournament of any kind and raise funds by charging an entrance fee per individual player or team. Award prizes to the winners, the more valuable the prizes usually determines how much you can charge for your entrance fee. If your tournament attracts a large crowd, set up areas for spectators and charge admission.

Most information in this section has been taken from printyourbrackets.com which is filled with information and it offers free printable single and double elimination tournament brackets for any sport, game, or activity up to 64 teams. The brackets are available for single or double elimination in both blind draw and seeded formats. Also available are printable round robin tournaments for up to 18 teams.

Tournament Bracket Types Available on PrintYourBrackets.com: Horseshoes, Washers, Madden, Ladder Golf, Volleyball, Foosball, Ping Pong, Cornhole, Dart, Billiard, Basketball, Cricket, Archery, MMA Fighting, Polo, Swimming, Bowling, Football, Softball, Wrestling, Tennis, Hockey, Card Game, Video Game, Chess, Baseball, Table Hockey, Wii Sports, Badminton, Handball, Rugby, Squash

Tournament Types: • Round Robin • Elimination Style: Single & Double Elimination, Seeded vs. Blind Draw
Tournament Examples: • Video Games • Board Games • Poker

Round Robin: Each team should play every other team one time. When to run a Round Robin Round robin tournaments can be used for league schedules or tournaments that guarantee a certain number of games. A round robin tournament is best when you have a small number of teams or a long time frame. If you have a lot of teams you can break them up into separate divisions. Be sure to decide the tie-breaker before the tournament begins.

How to Run a Round Robin Tournament: Randomly assign a number to each team and place them in the bracket which you can generate for free when you go to printyourbrackets.com/roundrobin.html then select the number of teams. In most tournaments the teams will already be decided before the tournament, such as a softball or football tournament, but in some games such as corn hole and darts you will need to decide how teams are going to be formed, you have two options:

Option 1: The teams have already been set; everyone came to the tournament with their own partner or chose their partner once they arrived.

Option 2: Place every players name in a hat and draw two names at a time, those two players will be on a team.

When the tournament is ready to begin, start at round 1 and play all of the games for that round, then move onto round two. Continue until all of the games are played meaning each team has had a chance to play everyone in the tournament or division.

Determining the Winner: Keep a tally of each team's wins and losses. The team with the best record after all games have been completed is the winner of the tournament. If teams have tied, refer to the tiebreaker you decided upon before starting the tournament.

Additional Round Robin Resources:

- TEAMOPOLIS: Round Robin Tournament Generator Tool, teamopolis.com/tools/round-robin-generator.aspx
- Print Your Brackets, printyourbrackets.com/roundrobin.html or printyourbrackets.com/howtoroundrobin.html

Single Elimination: When a team wins they continue, and when they lose they're out. When to run a Single Elimination: This is the easiest type of tournament to run and is best when you have a large number of teams and a short time frame.

How to Run a Single Elimination Tournament: Start by printing the appropriate tournament brackets needed for the tournament, you can do this for free at printyourbrackets.com/index.html. You probably will not know the exact number of players that will be attending, so you'll need to estimate. If you estimate that you will have 20-25 teams, then print all of the brackets for 20-25 teams.

Randomly assign a number to each team and place them in the bracket. The tournament is ready to begin, most of the brackets are numbered in the order the matches will be played. If they are not numbered start at the top left and work your way down to the right. Continue the tournament until a winner has been decided.

Double Elimination: Double elimination tournaments are similar to single elimination with one major difference; you must lose two games to be eliminated. When to run a Double Elimination: This is usually the preferred tournament to run, but you need to be sure to have a long enough time frame to complete all of the games.

How to Run a Double Elimination Tournament: Set up your bracket the same way you would start a single elimination tournament but scroll down and use the double elimination generator <http://www.printyourbrackets.com/index.html>. If you don't know the exact numbers of teams just estimate and print all of the brackets within a certain range.

Randomly assign a number to each team and place them in the bracket and the tournament is ready to begin. Most of the brackets are numbered in the order the matches will be played. If they are not numbered start at the top left and work your way down to the right. Continue the tournament until a winner has been decided.

After each winner's bracket game the winner moves over to the next blank line and the loser goes to the corresponding letter in the loser's bracket. After each loser's bracket game the winner moves over to the next line, but if you lose while in the Loser's bracket you are out of the tournament.

Seeded vs. Blind Draw: Two ways to organize single and double elimination tournaments are blind draw and seeded. Unlike seeded tournaments, blind draw tournaments are organized in a way the players are not ranked based on previous results or experience. The match ups are based solely on the luck of the draw.

Seeded Tournament: A seeded tournament is usually run for sporting events such as well established baseball, football, and wrestling leagues. It's organized in a way where the players are ranked based on previous results or experience. The match ups are based on how well a team did during the season or league, and sometimes based on skill level or experience.

How to run a Seeded Tournament: First determine the number of teams that are participating in the tournament and print the corresponding bracket. The brackets are marked with numbers along the left hand side. The numbers run from 1 to the number of teams participating in the tournament. The number 1 ranked team goes on the blank line marked "1", the number 2 ranked team goes on the blank line marked "2" and so on. A seeded tournament is set up so that the highest ranked team plays the worst team, the second highest ranked team plays the second lowest ranked team and so on. When there are an odd number of teams in the tournament the highest seeds receive byes.

Blind Draw Tournament: A blind draw tournament is usually run during events such as darts, corn hole, and billiards. It's organized in a way where the players are not ranked based on previous results or experience. The match ups are drawn at random or blindly.

How to run a Blind Draw Tournament: First determine the number of teams that are participating in the tournament and print the corresponding bracket. Then draw for positions, which can be done in various ways, a simple way is to draw from a hat. The first name drawn will go on the first blank line in the tournament bracket; the second name drawn will go on the second blank line. Continue this until all of the names have been drawn, and all of the blank lines have been filled.

Board Game Tournament: Create a fun twist on a card tournament and do something that everyone can participate in. Have a Board Game Tournament. Pick a favorite, such as Sorry, Trouble, or Monopoly. Assemble 4 person teams that will work together to accumulate points or you can allow individuals to participate. Charge an entry fee for each team, in order to earn money for your charity. Give a portion of the proceeds as the winning prize or get prizes donated from local businesses. Decide if you are going to play with a time limit for each game so that everyone has the same chance and to keep things running on a schedule. Decide on any "House" rules beforehand.

Video Game Tournament: Pick Your Game If you are a serious video game player, you probably have a system of choice and will prefer to stick to one game. But if you are just looking for a fun way to spend some time with your friends, an 8-bit Nintendo tournament with a whole host of games could be the way to go.

Choose a Format: You can base your tournament on several different formats, such as round-robin or double elimination. Base your decision on the number of people involved and how serious you want to get. Another option is to have a winner/challenger format where one person is the expert, and the goal is to beat her at her game of choice.

Set Up Stations: If you have more than one television and gaming system, having several stations will allow you to keep more people involved at one time and keep the tournament on schedule. You may be able to borrow from friends, and people playing in the tournament might be able to contribute supplies.

Create an Information Center: Whether it is a white board, poster or a traditional chalkboard, have a place where tournament standings can be updated and information is accessible to everyone. As the host, be sure to keep the information as up-to-date as possible, or designate someone else to do it.

Provide Food and Drinks: If your tournament is an all-day or an all-weekend event, you will need to have food on hand to keep your guests happy. Buffalo wings, nachos, burgers, hot dogs, chips and beverages of choice are good things to start with.

Video Game Tournament Resources:

- How to Host a Video Game Tournament from eHow.com, ehow.com/how_2071839_host-video-game-tournament.html
- Promote Your Event with Gathering of Gamers, gatheringofgamers.com/video_game_tournaments.php

Poker Tournament: Poker tournament can be a fun informal fundraiser or built into a fancy casino night fundraiser, either way they have huge potential. Bring Las Vegas into your home with a fun poker charity tournament. Make sure you have all your poker supplies to set up your game. Depending on the type of poker game you'd like to host will determine what supplies will be needed; JustPokerSupplies.com is a good place to get your supplies online. Visit Evite.com for helpful hints on planning your poker event. There are many variations of the game so carefully select the style and rules you will use and remember to check with the legality of gambling for charity in your state.

Get the Inside Scoop from PokerCares.com: PokerCares.com is made up of poker players, professionals, fans, industry insiders, and fundraising experts who care to make a difference in their community. They're committed to helping facilitate the growth of charity poker tournaments to raise funds for worthy causes. If you have an

upcoming poker event please e-mail to info@pokercares.com. Showcase your charity poker event and tell friends about it on MySpace by posting on the Charity Poker page myspace.com/charitypoker.

Poker Resources:

- Review game rules at Poker.com
- Learn how to host a Texas Hold'em Tournament, homepokertourney.com
- Try using Evite's Casino Party pages evite.com/app/cms/ideas/poker-night
- Celebrations celebrations.com/content/Host-a-Poker-Tournament-for-Charity
- Stock up at JustPokerSupplies.com
- PokerCares.com or myspace.com/charitypoker

D.I.Y. for Individuals or Small Teams

Waiting for Dollars or Guest Bartender: Find a local restaurant that is willing to host your waiting for dollars event. They will appreciate the extra business it will bring them and you will have fun raising money. Your group will take over waiting tables and bussing dirty dishes, in exchange for tips. You will probably want some experienced wait staff on hand to guide your group. Most patrons, hearing their tip money will be going for a good cause will probably be generous giving more than the customary fifteen to twenty percent.

Pick a restaurant that is popular so that you can ensure a large turnout. Advertise locally what your group will be doing and when. Work with the restaurant owner to create a special menu for the evening that is themed to your group. The restaurant may want to donate \$1 for every meal ordered from this menu. Remember to be polite, fast, and accurate. Try not to break any plates!

Garage Sale: Depending on your facility capabilities, you can coordinate the sale with a local community center, use your own facility's space, or use the space of a generous volunteer. Talk with your staff and volunteers and gauge their enthusiasm for a project like this, you might be surprised at how many people are excited by the idea of getting rid of old clutter while helping out the organization.

Gently Used Item Sales: Books, Baby Clothes, Prom Dresses, CDs & DVDs, Sports Equipment

Bagger for a Day: Sometimes it seems that your local grocery store can be too busy and that you always end up bagging your own groceries. Provide a nice service to your community and raise funds at the same time. Find a grocery store that is willing to help your group and pick a busy day of the week. Print off flyers that explain your group and what you are doing in the store that day. Hand out the flyers the week before your event and to people entering the store.

Give your "baggers" a quick lesson on how to properly bag, for example heavy items on the bottom and eggs and bread on the top. Have a tip jar at each register. You may want each bagger to wear a nametag with your group's name on it as well. Bag each person's groceries with a smile, offer to push their cart, and help to unload them into their car.

Recycling Drives: Recycling is the best way to do something good for the environment and your cause. It's also the only way to fundraise without having to ask anyone for money. You'll attract everyone who is looking for easy ways to be green and your many supporters with a recycling drive that is convenient to participate in.

Your drive can be for a set period of time or an ongoing effort, either way you're going to have to get the word out so people know where to drop the recycling off too. Placing drop off bins in highly trafficked areas of your community is one way to collect items. Depending on your group size and resources you can also schedule specific pick up days in your neighborhood.

- Recycling for cash profit [quests.com/IdeasRecyclingForCash.html](https://www.quests.com/IdeasRecyclingForCash.html)
- Collect Cans & Bottles
- Printer Cartridges [fundingfactory.com](https://www.fundingfactory.com)
- Cell Phones [fundingfactory.com](https://www.fundingfactory.com)

Ideas for Spring & Summer

Duckie Race: There is nothing quite like a group of rubber duckies floating down a river. Pick a day to host the race, then advertise with flyers, posters, local media, and consider building a website. Rubber duckie races can generate a lot of attention. You'll want a large number of ducks and a body of water to float them down. A river with a nice current would be perfect.

Get a roll of raffle tickets and mark the bottom of each duck in permanent marker with a corresponding number. Sell the raffle tickets and let people know there is a rubber duckie with their number on it. You can start selling the duckies prior to the event.

Set up a starting line where all of the duckies will be dumped into the river at once. You may want to find large boxes or crates to dump them from. Encourage people to watch along the racecourse. Have spotters in waders along the way to help any ducks that get stuck. Set a finish line and award prizes to the first 10 or 20 ducks, or however many donated prizes you have. You may also want to award a lame duck prize to the one that comes in last place. Make sure to collect all the ducks you release. You don't want to pollute your local waterways! You may want to stretch a rope across the river with floats on it as a derrick to catch the ducks and keep them from going further downstream.

Spring Planting: If your teammates have green thumbs, then they can offer their services to the community for fundraising. Spring, after all, is the time to re-grow and landscape gardens. If you can assemble some volunteers who love tending all things flora, you can organize groups of teams to go out into the community and help plant flowers, shrubs, and trees for individuals and businesses in exchange for donations. Remember to tailor your offering to the specialties of your volunteers -- some may be great at the physical labor aspect while some may be able to offer a true sense of creativity in arrangements.

Staffing a Concession Stand: Approach local athletic and entertainment complexes to see if they'll allow your group to staff their concession stands at an event. The venue should give your group a flat rate for the event or a percentage of the sales you make. You can find these opportunities at any level, community facilities up to major league and large entertainment complexes.

Junk Tow-Away: Here's a simple idea that can raise funds in a number of ways. When it comes time for spring cleaning, many people make special arrangements with the garbage company to tow away old furniture, appliances, and other items that are no longer wanted but often still usable. With a large truck, your organization can help people's spring cleaning by picking up these unwanted items for a donation. Then, you could do one of a number of things with the items: donate it to Goodwill for a tax write-off, assemble them for your own organization's yard sale, or bring them to consignment shops and markets for additional funds.

Squeegee Day: Ask people at a local drive thru to donate money to have their windshields washed. Have one person at the beginning of the drive thru asking the person if they would like their windshield washed as a donation. If they say yes, the volunteer places a pamphlet under their windshield wiper. Once they get to the front of the drive thru and they have a pamphlet under their wiper, two people wash the windshield. See if you can have the squeegees donated as well as the windshield washer fluid, which you should mix with half water.

Car Wash: This is one of the most used and recognizable fundraisers. It is very simply known as the Car Wash. You will want to find a place to have the car wash at. There needs to be a source of water that you can use. A school, gas station, or church on a busy main road would be a good location. You will need to have all of your own

supplies, such as a garden hose, buckets, sponges, towels, and car wash soap. Pick a date for your car wash, and plan a rain date as well. A rainy day would completely ruin your car wash. Make signs for members of your group to hold by the street to bring in the cars. Advertise with flyers, your city's cable station, and in your local newspapers. Charge a set amount for a car wash, or accept donations. You may earn more by leaving it up to each individual. Have some small bills on hand in order to make change. Most of all, remember to have fun. Your proceeds will reflect it.

For some reason summertime and car washes seem to go hand-in-hand just like the song says. So if you need a summer fundraiser, why not make it a car wash? As the motors get revving this summer, it seems like everyone wants a clean car to cruise around town in. Fundraisers that provide those donating with a service are typically very successful. Now a car wash fundraiser will be the most successful if your group or organization has a large base of teenagers or adult volunteers, which means it's ideal for high school groups and teams of any kind—especially the football, basketball, baseball, soccer or cheerleading squad. However, church youth groups and other group organizations that have access to teen volunteers will do just as well!

Setting up your Car Wash The great thing about a car wash fundraiser is that it takes very little planning—and you can do it in almost any empty parking lot. If your organization doesn't own a building with a large parking lot, you will want to approach locale business owners to use their lots. Before you do, remember that the most desirable areas will be those with easy access and high traffic. So choose a lot that's based in the city center, one with adequate room so that cars can line up and one that participants can enter and exit easily with their automobiles. A church parking lot will usually work best on any day but a Sunday, as church service won't be hindered in any way, and the lot will likely be empty.

Calling all Volunteer Scrubbers and Buffers Ideally, your volunteers will be largely made up of your youth group or team. However if you are also recruiting parents, be sure to give them adequate notice—typically groups will send home a flyer detailing the event and the need for volunteers a month in advance. You can send home a follow up reminder in the monthly parental newsletter, and follow up with interested volunteers via a phone call a week before the event. Ask that all volunteers commit to a two hour time slot, and create a rotating schedule so that washers get a large break from the heat. Ideally you will have enough volunteers to assign each a two hour work shift with no repeats, so they don't get worn out. **Car Washing Supplies** If you're planning to use a church parking lot, ask for permission and ensure that the building has an exterior water supply. You may have to provide your own hoses in addition to the following list of car wash essentials: Soap, Sponges, Rags—dry and wet, Towels, Windex, Steel wool pads for tire shining, Wax, Buffer chamois, Bristol board and markers for signs (post volunteers on the street to wave cars in), Fanny packs for all volunteers to collect keep money, Change cash flow

Dress for Success: The key to a successful car wash is being well prepared, and that means happy and comfortable volunteers. Ask all volunteers to wear waterproof clothing, or attire they are willing to get wet and possibly dirty. **Asking for Sponsorship** Also ensure that you have water and snacks for your volunteers. Washing and buffing cars for two hours can be strenuous physical labor. Add the fact that your volunteers are likely working in an open parking lot without much shade from the sun and exhaustion could spell disaster. So providing drinks to ward off dehydration, and snacks to provide some extra energy is vital to your event's success. Providing sun block, or at least asking washers to bring their own, is also very smart. You can ask for snack and drink sponsorship via your local convenience or grocery store. Many are happy to lend helping fuel if you agree to mention them as sponsors— especially if your event is being covered by the local press. You can even give them the opportunity to set up a vendor booth and sell food and drinks to those getting their cars washed.

Scavenger Hunt: Individuals and/or teams pay an entrance fee to take part in the scavenger hunt. Each team is given the list of items they need to find and very detailed instructions about what is – and is not allowed. Each person or team must return to the starting location by a specified time. Anyone returning even one minute late is disqualified from being the winner.

A winner is selected from those who returned by the specified time based on who found the most items on the list. If there is a tie, the winner would be the person or team that had the most items and returned to the designated location in the least amount of time.

It's a good idea to assign each item a point value based on how difficult the item would be to find. For example, "one unused burger wrapper" is going to be easy to locate, so that item would be a low point value.

On the other hand, "a business card from a local police officer whose name starts with the letter M" would be more difficult to find and thus would have a higher point value.

To increase ticket sales (and fun), you may consider doing a scavenger hunt/pizza party. At the end of the hunt, all participants will stay for pizza and dessert. Obviously, you will want to significantly raise the price of the tickets if you choose to serve food.

This event requires some preplanning, but not a large investment. Keep in mind that there is some initial investment if you choose to serve food.

What you'll need for this event: A list of items to be found. This list should be long and should include items that are easy to find and items that are difficult to find. To make things really interesting, you can require each team to bring along a digital camera. Then include items on the list such as "a photo of one team member in the ocean" or "a photo of two team members sitting in a fire truck". Use your imagination, and make a list that will turn your event into a memorable day that your community will look forward to all year.

- * Food (if you choose to serve food). Keep it simple. Pizza and soda is always a winner.
- * Designated starting and ending locations and times. A church or school works well as there is usually a large hall where each team can display their items after the hunt.
- * A team of judges. The judges will need to visit each team after the hunt, verify which of the items they have collected and calculate the number of points earned by each team.

Unique & Fun Ideas

Musical Request War: This usually takes place at an establishment with live band, musician or a DJ. Guests can request to hear a song for \$1 and other guests are allowed to override that request for \$2. Depending on the establishment it may be appropriate to raise the prices or lower them.

Pay to Play Game Party: Guests pay to enter a party, at a rate that covers the price of snacks and refreshments & then pay a fee to play one of the games. They can play that game as much as they want but they'll have to pay again to play another game. Prices should be adjusted according to food, venue, and selection of games.

A Night at the Races: Have people represent horses, set up a course/track with spaces they can move up as dice are rolled to see who progresses forward. You need: Six horses (6 sides of a die), 2 dice, 1 host & a lively crowd to name the horses & "place bets." Set a price for betting & get prizes to hand out to winners.

Try a fun variation of racing by renting a racing game from Circus Time Amusements, call 800-923-4386 or visit circustime.net and click the "Day at the Races" link on the right hand menu to check out other options.

Bingo Night: Getting started A bingo fundraiser is very easy to put together. All you need is a large room with lots of tables, bingo supplies, and a caller. Select a night, publicize your event, and you're in business. Stock up with bingo cards from JackpotBingoSupplies.com or go to BingoCardPrinter.com to print your own cards.

Bingo fundraising There are many ways to raise money with bingo games. Just be sure that yours comply with local

regulations regarding games of chance. One common approach is to charge a small amount such as \$1 per game or offer unlimited games for \$20. Winners then select from a variety of small, non-cash prizes.

Another approach gives tickets to winners. Then winners can redeem winning tickets for different levels of prizes. In this format, single ticket winners select from one prize category while multiple game winners select from higher-value prizes.

A third approach is to raffle off prizes to all winners using a double ticket system. Each time someone wins a game, they get half of a ticket pair and the other half is placed in the raffle drawing, each winner is guaranteed a prize, but some prizes are worth much more than others.

Casino Night: Events like these often include live entertainment, a catered dinner, live and silent auctions, sponsorships, ticket sales, tax deductible donations, and a host of other details that require plenty of advance planning. A Casino Night is a great excuse for adults to get all dressed up and have fun, so turnouts are impressive. Getting Started You need a strong crew of volunteers with a passion for getting things done. Group the tasks by category and divide them up by skill set of your volunteers. It's best to have them work singly or in pairs, partnering veterans with newcomers. Having too many people assigned to a task just slows it down. The only exception to that rule is in seeking donations of auction items. Have everyone call or better yet, visit their contacts to ask for their help with donated products or services. Seek out things with a true "Wow" factor to generate a strong buzz of excitement around your auctions.

For your games of chance, contact party supply and equipment rental firms. In major metropolitan areas, there are also companies that specialize in supplying this equipment and many even supply staff to run the games, deal the cards, etc. Make sure you have all permits well ahead of time. Some jurisdictions have special restrictions on gambling-related activities even when they are for charity and don't involve cash winnings, so research this carefully.

Raising funds A Casino Night fundraiser offers dozens of ways to raise funds for charity, including silent auctions, live auctions, raffles, poker tournaments, individual sponsorships, corporate sponsorships, cash bar, gourmet catered dinner, and ticket sales. Set your ticket prices high enough to cover all your expenses. In some instances, a high-dollar ticket price makes the event exclusive and will help attract a wealthy roster of supporters. You can price tickets differently for those who might not want a catered dinner or gambling chips included. Some people won't and you do want as many people as possible attending and bidding on your auction items. To boost ticket sales to a black-tie affair, you'll want your meal catered by a trendy restaurant that has a certain cachet. Good press coverage mentioning society and celebrity attendees will also help sell out your fundraiser.

Publicity Besides publicizing your Casino Night fundraising event in your newsletter, by email, and through word of mouth, to get a big turnout, you have to get media coverage. Put together a press release summarizing the highlights of the evening and emphasize why you are raising funds. Include details on the entertainment, the sponsors, prominent attendees, your best auction items, etc. Include full contact information as well as the obvious information such as place, date, and time. Send it to all the major media outlets in your marketplace well ahead of your fundraiser. Include a group photo such as the organizing committee or your group's board of directors.

Flamingo Flocking: Purchase 10 pink plastic flamingos (lawn decorations). Pick 10 yards in your community to be the lucky recipients. Attach cards to the flamingoes' necks with a phone number along with all the pertinent information regarding your group. State that for a \$10 donation, the flamingos will be removed but for \$15 they will be moved to the lawn of their choice. Make sure you also place a sign that has a contact name and phone number among the flamingos for those who drive by and would like to have the flamingos placed in a friend's yard. (Also give the option to simply pick up the flamingo gratis, since some people have no sense of fun.) It takes some organization, but is lots of fun. An additional fundraising idea is to sell "Pink Flamingo Insurance" for \$10 to protect yourself from the invasion of these pink pests.

Sneaky Flamingos: One fundraiser that my youth group did was to have people (most often parents) sign up to pay \$X for X flamingo's placed IN the yard WITHOUT being caught. Kids really got into it year after year dressing in cammies, sneaking into back yards, using the help of a neighbor or using distraction tactics for suspecting parents. Parents really like to get involved as well waiting out in their lawns with a garden hose or some other scare tactic. The event goes for several days without the parents knowing which house would be bombarded next. Though they knew their kids were out with the youth group and knew that they were posting flamingoes, they didn't know which house would be hit that night. Eventually, parents generally donated the money regardless for the sheer fun and enjoyment of the activity for both them and their children. You could even keep it a secret as to what dates flamingoes will be posted, but it's up to you!

Variation 1: Send everyone in your organization an announcement on pink paper about your Pink Flamingo fundraiser. Word your announcement something like this: A Pink Flamingo May Visit Your Family! On May 22, the youth group of [your organization] will conduct its first annual Pink Flamingo Fundraiser. We have several lovely pink flamingos, one of which may end up on your front lawn. We have divided the [church, school, etc.] into four Flamingo Areas. Inside each pink flamingo is a list of the names and addresses of church members living in one of the Flamingo Areas. On the appointed day, the youth group will plant each of the flamingos on the front lawn of one family from the Flamingo list. If the flamingo ends up in your front yard, you then - pledge a donation to the youth group, cross your name off the flamingo list, replant the flamingo in the yard of someone whose name has not yet been crossed off the list. The flamingo may not remain in the same yard for more than twenty-four hours. It is not necessary to follow the order of names on the list. HOWEVER, if you do not wish to see a pink flamingo on your lawn ever, you may buy Insurance for the Prevention of Large Pink Birds for only ten dollars. See any member of the youth group to purchase insurance. Purchase deadline is May 15.

Variation 2: Hold a good ole fashion flocking at your office. Make cut-outs of pink flamingos and charge co-workers to flock other people's offices or cubes. Take the cut-outs or plastic flamingos and decorate the flockees area. You can charge \$1 per flamingo, which will generate tons of money for your team. The bigger the lockin', the better.

Variation 3: Get a bunch of pink flamingos (we paid \$5.99 for six flamingo driveway reflectors through Oriental Trading Post) Other resources might be Wal-Mart - I've been told that they can order them for you in the Spring; some garden stores also have them in stock or can get them for you. If you decide on the large plastic birds, expect to pay about \$10 for 2. Put the flamingos in a church member's yard. The idea is that the yard will look so hideous with the pink birds that the church member will be more than happy to give a donation toward the fund raiser to get them out of there. Some options to consider are: pre-sell flamingo insurance to prevent yards from getting flocked; when a church member gets flocked, they get to pick the next victim; and have a map at the church that charts their progress.

We found this fundraising idea to provide benefits far beyond what was expected. Letting the member whose yard is flocked chose the next yard included far more members than we expected. Not only members who attended worship every Sunday were flocked - we used it as an outreach tool.

We flocked people who rarely attended, or who had only just started visiting! We discovered that no one was willing to be the last one to pass them on! Everyone was interested in where the flocks were (we had four flocks out). Conversation between members on Sun. morning usually started with, "I saw the flamingos in your yard...." The birds really brought the "family" together. And we even heard, "I'm glad they came to our house. I thought we were going to be left out."

Allowing for fundraising donations instead of a set fee increased our income. The average donation was \$25, but donations actually ranged from \$10 - \$200! We were able to raise close to \$2,000 for our summer youth servant trip. Give it a try - we had a great time with the cute, pink, little birds!

Matching Gift Information

What is a "Matching Gift"? Many companies sponsor matching gift programs to encourage employees to support numerous charities and non-profit organizations. Most companies match dollar for dollar and some may even double or triple match a donors' gift.

Helpful Tips for Matching Gifts: Spread the Word about Matching Gifts: Encourage all of your event donors to see if their company participates in a matching gift program.
Have Matching Gift Forms when you approach your coworkers: If your company participates in a matching gift program, have the forms available when you approach your coworkers. When they make a contribution, you can hand them a form to complete. Just by informing them of this opportunity, you could double, maybe even triple your contributions. Please remind your donors to include information on whose event campaign they are supporting so the gift will be credited to the correct event participant's account.

The Earlier the Better: Enclosing the matching gift forms in your pledge envelope on the day of the event or even before will ensure that your matching gift will be included with your current year's prize total. To assist us in the process, please include a copy of your pledge form for the National MS Society to reference.

Accessing the My Participant Center

STEP 1: From the Bike MS or Walk MS website select "MyAccount" or "Login" in the left-hand navigation bar or the right.

STEP 2: On the next page, you will be asked to enter your Username and password.

My Participant Center – Overview

The Overview page of the Participant Center acts as a "landing-page" and provides a quick look at your fundraising progress.

At your participant center you can:

- Set up your personal webpage
- Upload your email address book
- Send emails to solicit donations and to thank your donors
- Track emails sent and actions taken
- Track your fundraising progress
- Access your team information (only team captains have this icon)

Setting Up Your Personal Webpage

From the Navigation Toolbar, select the Personal Page button. This section is comprised of three sections – content, photos/videos, and components.

CONTENT

STEP 1: Utilize the "Content" section to customize your Personal Page's text. Add your personal story or motivation for participating to, or instead of, the stock message. Preview your page and "Save" (at the bottom).

STEP 2: Create an easy-to-remember URL for your Personal Page.

STEP 3: Ensure that your Personal Page is made "Public". Private pages do not show up on the Team Roster and are not easily accessible for donors.

Setting Up Your Personal Webpage

PHOTOS/VIDEO

STEP 1: Utilize the "Photo/Video" section to personalize webpage with pictures of you, your family or your team. Images must be JPEG files and smaller than 200KB.

STEP 2: Upload a video of your Bike MS efforts or a personal thanks to your donors.

COMPONENTS

STEP 1: The "Components" section allows you to choose which options will appear on your Personal Page. You must hit "save" to activate your choices.

Blogging on Your Personal Webpage

Keep your personal page fresh by adding a Blog to your personal webpage. Update your personal blog frequently with your training or fundraising progress or just with your daily thoughts. Encourage your friends to bookmark it and check frequently to see your latest updates.

STEP 1: Enable the Personal Blog feature in the "Components" section of the "Personal Page". See previous page for more details.

STEP 2: Access to your Blog is available only through your Personal Page. Choose "Your Personal Page" at the very top of the Navigation Toolbar to open your Blog.

STEP 3: Your Personal Page will display in a second window. Scroll to the bottom of the page and choose "Post New Topic".

STEP 4: Once you have entered your information, click "Post your topic" to submit your blog. This will now appear on personal page.

Uploading Your Address Book

STEP 1: Click on "Email" in the navigation toolbar, then choose "Contacts".

STEP 2: Click "Import Contacts" and follow the instructions to upload your address book from Outlook, Yahoo, AOL or a generic CSV file. Or click "Add a contact" to manually add contacts.

STEP 3: Once imported, contacts can be filtered by donor status, teammate status (team captains only) or the follow up needed.

Sending Emails

STEP 1: Select "Email" in the navigation toolbar. From this section you can send emails to potential donors to solicit donations and send thank emails to those that have donated. You can also send emails to teammates.

STEP 2: You can use the template emails or draft your own personal message.

STEP 3: You have several options available for the layout or "stationary" of your email. Choose the one that works best for your audience.

STEP 4: Preview your email before sending it out.

Tracking Your Progress

STEP 1: Choose "Progress" from the navigation tools.

STEP 2: The helpful tools allows you to easily track your fundraising progress. The "Progress" section gives a quick overview of your fundraising to date, your current goal (can be updated on the "Home" page), percentage to your goal and the number of days left until the event.

STEP 3: The "Donation History" section provides you with a complete list of donors. In this section, you can choose to receive or not to receive email notifications when a donation is made. You can also download your personal donation list for your future records.

