

A close-up photograph of a stack of folded clothing. The top item is a blue long-sleeved shirt. Below it is a tan or light brown long-sleeved shirt. The bottom item is a red long-sleeved shirt. The fabric textures are clearly visible, and the items are neatly folded.

MARION COUNTY'S GUIDE TO HOSTING

SWAPS





WHY SWAP?

Eco-friendly

The consumption of materials is increasing rapidly which has significant environmental impacts. The average consumer now buys 60 percent more clothing a year and keeps them for about half as long as 15 years ago. Reusing prevents pollution by reducing the need to harvest new raw materials, saves energy, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change. Swaps also challenge consumers to think differently about goods and are an excellent alternative to purchasing new.

Economical

Everyone wants to save a little cash. Swap events make it easy for you to swap out what you don't want and save for items that are hard to barter for.

Clear the Clutter

Clutter can easily take over your home and be an overwhelming burden to you and your loved ones. Swaps help you reduce your excess and empower you to embrace the things that matter the most.

Fun

Swaps are a wonderful way to connect with friends and meet others through an engaging, interactive activity.



ENVISION

TYPES OF SWAPS

Clothing (Women, Men, Children)

Accessories

Toys

Housewares

Seeds/Seedlings

Books (Novels or Comic Books)

Arts & Craft Supplies

Back to School Supplies

WHO IS INVITED

Consider who is invited to your event. Will this be an intimate gathering of close friends, a larger community gathering, or open to the public?

TIMING

When will you host the event? Clothing swaps have good attendance in the Fall and Spring to discard and get ready for the new season. Toy Swaps are helpful around the holidays to reduce new purchases and Seed Swaps are great at the start of the growing season.

HOURS

If you are hosting a swap at a venue other than your home, it will take time to set up and clean up. Plan for at least:

1 hr of set up time

.5 hr of item checking, sorting, and hanging

1-2 hrs of swapping

1 hr of clean up and donation

VENUE

If you have over 20 participants, consider booking a community hall or free event space so there is plenty of room to spread out with surfaces to display items. Some venues require public liability insurance. Think about partnering with a local non-profit or government agency to cover the cost of insurance and venue rental.

If you are hosting a clothing swap, changing spaces can be made by using room dividers or curtains in a specific area of the room for anyone that prefers privacy.

SNACKS

If you want to make your event more festive, consider serving snacks. You can also ask participants to bring a dish to share.

BYOB

Bring your own bag to ensure no plastic single-use bags are being used in the transport of items. You may want to have extra boxes or reusable bags on hand to share with guests.



HOW IT WORKS

Now is a great time to come up with ground rules and details so you are prepared.

ACCEPTABLE ITEMS

Consider what kind of items you are hoping to see at the swap and what items are unacceptable. For clothing, you might consider asking for items that are in good condition and have been washed. You may not want to accept clothing that is stained or has holes. Will you accept accessories or underwear? Lay out the rules now so people know what to expect at the swap.

MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM

Think about your space and guest list and then decide on how many items you recommend people to bring.

ORGANIZE

Make signs to keep things organized and sorted for the event. Feel free to download these premade signs:

Clothing Swap

<http://bit.ly/ClothingSwapSigns>

Jean Swap

<http://bit.ly/jeansizessigns>

Art & Craft Supply Swap

<http://bit.ly/artsandcraftswap>

DONATE

Think about what will happen with the leftover items from the swap. Will you donate them to a non-profit, sell them for profit, or do they go home with the original owners? Now is the time to line up how that will work.

HOW TO SWAP

There are many ways to operate the swap. Here are a few ideas:

- Roll dice to see who shops first and take turns shopping.
- Use tokens or poker chip for each item a guest brings.
- Bag for a Bag. For each bag that comes in, each participant is given a bag to fill up.
- Free for all. This is easier to execute in a large, open space.
- Limit items to start. You can give an initial limit of 3-5 items in the first half an hour and then open it up to more as the event goes on.
- Stagger shoppers. When guests arrive, they sort their items. Then they receive a number indicating what round they shop in. Rounds can be scheduled or at your discretion depending on how large the swap is. Plan for 15-minute rounds and see how it goes. You won't need to kick people out that are already shopping.



PROMOTE

INVITES

Depending on your audience, you may want to send invites through email, call friends, or advertise on social media. It's best to send personal invites and emails at least 3-4 weeks before the event. If the event is open to the public you can advertise through Facebook/other social media, emails, and/or submit a press release to local newspapers and radio stations. You can hang flyers on local noticeboards or place on food co-ops/cafes counters.

INVITE DETAILS

Name of Event (Type of Swap)

Time | Date

Place

Cost (if applicable)

Please bring (your own bag or dish to share?)

List of acceptable/unacceptable items

Contact details (email and phone number).

Any links for event online (Facebook event/EventBrite event).

SHINDIG

DAY OF

Do you need waivers or photo releases?

Do you want to collect emails for future events?

Take photos so you can promote similar events in the future and thank guests.

Assign a hashtag so people can share their finds and photos.

Ensure you have plenty of hangers and racks to hang clothes on.

Print up sign categories to organize items.

Allow table space for jewelry/shoes/accessories/bags/hats or other items.

Do you need dressing rooms?

You'll need a couple of full-length mirrors in the main area and in the dressing rooms.

Recruit volunteers to help with set up and clean up.

Donate leftovers.



Environmental Services
ReduceReuse.net