

How to organise a coffee morning

Coffee and cake mornings aren't just a great way to get people together in your community – when you do one to raise funds for our life-saving research, it could help to stop breast cancer from taking lives too.

How long you'll need

It could take anywhere from two weeks to a couple of months to organise, depending on where you hold your coffee morning.

Allow up to four hours for the event to leave plenty of time for your guests to enjoy tea, cakes, coffee, raffles and any other fun games you've put on for them.



Pick a venue

There are plenty of places you could host a coffee morning from your workplace, local community centre or hall, café or even in your own living room!



Get baking

A coffee morning isn't a coffee morning without cake! Keep costs down by getting your guests to each bring in a baked dish and you could host your very own baking competition with prizes for different categories.



Organise prizes

It's always a great idea to include games and raffles at the event to boost the money raised. Check our raffle guide for further information. You can approach local businesses for prizes or ask guests to donate any unwanted gifts to raffle off.



Order your materials

We can provide you with posters, balloons, cardboard collection boxes and plenty more to help your coffee morning stand out! Just get in touch and we'll get it sorted.

The legal bit



Your safety is our main concern – that's why this bit's here! Please follow these guidelines to keep yourself protected when organising your event.

- Insurance – check if the venue has insurance to cover your event or you may need to apply for public liability insurance.
- Food – if you are serving food at the event make sure to check for any dietary restrictions. Also look at the guidelines for food hygiene at www.food.gov.uk by searching for “charity events”.
- Venue – check with the venue to see if they have a copy of their risk assessment and find out if they need you to complete one before the event.
- We recommend you check out the government's advice on running your own event, by searching for “voluntary event” at www.gov.uk.
- And finally, make sure you're gambling aware by reading advice on “fundraising with lotteries at events” at www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk.





Meet Olga Gray, MBE

Olga started her coffee morning about 30 years ago to raise funds for the local hospice on the Isle of Man, where her sister had been cared for. When Olga's daughter was diagnosed with breast cancer she decided to raise funds for Breakthrough Breast Cancer (later Breast Cancer Now) instead, to fund pioneering research in the hope that this would help others diagnosed with this devastating disease.

Olga's top tips

- ♥ Hold the event for a limited time, to create a lovely atmosphere with lots of people and give you time to set up and clear away! Usually held 10.00am – 12.30pm.
- ♥ Have someone very welcoming and friendly on the door.
- ♥ Charge a small ticket price for entry – suggest £1.50 to include tea/coffee and biscuit or small cake. If you sell these in advance it makes it less likely that people will drop out.
- ♥ Ask as many people as you can to help by baking cakes, manning stalls, acting as runners, serving refreshments and attending!
- ♥ Have a lovely cake stall for people to buy cakes to enjoy with their coffee or to take home.
- ♥ Gather items for the stalls throughout the year, start early with unwanted Christmas presents. Suggested stalls – bric-a-brac, all new, jewellery, children's stall, cake stall.
- ♥ The raffle is always the most popular fundraising activity on the day so ask everyone you know if they can donate a prize and approach local businesses to support you. Or think about asking a talented baker to make a celebration cake, sell raffle tickets for £1 and then the winner can choose the message they want iced on it.
- ♥ Book a large enough venue for your expected numbers, think about places such as church halls or canteens at work that might be willing to help provide a venue.
- ♥ Make sure it looks fantastic with lots of bunting, paper table cloths and balloons.
- ♥ Advertise early on social media, approach your local paper, have posters at the venue and outdoor banners if possible. You might think about having a plants stall outside to attract people in.
- ♥ Get a float for each stall organised in advance with the right denominations (smaller coins for the cake stall and larger coins for the others). Consider a theme – a pink coffee morning always looks great.
- ♥ Have fun, and enjoy all the delicious treats you'll get to sample on the day!