

HOW TO MAKE SPECIAL INTEREST POSTERS AND LEAFLETS

Do you have hobby or special interest such as dancing, film or fossil-hunting? Then why not share your passion with others and help them to get involved.

What are special interest posters and leaflets?

Special interest posters and leaflets contain your personal reflections on your hobby; they are your opportunity to share your knowledge and experience with others and to provide guidance and advice on how they might develop their learning. You might want to put up the posters at a local community venue, library or shop or you might bring your leaflets along to a special event.

Why would you want to make posters and leaflets?

- Share your memories and experiences of a hobby or skill
- Pass on your knowledge and skill to others
- A catchy, effective and relatively inexpensive way of advertising an event, group or project
- Making posters and leaflets allows you to use and develop new skills like art and design, writing and IT skills

Local heritage centres, parks and gardens, museums and libraries might well be interested in copies of your leaflets and posters, particularly if they tie-in with an aspect of their site or collection. Organisations associated with your hobby might also be interested in what you produce; for example, if you produce a leaflet on growing roses, the local garden centre or nursery might like copies to put on display or if you produce a poster on silent film, your local cinema might like to put up copies around the building.

What to include in your poster or leaflet

You might be creating the poster or leaflet as part of a group or you might be working by yourself; whichever way you are working, you should try and include the following core elements:

- An introduction to the hobby or special interest
- Your personal experiences of the hobby (or the

experiences of individuals within the group)

- Some tips and advice for others who might like to pursue this hobby (i.e. local societies, good books to read, equipment they might need etc)

Don't dive headfirst into writing text. If you are working as part of a group, spend some time reminiscing over and talking about your knowledge and experiences. You might want to look at some objects or photographs which help to stimulate memories and ideas.

Ultimately ideas and information need to be turned into text to go into the poster or leaflet. You may wish to record a series of discussions (or your own memories, if you are working alone) and then type up relevant sections for the leaflet; individuals might wish to write small sections themselves or one individual might make it their responsibility to take notes of discussions and write these up to form the core text. Don't worry if it takes time to generate the content – you should enjoy the process of creating the product as much as the finished result.

Make sure your posters or leaflets aren't too wordy. Keep the sentences short and look for powerful images that illustrate your points and help to engage the reader.





Designing and editing your work

You can have various styles of leaflet - trifold, A5 single fold etc. Have a look in your local library or supermarket or even at the junk mail that comes through the front door to see the variety in size and style. Use these examples to try out different designs and layouts for your own leaflet.

Once you know the size of the leaflet or poster you are going to produce, you can start entering the content into a template on the computer. You will need to use a desktop publishing programme if you want a good quality product. Some good programmes are Adobe InDesign, Microsoft Office Publisher and Serif Page Plus. Most come with built in tutorials or with a help file to guide you through any difficulties.

When you start entering the content into the programme, make sure that you are using consistent font styles, spacing, sizes and colours throughout the leaflet or poster. You will also probably find that you have more content - particularly text - than you can really fit in. Keep editing the text - and give everyone a chance to help out with this - until you have a balanced leaflet or poster that doesn't look too cluttered.

Printing

When you have completed your publication you will want to print it. If your posters are to be larger than A4 you may need to look at either purchasing an A3 printer (which is only worth doing if you are going to use it on a regular basis - they cost upwards of £150) or having your posters professionally printed.

Professional printing is not as expensive as you might think, as long as you have finished all the design work. Look for print companies in your local area via your telephone directory or local library. For the best print quality, give the print company a disk or memory card with the poster/leaflet file on it (or email the file through as a PDF), rather than asking the printer to make photo copies of the original.

Remember, leaflets will have to be printed on both sides, so this will equate to two pages for most printers. If you are printing at home, check whether your printer will print to two sides (duplex) automatically or whether you will have to manually print the second side. If it's the latter, this will take more time. You should also allow time for folding leaflets, once they've been printed - particularly if you have opted for a trifold format.

For further information and support

These articles are a good introduction to desktop publishing:

<http://computercompanion.com/LPMArticle.asp?ID=141>

http://desktoppub.about.com/cs/learningdtp/f/choose_books.htm

Here are some websites to help you track down good value printers and scanners:

www.ehow.co.uk/how_2005963_choose-printer-home.html

www.priceinspector.co.uk/

