

How to Organize a



**Step-by-Step Guide for Creating a
Successful and Engaging Event**

HOMESTEADERSWEST.COM

Organizational Committee



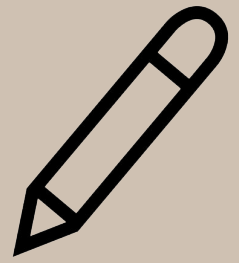
- **Recruit Individuals With Relevant Skills and Experience:** Look for like-minded individuals who have skills and experience in event planning, marketing, fundraising, or emergency management. Seek out people who are passionate about promoting self-reliance and resilience within the community and are willing to volunteer their time and expertise.
- **Define Roles and Responsibilities:** Once you've recruited committee members, clarify each member's role and responsibilities, including the chairperson, treasurer, communications lead, vendor coordinator, or event coordinator. Ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of their duties and how they contribute to the overall event.
- **Communication and Meeting Coordination:** Communication and collaboration among committee members is essential for a successful event. Establish a regular meeting schedule and choose communication channels that work best for the team, such as email, phone, or group chat apps. Regular meetings provide an opportunity to discuss progress, identify obstacles, and brainstorm solutions.
- **Planning and Execution:** The planning and execution phase is the core of organizing a self-reliance fair. It involves various tasks, including developing a budget, securing a venue, recruiting vendors and presenters, marketing the event, and managing logistics such as parking and setup. Start by deciding on the date, time, and location of the fair and develop a comprehensive budget that covers all expenses, such as venue rental, insurance, marketing materials, and vendor fees. Coordinate with vendors and presenters to ensure they have what they need to participate in the fair. Develop a marketing plan to promote the fair to the community and plan logistics, including parking, setup, and cleanup.



- **Permitting and Insurance:** Depending on the event's size and scope, you may need to obtain permits, licenses, or insurance coverage from local authorities. It's essential to secure all necessary permits and licenses well in advance of the fair. Additionally, you may need to purchase liability insurance to protect the organizers and participants of the event.
- **Volunteer Management:** Volunteers play a crucial role in the success of any event, including a self-reliance fair. Recruit volunteers and assign them tasks such as setting up booths, directing attendees, or cleaning up after the event. Make sure they understand their responsibilities and provide the necessary resources to complete their tasks.
- **Community Outreach:** To make the self-reliance fair a success, it's essential to get the support and involvement of community leaders and stakeholders. Reach out to local businesses, schools, churches, and other organizations to promote the event and encourage their participation. Collaborate with community leaders to identify areas of need and determine how the fair can best serve the community.



Fair Format



- **Topics for Booths/Tables/Classes:**

Consider what topics would be of interest to your community and fit within the theme of self-reliance and resilience. This could include topics such as emergency preparedness, sustainable gardening, homesteading skills, renewable energy, food preservation, and more. Try to ensure a balance of topics that appeal to a wide range of ages and interests.

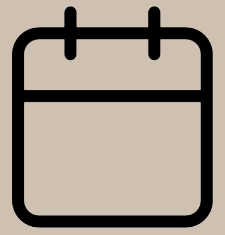


- **Presenters:** Look for presenters who are knowledgeable and passionate about their topic. This could include local experts, business owners, community leaders, or volunteers with experience in the field. Be sure to give presenters clear guidelines on their time slot and what equipment they need to bring.
- **Vendors:** Consider vendors that offer products or services that fit within the theme of self-reliance and resilience. This could include local farmers, artisans, or businesses that sell items such as heirloom seeds, beekeeping supplies, or solar panels. You may also want to consider inviting vendors to offer demonstrations or hands-on activities.
- **Sponsors:** Look for local businesses or organizations that are interested in sponsoring the event. Sponsorship can help cover the cost of the fair and provide additional resources such as advertising or equipment. In return, sponsors can receive recognition through signage, advertising, or social media.

- **Schedule:** Determine the schedule of events for the fair, including the timing of presentations, classes, and other activities. Be sure to allow enough time for attendees to visit all the booths and participate in the activities.
- **Setup:** Plan out the layout of the fair, including the placement of booths, tables, and other equipment. Be sure to consider factors such as traffic flow, accessibility, and safety. Provide vendors and presenters with clear instructions on when and where to set up.
- **Parking:** Consider the parking needs for attendees, vendors, and presenters. Determine where parking will be located and how attendees will be directed to the fair.
- **Cleanup:** Plan for cleanup after the fair is over. Determine who will be responsible for cleaning up booths and equipment, disposing of trash, and returning any borrowed equipment.



Logistics



- **Date and Time:** Choose a date and time that is convenient for attendees and vendors. Consider factors such as weather, holidays, and other events happening in the community that could impact attendance.
- **Schedule:** Develop a detailed schedule for the day of the fair, including set-up and take-down times, vendor arrival and departure times, and class/presentation schedules. Be sure to allow enough time for each activity and build in buffer time for unexpected delays or issues.
- **Location:** Choose a location that is accessible to attendees and vendors. Consider factors such as parking, public transportation, and proximity to other community resources.
- **Theme:** Determine a theme for the fair that fits within the broader topic of self-reliance and resilience. This can help guide the selection of topics, vendors, and presentations.
- **Budget:** Develop a budget for the fair that includes all anticipated expenses, such as venue rental, equipment rental, marketing, and permits. Be sure to also consider potential revenue sources, such as vendor fees, sponsorships, and donations.
- **Staffing:** Determine the staffing needs for the fair, including volunteers and paid staff. Assign specific roles and responsibilities, such as registration, traffic flow, or equipment setup.



- **Permits and Insurance:** Identify any necessary permits or licenses required for the event, such as a permit for outdoor activities or a license for food vendors. Ensure that appropriate liability insurance is also in place.
- **Equipment and Supplies:** Determine the equipment and supplies needed for the fair, such as tables, chairs, sound systems, and signage. Ensure that all necessary equipment and supplies are ordered or rented in advance.
- **Marketing:** Develop a marketing plan to promote the fair to potential attendees and vendors. Consider a mix of advertising channels, such as social media, print ads, and flyers.
- **Accessibility:** Ensure that the fair is accessible to all attendees, including those with disabilities. Consider factors such as wheelchair accessibility, accessible parking, and sign language interpretation.
- **Emergency Management:** Develop a plan to manage emergencies or unexpected situations that may arise during the fair, such as severe weather or medical emergencies. Assign specific roles and responsibilities for managing emergencies, such as contacting emergency services or evacuating the venue.



Facility



- **Location:** Choose a location that is easily accessible and has ample parking for attendees and vendors. Consider the size of the venue and the number of attendees and vendors expected. Make sure the location has adequate restroom facilities and meets any other specific needs of the fair.
- **Setup:** Plan the layout of the fair and determine where each vendor, booth, and presentation area will be located. Ensure that there is enough space for attendees to comfortably move around and interact with vendors and presenters.
- **Electricity and Lighting:** Determine the electricity needs for the event and ensure that there are enough outlets and power sources for vendors and presenters. Plan for lighting, especially if the event takes place in the evening.
- **Seating and Tables:** Arrange for seating and tables in areas where attendees can sit and participate in presentations or workshops. Ensure that there is enough seating for all attendees and that tables are arranged in a way that promotes easy movement and accessibility.
- **Signage:** Create signs and banners to help attendees navigate the event and find the various booths, presentations, and activities. Use clear and concise language and make sure the signs are visible from a distance. Consider using QR codes as a convenient way to provide attendees with access to event information and resources, such as maps, schedules, and contact information for vendors and presenters. QR codes can be displayed on signage throughout the event, as well as on marketing materials leading up to the fair.



- **Security:** Consider hiring security personnel to ensure the safety of attendees, vendors, and presenters. Determine whether or not a security deposit is required and make sure to communicate any security protocols or policies to everyone involved in the event.
- **Parking:** Plan for adequate parking and communicate parking instructions to vendors and attendees. Consider offering shuttle services or alternative transportation options if parking is limited or if the event is held in a congested area.
- **Cleanup:** Develop a plan for cleaning up after the event, including trash disposal, breakdown of tables and equipment, and any necessary repairs or maintenance. Communicate these expectations to vendors and volunteers and ensure that everyone knows their role in the clean-up process.
- **Weather Contingency Plan:** Consider the possibility of inclement weather and develop a contingency plan in case of rain, wind, or other adverse conditions. This might include renting tents or other shelter, rescheduling the event, or moving the event to an indoor location.

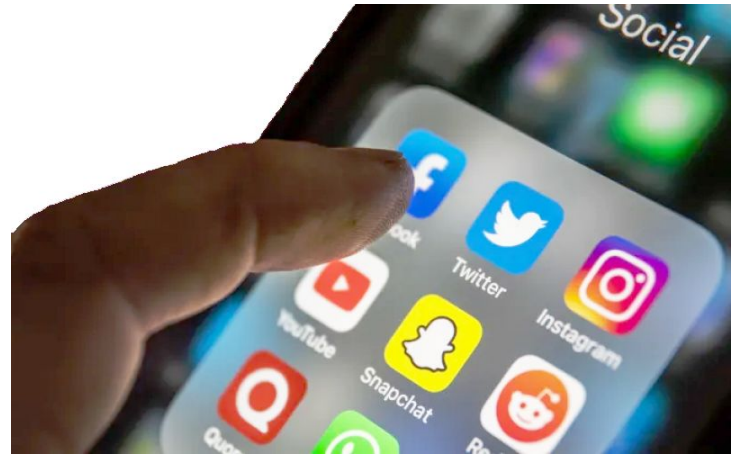
See page 13 for more information on how to secure a venue



Promote



- **Social Media:** Utilize social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to promote the self-reliance fair. Create event pages, share updates and photos, and encourage attendees and vendors to share their experiences and promote the event to their own networks.
- **Email Newsletters:** Develop an email marketing campaign to promote the fair to existing subscribers. This can include announcements, updates, and reminders leading up to the event.
- **Flyers and Posters:** Create flyers and posters to distribute in the local community, including public bulletin boards, local businesses, and community centers. Make sure the flyers and posters include essential information such as the date, time, location, and theme of the event.
- **Local Press:** Reach out to local media outlets, including newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations, to promote the fair. Offer to provide interviews, press releases, or other relevant information to help generate interest and coverage of the event.
- **Partner Organizations:** Reach out to partner organizations that share a common interest in promoting self-reliance and resilience within the community. This may include local nonprofits, community centers, or faith-based organizations. Encourage them to help promote the event to their own networks and communities.
- **Word of Mouth:** Encourage attendees and vendors to spread the word about the fair to their friends, family, and colleagues. Offer incentives for referrals, such as discounted vendor fees or free admission to the event.



- **Community Calendars:** List the fair on community calendars, both online and in print. This can help ensure that the event is visible to a wide range of potential attendees in the local community.
- **Sponsorship and Donations:** Seek out sponsors and donations from local businesses and individuals. This can help offset the costs of marketing and promotion, as well as other expenses associated with the event.
- **Street Teams:** Develop a street team of volunteers to distribute flyers and other promotional materials in high-traffic areas throughout the community. This can include public parks, shopping centers, and community events.
- **Paid Advertising:** Consider paid advertising options such as online ads, print ads, or billboards. Be sure to target your advertising efforts to reach your intended audience, and track the results to ensure that you are getting a good return on your investment.



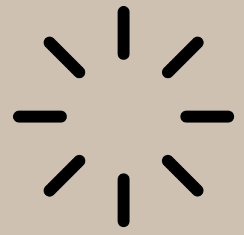
Day of the Fair



- **Setup:** Arrive early to set up booths, tables, and other equipment. Make sure each vendor or presenter has their designated area and necessary materials.
- **Welcome and Orientation:** Have a designated area to welcome attendees and provide them with any necessary information, such as maps and schedules of presentations or activities.
- **Security and Safety:** Have security personnel or volunteers monitor the event for safety issues, including potential hazards or emergencies.
- **Parking and Transportation:** Provide designated parking areas for attendees and consider offering shuttles or other transportation options to and from the event.
- **Food and Beverages:** If food will be served at the fair, make sure food vendors have proper permits and are following safety guidelines. Consider offering water stations throughout the venue to keep attendees hydrated.
- **Presentations and Activities:** Ensure that presenters and activity leaders are ready to start on time and have any necessary equipment or supplies. Consider having a backup plan in case of inclement weather or other unexpected issues.
- **Attendee Engagement:** Provide opportunities for attendees to engage with vendors, presenters, and each other. Consider offering interactive activities, games, or competitions.
- **Cleanup:** After the fair, make sure to clean up the venue and properly dispose of any waste or debris. Thank vendors, presenters, and volunteers for their participation and assistance.



More to Consider



- **Volunteer Management:** Recruit and train volunteers to help with various tasks before, during, and after the event. Ensure that volunteers are informed of their responsibilities and have the resources they need to carry them out.
- **Community Outreach:** Build relationships with local organizations and businesses to encourage participation and support for the event. Consider partnering with community groups to provide additional resources or services.
- **Incentives:** Consider offering incentives for attendees to participate, such as raffle prizes or free samples.
- **Compliance:** Make sure to comply with all local laws and regulations when planning and executing the event, such as zoning laws and health codes.
- **Contingency Planning:** Have contingency plans in place for potential issues, such as unexpected cancellations, low attendance, or inclement weather. Consider having backup presenters or activities in case of changes to the schedule.
- **Safety and Security:** Consider any potential safety hazards, such as tripping hazards or electrical risks, and take measures to mitigate them. Have a plan in place for responding to emergencies, including medical emergencies, severe weather, or security threats.
- **Evaluation and Feedback:** Collect feedback from attendees, vendors, and presenters to evaluate the success of the event and identify areas for improvement. Use this information to inform future events and make adjustments to the planning process.



Tips for Securing a Venue



- **Research the Options:** Identify potential venues that could accommodate the fair and meet with the necessary criteria such as size, location, accessibility, etc. Reach out to each venue to obtain information about availability, rental rates, and any necessary permits or contracts required. Some possible venue ideas include: schools, community centers, churches, parks, etc.
- **Schedule a Meeting:** Set up a meeting with the appropriate representative of the venue to discuss the fair, explain its goals, and outline the requirements of the event. Discuss any potential conflicts, limitations, or issues that may need to be addressed.
- **Review the Contract:** Carefully review any contract or rental agreement before signing. Ensure that it includes all relevant details, such as rental fees, security deposit, insurance requirements, and any restrictions or regulations.
- **Address Logistics:** Work with the venue representative to address logistical considerations such as parking, security, and cleanup. Identify any specific setup or teardown requirements and ensure that they are communicated to the necessary parties.
- **Confirm Arrangements:** Confirm all arrangements with the venue representative in writing, including the date and time of the fair, the setup and teardown schedule, and any other pertinent details. Keep the lines of communication open with the representative leading up to the event to ensure that everything runs smoothly.
- **Express Appreciation:** After the event, express appreciation to the venue representative and their staff for their assistance and support. This will help to establish a positive relationship for future events.

