



how to run a repair café/ workshop



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What is repair?

To repair means to fix or mend something so that it is in good working order again.

Why repair?

- A simple repair or a quick stitch here and there can save you money rather than having to buy new items.
- It can be very rewarding to mend something and have that sense of satisfaction.
- Mending something stops it going to landfill and harming the environment.
- If you're unsure of how to mend something, a friend or member of the family may be nifty with a needle and thread, or handy with a hammer or screwdriver.



- Lots of shops offer repair services – look on your high street, or search online or in local directories. If there's a re-use organisation near you, ask them if they do repairs (try www.revolvereuse.com)
- You may learn new skills which could be useful at home or to turn into a career.

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Planning a repair café/workshop

Who?

- Decide on your target audience/theme. For example, you could target young people with a clothing repair workshop to help them develop skills to mend their own clothes in future, or target elderly people with computer problems who may not have the skills/money to do complex repairs.

When?

- When you've decided on your audience, you can agree the best time of the day/week to hold your event.
- Give everyone plenty of notice to ensure they have time to find an item to bring along and don't go elsewhere to get it fixed.

Where?

- This may depend on the type of repair, for example, if you'll be working on furniture you may need a large workshop or hall where you can make a bit of a mess and have access to tools.
- If it's clothes, you won't need as much space, but might need space for tables, sewing machines etc. Consider locations such as village halls, community centres, workplaces, pub/hotel function rooms or council premises.
- There may be a charge, so worth checking out first (you could charge an admission fee to cover the hire costs).

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How?

- Advertise through the local press, social media, emails, posters, local radio, websites and don't forget word-of-mouth. Tell local organisations such as the council, schools, libraries etc as they may be able to advertise your event. Invite journalists.
- Make sure the advert is very clear as to what people can bring i.e. computers, phones, clothing, furniture, toys etc. There's no point in people bringing laptops if you don't have technical support there. Confirm whether people need to bring any tools and what the costs are.
- Be clear as to what people can expect i.e.
 - "We have a sewing tutor on hand to help you mend, alter and upcycle your clothing"

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- “Our computer expert can help with hard disk and file management, disk cleanup and defragmentation, PC optimisation, upgrading hardware, virus scanning, malware protection, spam avoidance and online security”.
- Consider if you just want to mend things for people, or teach them the skills to mend things themselves. Take pictures for inspiration and to advertise future events and PR.
- If there is a limited range of items to be repaired, consider a talk/demonstration to cover off common repairs to a wide audience in one go.
- Consider an entry fee to cover costs of venue/materials
 - Decide whether to just have a drop-in session, or get people to book slots, so you can ensure an expert is on hand to help them.
- Get appropriate experts such as woodworkers, seamstresses, computer troubleshooters etc.
 - Ensure the tools of the trade are available i.e. workbenches, sewing machines, needles, threads, tools etc.
- Consider whether to have refreshments to make for a more relaxed atmosphere (and keep people happy if they have to wait some time for the expert to come to them). You can always charge for them if necessary (but be clear about that on the advert).
- Arrange staff/volunteers to take money at the door, coordinate activities, make announcements.
- Arrange a float/cash box if money is going to change hands.

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After the event...

- Taking photos of the finished articles is useful for post-event PR and promoting future events.
- Evaluation; consider forms of evaluation in order to monitor the success of the project.
 - Weigh the items repaired and hence diverted from landfill.
 - Estimate the cost of buying new items versus the cost of the repaired items.
 - Pre- and/or post-event questionnaires could be used to gain feedback from participants such as rating the participants' enjoyment, their opinion of upcycling, whether they would be likely to upcycle more items in future as a result of the workshop etc.



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Useful links

www.ifixit.com
www.remadeinedinburgh.org.uk
www.diynetwork.com
www.facebook.com/UpRags2Riches

Bike Repair

www.thebikestation.org.uk
www.shrubcoop.org
www.recyke-a-bike.co.uk

Clothing Repair

www.loveyourclothes.org.uk



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Repair cafes

www.repaircafe.org
(for a fee you can get a starter kit).

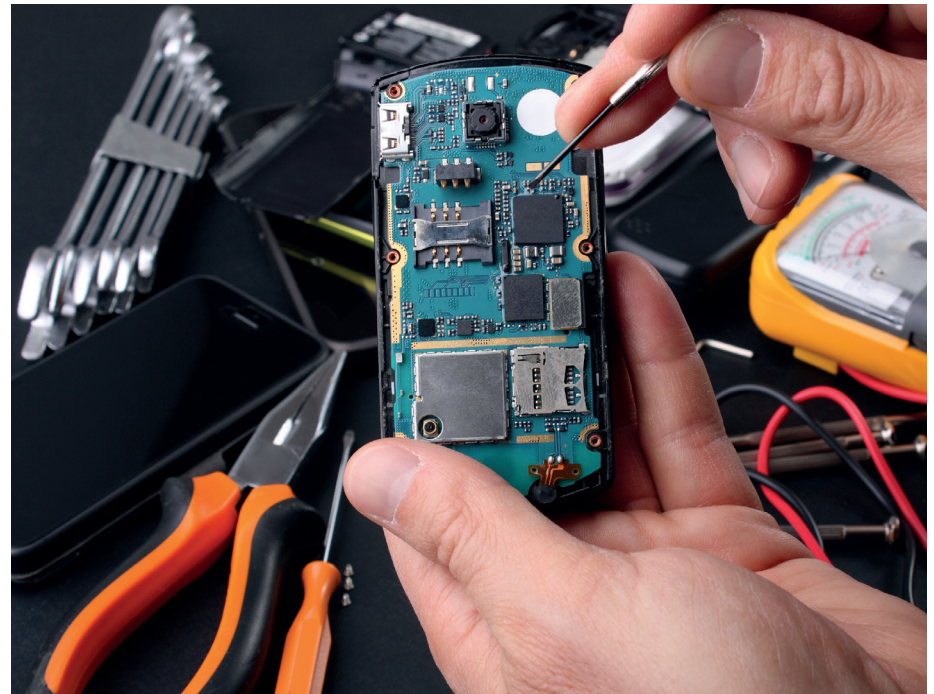
An example in England

www.facebook.com/bristolRepairCafe *

*NB. at the time of writing this, at their latest repair café, repairs had included a wooden duck, aeroplane (presumably not a commercial one), a dolls house and a coffee machine.

This link below has some excellent ideas around running a restart (repair) party.

<https://therestartproject.org/>



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Remade in Edinburgh

www.remadeinedinburgh.org.uk

Remade in Edinburgh run a number of workshops where you can learn the skills to repair a wide range of things including furniture, upholstery, leather, computer hardware and textiles.

These are a great opportunity to learn new skills, and also borrow the necessary equipment – saving everyone from buying items they might only need once in a while.

A member of the Zero Waste Scotland team attended the leather repair workshop, and managed to repair a briefcase and a bum bag – extending their life, eliminating the need to buy new ones, and developing the skills to fix them again in the future if necessary.

She also now knows that Remade has the tools, so if she needs to use them again, she can take items along to the repair surgery sessions.



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passitonweek.com

[#passitonweek](https://twitter.com/passitonweek)



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