



How to Start a Quilt Guild

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Define Guild:

Who may join the club?

- Everyone must be a competent, highly skilled quilter, or
- Anyone who quilts, wants to learn, or likes quilts regardless of their skills.

Define your Reason for Existence:

- Do you want to promote quilting?
- Do you want to form a club of people with similar interests in order that you might bring in teachers, films, etc.?
- Do you want to unite to share your knowledge, expertise, books, resources and tools?
- Do you wish to socialize?
- Do you have six or more people? A guild is an organization that needs working bodies. A group of quilters can gather without the organization of a guild and simply enjoy quilting.

But you want to form a Guild....Great!

You have defined Guild and you have decided why you wish to exist. Now you need:

- A Chairperson/Leader/President ... to lead your meetings and take responsibility as the head of your group.
- A Secretary... to keep minutes and write letters.
- A Treasurer/Membership... To keep track of your finances and your members, as well as to prepare a budget.
- Write down the duties of each person. Decide the chain of command. If your chairperson is away, who will take over

NOW YOU HAVE THE BEGINNINGS OF A GUILD

The Next Step is to Find:

- A MEETING PLACE that is open to the public unless you decide to have a closed guild.
- A DAY and a TIME that you as a group can agree on. You can have as many or as few meetings a year as you decide will work for you as a group.

Decide what you are going to do in the first six months of the year as it is best to have some idea of where you are going.... For example:

Will you teach one another?

Will you bring in a teacher?

Will you have a show?

Will you work on a special project?

Will you begin documenting local quilts and quilters?

Will you go out and educate the public at fairs, schools, centres, etc?

Whatever you decide as a group can change at any time and as you begin to see your guild as something else, you will simply decide as a group what the new definition of your function is and change your constitution if necessary.

Find a wonderful name for your group and call yourself:

The _____ Quilters' Guild

Plan your meeting:

Suggestion # 1: Call to order
 Business Meeting
 Show and Tell
 Program

As your group grows, you may add the following positions:

- A separate membership person
- A librarian
- A publicity chairperson
- An historian to keep track of our history and photos of activities
- A program chairperson to organize programs
- A workshop coordinator to plan workshops
- A newsletter editor
- A quilt show chairperson
- A vice president or vice chair
- A social convener

These people may be elected or volunteer. In the beginning, you may establish the term of a one year time limit until you decide what works best.

As soon as you become a Guild, keep records. Keep an up to date list of responsibilities and rules. These will become the basis for your constitution. Whenever something doesn't work, decide as a group how to proceed. When you become large or mature enough for a constitution, look at other club or group constitutions and bylaws.

A simple format to follow is:....

- Article 1 Name the organization
- Article 2 State the objectives
- Article 3 State the rules of membership, indicate special types, ie associate, senior
- Article 4 List the officers, and job descriptions.
- Article 5 List the officers that constitute the executive. Indicate how they are chosen and the length of their terms.
- Article 6 State the month of the Annual General Meeting. In this section, you usually include that the executive reports are due and that the nominating committee will hold the elections for the new executive.
- Article 7 This is where you state who shall chair if the chairperson is absent and how you will decide who is next in the chain of command. You may decide that a quorum may elect the chair at this time. Here you will decide what your quorum will be, and if it is related to the members present or the total membership.

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- Article 8 Decide when and how your financial report and books are to be audited. You may do it as simply as asking three members to go over the books.
- Article 9 The procedure for amending the constitution is included in this section. You will establish how much time your membership will be given in writing of changes as well as how changes can be presented. Usually you give written notice to your membership one month prior to the vote. You may also state whether the vote is by secret ballot, voice or show of hands. An amendment must also have ___% or ___# of the majority of the members present at the meeting to be carried. This percentage or number is your quorum.
- Article 10 All business meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (usually this is included as R.R.). These are Parliamentary Procedures and that is what we follow in this country. Buy or borrow your group the newest copy available as it is updated and simplified periodically. You might also invite someone in to talk about the rules and teach you how to apply them. The book is a soft cover one and as your group gets larger, it will speed up your business meeting so that you can have more time for the fun things.
- Article 11 Decide how you will handle the situation if someone has to leave before their term is up or how you will handle a situation where you wish to relieve someone of their duties with good reason.

The document, once it is accepted by your membership, becomes your constitution. Remember to live up to your constitution and give your membership enough time to make changes. The document should be signed and dated at acceptance. The constitution may be updated and modified as your group wishes, providing you follow the rules of the constitution regarding notification.

Remember if you pay the rent, your dues and the money you make will need to cover this item. When you look for a place, you will need to consider what your earning power is and what your members can afford in dues. Look at the community centres, church halls, schools, fabric shops, fibre studios or private homes. You may be able to get a bargain for your first meeting place. If you outgrow your present place, you will then have an idea of the kind of facility in which you would like to meet.

Good Luck

Remember that all guilds had to start somewhere and here you are on your way.

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