

# Your

# Big Aussie Swap

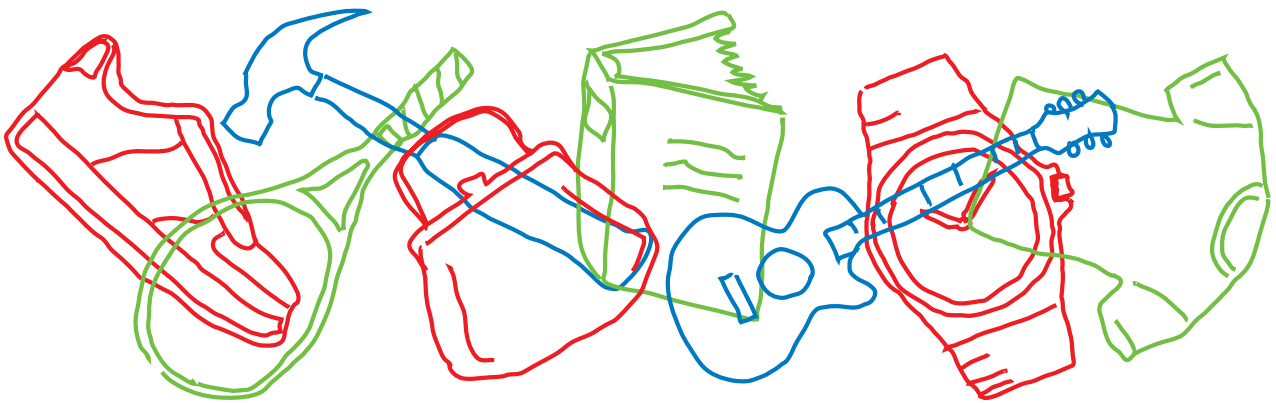


**NATIONAL  
RECYCLING WEEK**

**PLANET ARK**

## Party Survival Guide

**Everything you need to know to host a  
successful Big Aussie Swap Party for  
National Recycling Week 2011**



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Planet Ark and the City of Sydney have written this guide to provide you with ideas and tips for hosting a successful Big Aussie Swap Party, based on our experiences and learnings. We have tried to make this useful to councils holding Swap Parties of any size.

This guide also draws on the experiences of the 50 or so Big Aussie Swap Parties held during National Recycling Week 2009. Thanks to the 39 organisers who responded to our post-event survey, enabling us to share their evaluation results and lessons learnt.

Read on to find out the secrets to a successful Council Swap. There's also a detailed case study of the Swap Party hosted by Hornsby Council in northern Sydney, which shows how Swap Parties can meet community engagement and environmental goals. You can find the case study at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap).

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## The 10-step program

The 10 top things you need to know to throw a Swap Party.

Any Swap Party, no matter what size or theme, can benefit from early preparation. For a larger Swap Party, think about planning at least 6 to 8 weeks in advance. To lock in a high-profile venue, you may need to start thinking about securing it more than 8 weeks in advance. Smaller scale parties will take a little less time but bear in mind some elements such as promotional activities and printing can always take a little longer than expected to organise and produce.

1. **Decide on the type or theme of your Swap Party**
2. **Choose and book a venue**
3. **Hire equipment for the day**
4. **Approach your spokesperson**
5. **Promote your Swap Party**
6. **Plan the day with a 'runsheets'**
7. **Recruit and brief volunteers**
8. **Capture the day**
9. **Get feedback from participants, staff and volunteers, for an evaluation**
10. **Debrief, report and publish successes**

## Dear Swap Party Coordinator

*You might feel a bit daunted if you've never held a Swap Party before. Many people have heard of Swap Parties but have never been to one, let alone organised one. These parties have been around for a few years in the UK and the States, and are fast becoming popular in Australia.*

*For people involved in encouraging communities to tackle waste issues, a Swap Party holds many benefits. Looking back at our parties, we can pinpoint the greatest benefits they have given us. From our perspective, the beauty of a Swap Party is watching the message of Reuse delivered in an unforgettable and novel way to the people who come along and join in. It has been a brilliant way to get across the idea that waste is a valuable, and even desirable, resource.*

*Over the past three years, the City of Sydney has held more than ten Swap Parties, ranging from internal Swap Parties for staff, to giant public Swap Parties in Martin Place, and village-based Swap Parties in partnership with the City's community centres. They have all been meticulously planned and wonderfully chaotic, but in a good way - a way that feels like we are all in this together. Like a Myer sale. And how often do we get the chance to share an experience like that across councils in Australia?*

*We suppose there's only one tip we can give you that really matters. All other tips are helpful for planning but here's the big one that makes all the other ones obsolete if it's not taken seriously: Have Fun! We made fun our middle name from the word 'brainstorm'. Fun was the brief. Fun was the motto of the day. And it was no surprise to us that fun was the result.*

*We hope you have a tremendously fun time organising your Swap Party for National Recycling Week. Just don't forget to eye up a little something for yourself and bags it to swap on the day - such are the perks of being behind the trestle table!*

**The Zero Waste Marketing Team, the City of Sydney**



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# What is a Swap Party?

A Swap Party is an event where participants bring good quality items they no longer want and **exchange them for other items**. Participants exchange their items for **tokens** and once all the items are displayed, participants browse and swap the tokens for items brought by other people.

Swap Parties generally work best when participants are given specific times for the different elements of the event. This includes: An 'arrival and registration' time when participants hand over their items in exchange for tokens. During this time they can browse (but not take) the items brought by others; an 'opening' time, when the swapping begins and participants can take items and an end time when the event is wrapped up.

Sample programs could look like:

## An 'boutique' event:

- 1 hour before Swap opens– Arrival, Registration and Browsing (eg 11am - 12pm or 6 - 7pm)
- Swap opens – Swapping, Announcements, Recycling/Environmental Information (eg 12 - 1pm or 7 - 8pm)
- 1 hour after Swap opens – Event Closes

## A public place, day-time event (for busy CBD and door locations)

- 11:30 – 12:30 – Arrival, Registration, Browsing (you could also have recycling information, stalls, entertainment etc during this time)
- 12:30 – 1:30 – Swapping, Announcements, Vox Pops (casual interviews with participants), and so on
- 1:30 – Event Closes

A problem with having an event that runs all day (eg, 9 am to 4pm) is that the early birds will be disappointed that there are not many items for them to swap. They can take their tokens away and bring them back later but this is likely to leave them feeling like the event hasn't been successful.

## Joining in the Big Aussie Swap

Planet Ark invites your council to hold a Big Aussie Swap Party any time during National Recycling Week 2011 (7 – 13 November) or a few days on either side of the week.

There's one golden rule for being part of the Big Aussie Swap: your event needs to be open to the local community. If you are holding a Swap Party with a certain theme, like women's clothes, or children's books and toys, it's fine for the Swap to be open to just the relevant segment of the community.

Swap Parties come in all shapes and sizes - your Swap Party does not have to fit a particular mould, or adhere to everything in this guide.

## Getting started

Once you have made the decision to host a Swap Party, a good place to start is an initial meeting with the people in your Council who will be involved in helping to make your Swap Party a success. For example, you may want to invite a colleague responsible for media activity or one that looks after a potential venue you may have in mind. Consider a collaborative approach for generating creative ideas and use the initial meeting with colleagues to help scope your event.

Your initial meeting could explore the topics which are critical to shaping your event such as:

- Picking the right venue and time
- Choosing the type of Swap Party
- Promoting the event
- Managing the event on the day

## Targeting participants

Before the meeting, it might be useful to clarify who it is you would like to attend the Swap Party. This will help determine which venue and location you choose and the type of party you have.

The City of Sydney engages regularly with residents, however, for National Recycling Week 2008 and 2009, the City saw the event as an opportunity to **broaden its engagement activity** to include the wider community and in particular, engage businesses. For this reason, the City of Sydney chose Martin Place, a busy lunchtime square in the middle of the CBD, as the venue for the Swap Party.



Swappers at Moonee Valley's Big Aussie Swap 2009



## Brain-picking

If you are organising the event by yourself, you can always refer to ideas from others who have held Swap Parties before and even contact Planet Ark or the City of Sydney if you would like to talk over any ideas you have. Think about getting in contact with neighbouring councils to share ideas as well.

## Themed Swap Parties

Depending on who you're targeting, different types of Swap Parties may be more suitable for your participants. For example, if you were engaging more with the school community, you may wish to hold a toy swap or book swap. Another popular theme includes a clothes swap.

The City of Sydney wanted to attract a **wide range of participants** to its Swap Party and chose to have a **general swap** with a wide range of items including clothes, books, DVDs, CDs, bric-a-brac and more. Participants were told to bring 'Up to three, good quality items, that you can carry.' As a result, a broad demographic attended.

Whatever type of Swap Party you have, it's a good idea to give examples of what kind of items people can bring. The City of Sydney has had enquiries in the past from people who have wanted to know specifically what was acceptable. Remember that some people have not previously attended a Swap Party, but once they know how it works, they are often highly enthusiastic and will go home to 'spring clean', scout out and prepare their items for the event.

## Choosing the right venue

The biggest milestone is securing the right venue for your party. Choose the venue that suits the theme of your party and your targeted participants. If you're appealing to older students and younger demographics, consider holding the swap at a university hall. Thinking of a book swap? Why not hold it at a library?

If you are having a 'Women's clothes and accessories' Swap Party, have the party at an indoor venue like a community hall or library so it is private and you can set aside a change area. Hornsby Council in Sydney has hosted four of these events – a case study of their experiences is available at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap).

Swap Parties can also be held in outdoor locations. Councils from the City of Sydney, Coffs Harbour, Wollongong, Darwin, Perth and many more have held successful outdoor events during National Recycling Week.



Swappers at the 2009 Big Aussie Swap in Newtown

## Format and budget

Your Big Aussie Swap Party can be **tailored to meet your local needs**, budget and resources.

*Your Swap Party can be as big or as little as you would like. It can also take any format that works best for your council.*

Below are three suggested formats to help you decide what type of Swap Party will be right for you. For any of these formats, consider holding a recycling collection at the event. In your promotions, you can call on people to bring items like printer cartridges, eye glasses or mobile phones to collect for recycling. See if you can join forces with local collection services (find them on [RecyclingNearYou.com.au](http://RecyclingNearYou.com.au)) for eye glasses or contact MobileMuster for mobile collections. Check the status of your 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' collection box or sign up for one on 1800 24 24 73.

### A – The Boutique Swap

The Boutique is a **Swap Party in an enclosed space** such as a community hall, library or council chamber, with a limited number of participants eg. 100 to 150, who may need to RSVP before the event. This type of event is highly cost-effective and can even be tailored to specific audiences and items like 'women's clothes and accessories', 'kids toys and clothes' or 'books, CDs and DVDs'.

Think about running this type of event at a time that suits the theme of the party and who you plan to attract. For example, 'kids' toys and clothes' could be a daytime



event, and 'women's clothes and accessories' could be an evening event. A short and sweet event works best for the Boutique. For example, encourage people to arrive between 6 and 7pm to register and hand in their items which are then taken and displayed by staff. During this time, you could have recycling educational resources on display or offer catering (if it suits) and make it a **social networking opportunity**. The Swap could then open at 6:30 and conclude at 7:30pm.

True to its name, the Boutique Swap Party is definitely all class!

*Hornsby Council in northern Sydney has run at least four of these events. You can find a Case Study of their experiences at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap)*

## B – The Swapaholic Swap

The Swapaholic caters for those who can't resist a little retail therapy. It's a Swap Party **held in a public place like a local mall or shopping centre**, where undiscovered swapaholics tend to hang out.

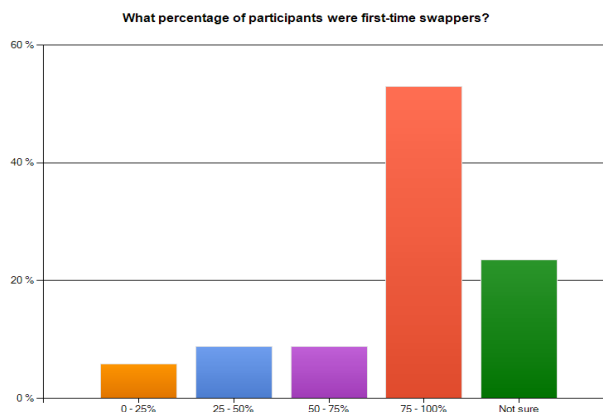
Choose a public place event in a local mall or shopping centre with lots of foot traffic as a venue. To increase the educational benefit you could include a recycling information stall. The Swap Party will draw in curious passers-by and you will be able to engage them at the stall and dazzle them with your educational materials and demonstrations.

This type of event can be stretched out a little longer than the Boutique. You could run your stall(s) for an hour on either side of the Swap Party and catch the 'peak hours' of traffic in the mall around lunch.

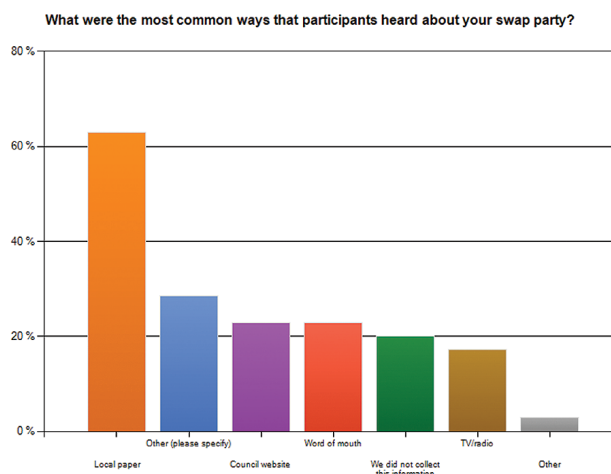
A 'Full Bells & Whistles' event could include a recycling or environmental expo, a stage, a host/MC and entertainment. You can even invite businesses and community groups to have a presence on the day. The centrepiece of this type of event is still the Swap Party itself, which should be held at lunchtime to make it convenient for people to attend.

Work with your media team to get the local media there on the day. Results from the 2009 Big Aussie Swap parties showed that the local press was the most common referral method followed by council website.

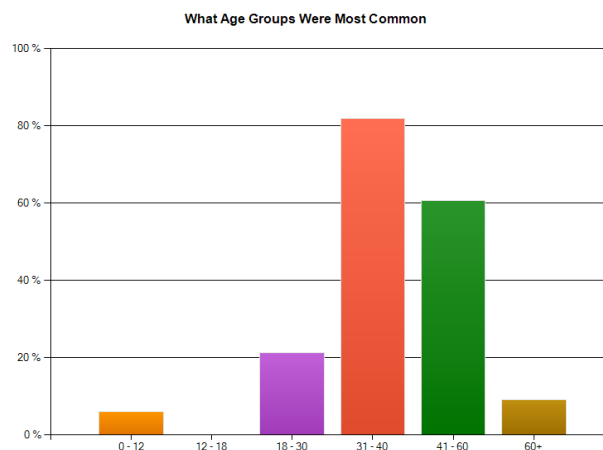
In 2009, most participants had never been to a swap party before.



Most participants heard about their local Swap from their local paper.



Councils were asked to nominate the most common age group at their swap.



## Potential costs

The cost of your Swap Party will depend on the type and scale of event you choose. You can hold a Swap Party for as little as a few hundred dollars. However, if you're thinking of a Bells & Whistles event, you may want to consider the potential costs of several elements:

- Event infrastructure – eg. trestle tables, stalls, stage, audio equipment
- Exhibition fees – eg. for commissioning an exhibition on recycled art
- Venue hire – eg. if the venue is not on Council property
- Advertising and materials – eg. street banners, press advertising, signage
- Waste services – eg. general waste and recycling service
- Catering – eg. drinks or snacks if it's a more intimate event
- MC hire – eg. for professional services
- Entertainment hire – eg. for a band
- Staffing – eg. staff working after hours

## Ideas to help reduce costs

If you have your heart set on having a large-scale event, there are still many ways you can make your dollar go further.

### Leveraging national publicity

Planet Ark will be driving national media activity so the more you tap into these opportunities, the earlier you begin your local media activity, the more coverage and publicity you will receive and the less you will need to put towards advertising.

### Use the Adaptable Promotional Resources

Planet Ark has developed a range of adaptable ads, posters and other resources that you can use, free of charge, to promote your event. There is space on each resource for your event's details and logo. You can find these resources at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap).

### Sweet-talking your colleagues

You may also find that your colleagues will be more than happy to volunteer on the day, thereby reducing any staffing costs. Staffing costs can also be reduced by working with local community groups. Hornsby Council in Sydney co-hosts Swap Parties with the local Anglicare. The community group can provide volunteer staff in exchange for money raised through a small entry fee (gold coin or \$5 - \$10) or donation bucket.

### Building partnerships with businesses

Consider building partnerships for the Big Aussie Swap. Is there a privately operated property, like a large public square or office building foyer that has caught your eye? If you think it's a good venue, approach businesses about co-hosting the event. Every year,

businesses around the country participate in National Recycling Week and Planet Ark receives many requests from businesses on how they can be more involved.

If you're holding an expo, you may also wish to get businesses involved in holding a stall and partly 'sponsor' the equipment hire or infrastructure on the day.

*Get the most of your budget and Swap Party by brainstorming creative ideas with colleagues, prioritising publicity and planning your party early.*

## Planning Your Swap Party

### Infrastructure and equipment

Equipment is everything from a trestle table or clothes rack to a stall or marquee, and will need to be considered carefully to make your day run smoothly.

### Tables for display

Make sure you have enough **tables** for the expected size of the crowd. You'd be surprised at how quickly the space can fill up with items. You may also want to set aside a **registration** area (tables or stall) where people can hand in their items and pick up their tokens.



Registration at the 2009 Big Aussie Swap in Canberra, hosted by Jones Lang LaSalle



It's a small detail, but think of using plain, black or white **tablecloths**. A tablecloth will lift a dreary trestle table on the day and help provide a backdrop for the items, which makes it easier on the eye for those browsing.

If your Swap Party is outdoors, opt for **a marquee** over your trestle tables. The Big Aussie Swap is during summer and for some Councils it will be the wet season. If it's not raining, the roof still offers protection from sun.

### Hanging displays

If clothes are the theme, you might want to think about **borrowing clothes racks**, hangers and if you're super keen, arrange a space with a hanging curtain where people can privately try on items.

### Carry bags

You won't need to worry too much about carry bags because people commonly bring their items in bags which they then use to carry away new items. But it's a good idea to keep a stash of reusable bags on the day just in case. Prior to the Swap Party, why not call out for a **bag amnesty** at work? You may find that many people have accumulated an excess of reusable shopping bags (or boutique shopping bags) at home and can contribute a few for the Swap.

### For larger events

If you're holding a larger scale event, consider getting an **event management company** to coordinate all the elements such as the sound system and stage production, stall set up and security / safety.

*You can never have too many trestle tables. More table space means you can spread out items neatly. It gives people a chance to see everything that's up for grabs and it helps you keep a better eye on things.*

### Emcee and spokesperson

No matter how big or small the party, having a host or MC for the event is always a good idea. You may not need to hire professional services – as there may be a colleague from your organisation that may be able to host the Swap Party. Having a host or MC can tie the

event together by helping participants get a sense of timing and getting them revved up for the event. They can also provide recycling information, interview the local waste/environmental officers or draw attention to any education materials or resources you have displayed around the venue.

Think about ways you can **involve your Mayor** on the day. Maybe s/he could launch the event or donate an item to be swapped.



City of Sydney's Lord Mayor, Clover Moore, at the 2008 Big Aussie Swap in Sydney

### Staff and volunteers

You may find that people from work will gladly volunteer to help on the day of the Swap Party. A Swap Party is a fun event and if you start recruiting volunteers a few weeks in advance, you may just attract a hoard of eager colleagues to pitch in. Alternatively, you could approach local community groups like Lions Clubs, Country Women's Association or Surf Life Saving Clubs. In return for their labour you might charge a gold coin entry (for indoor events) to the Swap Party as a fundraiser for the community group.

It's good to brief your staff and volunteers thoroughly before the event and also to look after their needs on the day. For example, when briefing staff, consider a role-play to take them through the action of giving out and redeeming tokens. If you're holding an outdoor event, be prepared with a supply of sunscreen and water. You may also want to provide them with FAQs and the Swap Party Rules so they can answer any sticky questions from participants that might come their way.

For the ultra-organised, think about **allocating tasks and roles** to various staff and volunteers. For example, you might want certain staff to collect tokens whilst others can arrange items on tables or be the liaison for your spokesperson. Other roles might be photographer or a 'meet and greet' person that ushers participants to where they need to go.



In 2009 the City of Sydney had about 20 volunteers for 500 swappers. Volunteers wore matching t-shirts so they could be easily identified. The key tip is to err on the safe side. Welcome additional volunteers – it's better to have ample bodies on the day – especially at the start of the Swap Party. You can always relieve staff as the party is winding down.



## Event management

It's often the case that whoever organises the Swap Party has responsibility for the overall event management. Be aware that holding public place events usually requires filling in an application to your council or the venue / space owner. It might pay to **enquire about the protocol and process** for this early on. This application can take longer than you think and may require you to get expert advice to tick off necessary prerequisites. For example, if you are overseeing the site and managing the event yourself, you might need to conduct a risk assessment for the day and address any Occupational Health and Safety requirements for your Council.

*Remember to address your Council's OHS requirements for holding public place events.*

## Waste management

You may want to consider how the waste generated at the event will be managed. Whether you are holding the event indoors or at an outdoor public place, providing recycling services is relevant to the theme, especially if your event is visibly located in a high-traffic area. If you're concerned about levels of contamination, consider trialing some of your ideas for public place or event recycling. This could mean setting up a bin system to collect and recycle just drink containers for instance, if it's a crowded lunchtime area.

## On the day

A running order or production timetable for the day is always your lifeline at any event. It lets everyone know exactly what's happening at every minute and this may be most important if a Mayor is expected to arrive and be onstage. If it's a large event, provide lanyards with mobile phone details in case you need to make contact with helpers. It is sometimes overlooked, but an important tip is to charge your mobile phone the night before the event.

# Running the Swap

## Swap Party rules

It's important to set some ground rules and make them clear to participants and staff so that **expectations are managed**. Some rules involve what participants can bring, how many items will be accepted, the duration of the party and what happens if two people want the same item.

Send the rules and parameters for your Swap Party around to staff and volunteers before the event. It can be useful to have a printed rule sheet on hand at the table where items are handed in, to help explain the system to punters. A generic Swap Party Rules sheet has been produced by Planet Ark and is available for download at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap). This can be printed and displayed at the event.

## Avoiding leftovers

Carrying out a few key steps helps to ensure the swap process runs smoothly and that all goods have a place at the end of the Swap Party:

- **Limit the number of items** people can bring, this helps to ensure that people don't bring an excessive amount and use the party as a way to offload junk
- **Specify that people bring quality items only** and reinforce this by letting them know that their items will be checked
- After the party dies down, **consider giving the items away** without exchanging for tokens. This works well for larger swaps in open public spaces as passers-by can join in, browse for items and take them away for free
- Have a backup plan for leftover items by contacting local charities like Vinnies or the Salvation Army to let them know you will be **donating leftover items**. Ensure charities that the items will be of quality and think about post-party operations such as **transporting the items** to the charity



In previous years, the City of Sydney has used the above rules and in all cases, the organisers have been left with just a small carry bag worth of items, which they have donated to charity.

*Prevent the dumping ground syndrome – limit the number of items people can bring, specify ‘Good Quality Items’ and have a backup plan for leftovers*

## Quality control

Even though quality items are specified, it's still a good idea to inspect the items as they're presented at the Swap Party. At times, what is a quality item depends on interpretation, so you may have to make common sense decisions on the day. All items should essentially be functional, unbroken and in good condition. If you think that an item is not up to scratch, let participants know politely that their item has been rejected. A good tip is to check items that may contain contents such as CD and DVD cases, as sometimes the contents may be missing.

## Two people, one item

It is common for popular items to be in demand by more than one person. If two people want the same item, think about **putting in place a fair system** to decide who gets it. There are a range of systems you can use. For two people, get a volunteer to adjudicate a game of 'Rock, Paper, Scissors' or toss a coin. The winner of the game gets to keep the item. If more than two people are involved, try pulling names out of a hat or play 'pick a number', where you write down a number between 1 and 100, then award the item to the person who guesses closest to this number.

*‘Rock, Paper, Scissors’, ‘pick a number’ or drawing names from a hat are fun and fair ways of deciding who gets to keep an item if more than one person wants it.*

## Token system

Tokens are given to participants in exchange for the items they bring in. Swappers then redeem their tokens to claim other items.

### Using reused paper

The City of Sydney produced tokens on reused paper left over from faxes or expired letterhead paper. Tokens can be small pieces of reused paper or can be made of other reusable items such as old playing chips or buttons. No matter what the token is made of, it's still a good idea to make it unique to your council and not easily reproduceable. If you're planning on having regular Swap Parties, you can use any excess tokens next time.

To increase the educational value of the event you can include recycling or re-use information on the token. Planet Ark has prepared a range of downloadable tokens you can print out and use. They are available at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils)

### Providing extra value

As tokens will be provided to every participant, they are a good channel to help promote your services, workshops or message. Why not print an offer on part of the token, which can be torn off and kept as a 'receipt' when people 'cash-in' their tokens.

### Token worth

The City of Sydney made every item the value of one token. 1 token = 1 item. This was to simplify the process and make operations easier on the day. However, you may like to categorise your items into different token values. For example, general items books, CDs and DVDs can be worth one token, however, you might want to allocate more tokens to premium items such as an authentic classic Chanel handbag. Even though part of the process will rely on making a judgement call on the day, you can agree with your staff and volunteers prior to the event how to make the decision.



*Make your token go the extra mile – photocopy an offer or educational message on one half of the token, which people can keep and use*

## Crowd control

Swap Parties are usually crowded at the beginning of the party. Some swaps can be extremely busy in the first 15 mins and tend to peter out soon after. A Swap Party has a similar vibe to a sale. Because of the fun nature of Swap Parties, people are generally in great spirits and are self-moderating on the day. Nonetheless, it's a good idea to **ensure your staff and volunteers are briefed to expect and manage a crowd of people** presenting items and tokens. For example, when a Swap Party 'opens', staff can be overwhelmed by a sea of waving tokens as people may have already been browsing and know exactly what they want to swap. In this situation, you can prepare your staff by advising them to maintain eye contact with only one person at a time – this helps to make an exchange efficient.

Just before the Swap Party opens, it's a nice touch to have a **Countdown**. For an event that's held at a particular time, like New Year's Eve, a countdown builds excitement and camaraderie.

## Communications and marketing

Planet Ark makes it easy for you to promote your Swap Party by providing ready-made pieces of artwork and media templates, which help get you started with the process. However, it still pays to plan your promotional activities well in advance to maximise coverage and exposure. Planning early will also give you time to think of ideas which don't necessarily cost a lot in budget, but may require some time to put together.

### Communication channels

Once you've decided on your Swap Party rules and venue, publish the information as early as possible. Think about your Council's existing communication channels and particularly your **website**.

**Channels can include:** Council newsletters and websites, community centres, libraries, customer service centres, social networking websites like Facebook, outdoor advertising such as bus shelter advertising and street banners, and local press and radio advertising.

## Register Your Event

Register your Swap Party on Planet Ark's National Recycling Week website. All of the national media generated by Planet Ark (like TV and radio community service announcements) will direct people to this site to check out what their council is doing, so make sure your information is up to date. If you aren't sure how to do this call the RecyclingNearYou Hotline on 1300 733 712. Other NRW related events, like MRF tours, workshops etc can also be listed on the site.

In 2009, the most common way that participants heard about their local Swap Party was through local media.



## Producing materials

### Future-proofing

When producing materials, design for reuse in mind. For example, if you can avoid listing the date on materials, such as event banners, it will save resources as you can reuse them if you choose to hold another Swap Party.

### In the spirit of recycling

The City of Sydney produced flyers on reused paper by printing them internally. The flyers were then distributed in public places near the venue over two days prior to the Swap Party.



**Materials can include:** posters to be placed at community centres; event banners; signs at the Swap Party to indicate the table where people hand in their items; flyers for leafleting surrounding areas.

*To save resources, the City of Sydney designed street banners that weren't dated, meaning they could be reused.*

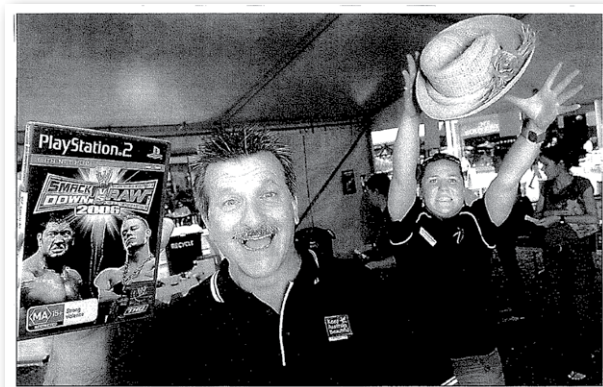


## Media and publicity

Use Planet Ark's media release template and build on it by thinking of creative ways to publicise the Swap Party. Pitch your stories to the local media early. For example, is there a local celebrity you can involve? If so, you can ask them for a quote to include in the press release, donate an item, or even better – invite them to participate on the day.

Attract media interest by highlighting some of the unique and wonderful items people can hope to find. The Swap Party rules including 'Rock, Paper, Scissors' can also be an interesting angle. Some unusual items from the City of Sydney's Swap Party included a commemorative plate of Prince Charles and Princess Di, a bicycle, a pram and even a pair of Prada shoes. It's a good idea to use these quirky facts alongside a staged photo to enhance your pitch.

The use of these strategies in 2009 meant that councils across the country received great local coverage. Around Australia there were 165 newspaper articles and 113 radio news or radio program mentions about Big Aussie Swap Parties.



**GOOD DEAL:** Helm Schober and Shelley Inglis dropped down to the Darwin City Council swap meet in Raintree Park. Picture: BRAD FLEET

**Rife swapping: Punters eager to turn trash into treasure**

TERRITORIANS discovered that one person's trash can be another's treasure at the inaugural Darwin City Council Big Aussie Swap Party in Darwin on November 11.

Items to swap with other people's unwanted items.

A flurry of people took part and traded in their junk, including shoes, a note on it saying 'new – never been used'.

She had traded in a 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle for the plastic ice seat.

It is a initiative to save water, to conserve resources, to reduce contamination and to combat climate change by reducing carbon emissions.

She said any items left over from the swap party would be donated to the Australian Red Cross.

— REBEKAH CAVANAGH

**Join the party and swap those unwanted goods**

SWAP is the time to start rearranging your wardrobe, shed, garage, under the house, in the back of cupboard and under the bed – or that you can take part in the Big Aussie Swap Party in Darwin Harbour on November 11 during National Recycling Week.

"All of us have good quality items or clothes around the house that we no longer want or use, but someone else can," said Stephen Saward, Council's General Manager.

"Swapping your unwanted goods and finding something you want at the same time is the ultimate way to recycle."

The environmental benefits to swapping rather than discarding unwanted items, one that keeps quality resources in use and out of landfill. In addition, recycling items saves water, saves on energy and reduces carbon emissions.

The Council's Harbour Big Aussie Swap will be held in City Square, Darwin, on November 11 from 11.30am to 1.30pm.

What can be swapped? Clothes, shoes, jewellery, books and magazines, toys and games, and more. No broken items, electrical goods or children's toys.

Anyone coming along can drop off and take home up to five items. People who pick up something of value will be thanked to make a donation to the South Darwin charity on the day.

The City of Darwin Big Aussie Swap will be held in City Square, Darwin, from 11.30am to 1.30pm.

What can be swapped? Clothes, shoes, jewellery, books and magazines, toys and games, and more. No broken items, electrical goods or children's toys.

Anyone coming along can drop off and take home up to five items. People who pick up something of value will be thanked to make a donation to the South Darwin charity on the day.

For more information about swapping go to [www.cofdarwin.com.au](http://www.cofdarwin.com.au)



Council staff have already begun swapping for a

**It's time to swap 'til you drop**

THE date for the Big Aussie Swap Party is fast approaching and it's a time to turn the odds for this fun event which will be the counterpart of City of Sydney's National Recycling Week.

"All of us have good quality items or clothes around the house that we no longer want or use but someone else can," said Councillor John Ackles.

"Swapping your unwanted goods and finding something you want at the same time is the ultimate way to recycle."

Plus there is the added benefit of anyone something to and reduce carbon emissions.

The City of Darwin Big Aussie Swap will be held in City Square, Darwin, from 11.30am to 1.30pm.

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Anyone coming along can drop off and take home up to five items. People who pick up something of value will be thanked to make a donation to the South Darwin charity on the day.

## Treasures at Swap Party

TRANSFORMING unwanted goods into sought-after items, Ipswich residents can browse for new treasures at the upcoming Big Ipswich Swap Party.

Held as part of National Recycling Week, the event is an initiative of the Ipswich City Council and Ipswich Waste Services and will take place on November 11 from 10am at the Ipswich Showgrounds.

City Works Committee Chairperson Councillor Trevor Nank said as part of the free event, residents could swap up to five unwanted items from home for items brought along by other people.

"People just go armed with goods they would like to swap, and exchange them for the things they do want for a book they want to read or a cricket bat for their grandsons," Councillor said.

Councillor Nank said recycling and reducing waste usually went to landfill was the key message of the week.

"It's tempting just to put unwanted but still useful items in the bin, but that means they just end up in landfill," he said.

The Big Ipswich Swap Party will also include a range of activities such as a trash-and-treasure workshop for children six years and under, a give away of 100 plants to the first 100 Ipswich residents and an appearance by environmental advocate Slavery Thomson (better known as Ranger Slavery from Channel Ten's *Ronny Hill*) in MC.

Visit [www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/swap](http://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/swap).



SWAP PARTY: Coral Murrill (left) and Ruth Thomson show here it will be done at the Big Ipswich Swap Party on November 11.

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Current location: Home » News » Clover's eNews 472 » Join In The Swap Party For National Recycling Week

**Join In The Swap Party for National Recycling Week**  
From eNews 472 - Friday, 6 November 2009

National Recycling Week, now in its fourteenth year, begins on Monday. Coordinated by Planet Ark, with the City as a major supporter, the event encourages us to reuse and recycle, reducing unnecessary waste and the amount we send to landfill.

I invite you to join me at this year's "Big Aussie Swap Party" in Martin Place on Tuesday 10 November, and to clean out your office and recycle old papers in next Friday's "File Fling".

**Clover Moore MP**  
INDEPENDENT

Working for Sydney  
Animal Welfare  
Arts & Culture  
City Economy



## Evaluation

*Planet Ark will send a council evaluation survey to each council with a registered Swap Party.*

It's best practice to evaluate the day. A quick survey of participants will help assess key areas like where they heard about the event, whether they are residents, whether they would come to another Swap Party and whether they are satisfied. You can ask the key questions as people register their items or have roving surveyors.

A sample of evaluation questions is available on [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils)

As this is a national event, it would be fantastic if we could collate the results. Planet Ark will send a council evaluation survey to every registered Swap Party organiser, around or after National Recycling Week. The survey will ask you to identify:

- The number of items swapped
- The number of participants
- The percentage of participants who were first-time swappers
- How participants heard about the event.

The more detailed feedback we can get from your event the better we can assess the success of the Big Aussie Swap parties across the country.

A council evaluation form is also available on [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap).

## Capturing the day

In the past, video was considered a premium option for public communications; however, you would be surprised at how cost-effective it can be and how it can make an impact as an **additional resource in your educational toolkit**. You can host the video on the Council website, as well as loading it up on YouTube and social networking sites. The video can be shown at presentations to demonstrate how a Swap Party works and encourage others to hold one for themselves.

Think about filming your event and involving any budding videographers or those in film school who would be willing to do it as a project. Otherwise, there are several videographers in Australia with services that are reasonably-priced.

The City of Sydney produced a low-budget video of the Swap Party by getting staff behind the camera on the day.

Watch a video of the City of Sydney's 2008 Swap Party on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4jK9XPVvJg>

If a video is not possible, still ensure that you capture the day with photos.

If you do feature any individual in photos or videos, ensure that you have the participant's signed and authorised permission to use their image. The City of Sydney has developed a 'talent release form' for this purpose and can provide it to you with a template if needed.

## After the event

Soon after the event, hold a debrief meeting with any stakeholders to evaluate outcomes while the event is still fresh in your mind.

When initially planning your event, set your evaluation indicators, think of ways to gather the information you will find useful and revisit them at the end. Some information that is important for educational purposes include: how many participants attended, the knowledge participants gained from the event, how many visits you received to your website, how participants heard about the event, how many tokens were dispensed, as well as feedback from staff, volunteers and other event partners about what went well and what could have worked better.

You can also benefit by publishing a follow up story using your communication channels to provide feedback to the public and stakeholders about the success of your Swap Party.

