



Hosting Your Own

Swap Party

What is a Swap Party?

Swap Parties are the latest way to update your wardrobe or cupboard without buying new things. At a Swap Party, a group of people get together to swap items – from clothes to toys, books to sports equipment. The phenomenon become famous with glamorous ‘swishing’ parties of high-fashion clothes, but the concept is simple and can be adapted to suit any group of people and product.

It’s fun, free and green. You just:

1. Bring along good quality, clean items you no longer want,
2. Register each item in exchange for a token,
3. Browse what others have brought;
4. Then swap your tokens back for new items.

Swap Parties make acquiring new things into a fun, interactive event, which also reduces the environmental impact through recycling products. Swap Parties are easily adapted to suit any type of swap items and group of people:

- friends and family at home
- colleagues at work
- weight watchers groups
- sports clubs
- play group or pre-schools.

In fact, any type of gathering!

Check out the case studies of preschool and friends & family swap parties held over the last year at RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/involvement/swap.cfm

Environmental benefits

Recycling takes items you have finished with and puts them back into circulation. By passing your clothes, accessories or equipment on to others, you are diverting materials from landfill thus conserving resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Reusing a product, rather than buying a new one, reduces the demands for water, energy and raw materials. This reduces the impact on the environment.

Ready to recycle? Our steps make it easy to host your own Swap Party...

Swap Party Options

- Go for the simple clothing and accessories or splash out!

Mums & Bubs

- Pregnancy clothes
- Kids clothes
- Kids toys & books
- Kids sports gear

Sporty

- Sports gear
- Clothes
- Tools

Stylish

- Smart office wear
- Upmarket casual clothes
- Wedding outfits

Bonanza!

- Clothing
- Belts, bags, shoes
- Jewellery
- Cookbooks & novels
- CDs or DVDs

How to Host a Swap Party

Preparations

- Decide on the types of items you'll swap (see previous page - Swap Party Options).
- Pick a date.
- Find a venue (make sure it's suitable for the number of people, has enough parking and public transport options and, if necessary, changing facilities).
- Send invitations to your friends, work colleagues and neighbours that explain how the Swap Party works, and what they need to bring to swap (see Swap Party Invitation ideas at [RecyclingWeek.planetark.org/involvement/swap.cfm](https://www.planetark.org/involvement/swap.cfm)). You could also ask people to bring snacks and/or drinks.
- Arrange the display area and be creative - items like tables, chairs, racks or ladders can be used. You may need to bring coat-hangers or pegs for clothes.
- Arrange for mirrors and try-on areas if necessary.
- Prepare some music, food and drinks to get the mood going.
- Set up boxes to collect the bottles, cans, plastic bags, corks etc used at the party. Download signage to label the boxes at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org](https://www.planetark.org). This will help people sort the recyclables.
- Optional: You might consider charging an entry fee or ask for a donation to help cover any costs or as a fundraiser for charity. See the case study at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/involvement/swap.cfm](https://www.planetark.org/involvement/swap.cfm) where a women's clothing swap party in Perth raised money for the Leukemia Foundation.

At the Swap Party

- When your guests arrive, register their items and give them one Swap Token for each item they bring (download Swap Tokens at [RecyclingWeek.planetark.org/involvement/swap.cfm](https://www.planetark.org/involvement/swap.cfm)).
- Have copies of the Swap Party Rules printed out (download at [RecyclingWeek.planetark.org/involvement/swap.cfm](https://www.planetark.org/involvement/swap.cfm)), and explain the rules to each guest as they arrive.
- Decide on a time to open the Swap. An hour after all the guests have arrived usually gives people enough time to look at the items. Allow more time for a large party.
- Announce the Swap is open at the set time. After this point, guests may claim one item for each Swap Token they have.
- If two people want the same item, place one each of their Swap Tokens in a hat, and draw the lucky swapper or conduct a scissors-paper-rock game.
- Optional: At larger Swap Parties, you may like to ask people to hand in their tokens to the host or representative in order to claim their chosen items.

After the Party

- Congratulate yourself on holding a Swap Party and recycling all those unused items!
- Sort and place recyclables in the appropriate recycling bins.
- Take remaining recyclables to their specific drop-off locations (eg plastic bags to the supermarket, corks to the Body Shop). To find local locations, as well as your council services, search [RecyclingNearYou.com.au](https://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au).
- Donate any remaining swap items to your local second hand store.
- Send Planet Ark a short e-mail (admin@planetark.org) and a photo or two from your event. We'd love to hear about your Swap Party!

Recycle Right ... to reduce your impact on the environment

Swapping 1 suitcase (20kg) of clothes saves enough energy to run a TV non-stop for 1.7 years.

Swapping 1 box of books (25 kg) saves enough water to fill 150 spa baths.

Swapping books or clothing diverts these organic materials from landfill. In landfill they produce methane, a greenhouse gas with the global warming capacity 20 times stronger than CO₂.

Curious about re-use and recycling? Explore

[RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org](https://www.planetark.org) to:

- Search for recycling information for household products
- Check out the Trade & Exchange pages for other ways to reuse items
- Find out about recycling events and community initiatives.