



Guide to opening a Repair Cafe

Repair Cafe Denmark, the Danish umbrella organization within the Repair area, has prepared a detailed list of good advice for new organizations and / or associations that want to start a Repair Café.

AffaldVarme Aarhus (AVA) has been granted permission to pass on the content and has selected the advice and recommendations that are of a universal nature:

- Keep the concept simple!
- Start small and build from there.
- Find a good and saying name that people will associate with the area where the Repair Cafe is located.
- Create a Facebook page and / or a website for your Repair Café for practical information regarding the Repair Café, as well as pictures.

16. december 2020

- Find volunteers to help with the preparations and volunteer fixers, who can repair things on the day itself. Start out by finding a few friends or acquaintances who would like to join or set up advertisements in the local area, e.g. in clubs, malls or sports arenas. Also post about it in your own network or Facebook groups and websites with volunteer work.
- You will need volunteers to help set up the Café, welcome people and to fix used items. As a start, you should find a minimum of 1 person on to fix electronics, 1 seamstress and 1 person checking in / receiving the guests. As you become more successful, you will of course need more fixers. If you are from a municipality consider using unemployed people as volunteers.
- Once you have assembled your team of volunteers, you must find out what you want / can help with repairing. Remember that Repair Cafe activities should not distort competition with the local business.
- Find in your network if anyone wants to borrow or give you tools.
- Find out if you can get sponsorship from the local construction market, local committee, the municipality or similar.
- Make sure to be present as often as possible and acknowledge all the volunteers for helping to make a difference.
- Communicate in a simple and clear manner to the volunteers with the most important information.
- Find out where you can borrow a free room. You can ask i.e. local associations, cultural centers, libraries, cafes, schools, the municipality or at an existing cafe (preferably non-profit). Most Repair Cafes have between 10 - 50 visitors at once, so there should be plenty of space. The room should preferably be able to accommodate 4-5 tables, where the fixers and users sit. Involve people at the level they can and want - and let them own the event. Everyone should be able to join regardless of age.
- Create a cozy setting for your Repair Café.
- Keep track of all the practicalities and make sure your tools are in order.
- Find out how often you want the Repair Café to be open. Start up with fewer times i.e. with a pop-up event. Remember that everyone is a volunteer, so do not have too high ambitions for how often you can open the Repair Café. We recommend to open the Repair Café once a month for approx. 3-4 hours. But most importantly - be consistent, and people will start coming too.

Marketing

It is a good idea to do some PR for a Repair Café. The PR material should state: Time, place and date and what you offer to repair.

If you get sponsored one or more things for your Repair Café, it is a good idea to credit the sponsors in your PR material.

Always remember to use your Repair Café logo.

Examples of PR activities:

- Make a post on the local Repair Café Facebook page.
- Make a post on your own Facebook profile and share. Also consider sharing on other social media, e.g. Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn or where you have a profile.
- Create a Facebook event / event that people can sign up for and share.
- Make flyers to hand out and posters to hang in the local area, e.g. at libraries, cultural centers, cafes, sports centers or similar. It does not have to be super fancy, use your own printer.
- Contact the local press (local newspaper / radio / TV) and invite them to come by so they can make an article or feature with you.

Before holding a Repair Café:

1. Be sure to bring a computer (or lists) to record visitors and their belongings
2. Remember tools, sewing machines etc.
3. Bring a weight / suitcase weight so you can weigh all the things people bring.
4. Print lists where new volunteer fixers can sign up.
5. Print lists of local seamstresses, bicycle blacksmiths, mobile phone repairers, etc. You can refer to.
6. We do not charge money for the repairs, but it happens that the visitors will give a coin to the coffee box.

A few days before the Repair Cafe, it may be a good idea to send a message to the volunteers, telling them what time you will meet and how the day will play out (especially the first few times).

Celebration - tasks on the day

1. Set up tables before the Repair Cafe opens - be well in advance so you are ready on time. Also remember that there must be tools and good light for the fixers.
2. It is important to have a person who is responsible for receiving the visitors and registering the things to be repaired. All information is registered directly on the website (or in the excel sheet that can be downloaded from the website).
3. Take photos for your Facebook-page (a smartphone takes nice pictures). Film small short videos that you can post on your Facebook page.

16. december 2020

4. Repairs should NOT distort competition in relation to local companies, but we should provide things that were otherwise thrown out for a longer life. If you are in doubt about whether the repair is distorting competition, it is a good rule of thumb to ask the user if the item is thrown out or not.
5. If the fixer is in doubt whether he / she can repair the object, then first ask one of the other fixers - if no one can repair, you refer to the nearest company that can help.
6. Make sure that your visitors stay while you repair, and preferably help them to fix their own item as much as possible.

Evaluation

After the first times you have held a Repair Café, it is good to evaluate the day.

- Make a list of pros and cons of the day.
- Make a list of what is missing for next time, etc.
- Feel free to share photos and stories on social media along the way and afterwards.

Starting a Repair Café is not difficult - just do it! But it requires one or two coordinators who keep the pot boiling.

Enjoy! **Repair Cafe Danmark**