

Guide to hosting a sew day

If you have never attended a sew day, we strongly recommend you attend *at least* one before hosting. It gives you a visual of how things work and progress so you can better prepare your own home when you host a sew day. Watching someone else host a sew day allows you to see how much work really goes into being a host/hostess.

We tend to plan as many as six months in advance, so decide when you would like to host a sew day and let us know as soon as possible. If you would like help setting up for sew day, please let us know so we can schedule a time to come to your home.

Things to consider before hosting a sew day

Before you commit to hosting a sew day in your home, please ask yourself these questions: Do I have enough room to accommodate 10-20 people as well as enough tables and chairs for these people? Do I have easy access to electrical outlets for as many as 4-6 sewing machines as well as outlets in separate areas for 1-2 irons? Do I want to allow ferrets to come into my home? If so, do I have room for them? Do the ferrets that come into my home need to be ADV tested negative or untested? **This last question is VERY important!**

You will need to specify whether you want to allow ferrets to come to the sew day. If you choose not to allow outside ferrets, please specify this in your email. Even if you specify no ferrets, expect to make special preparations because someone may show up with one anyway that was too ill to leave at home.

If you decide to allow outside ferrets, you will need to specify whether they need to be ADV tested negative or untested: *you cannot invite both*. Aside from where your ferrets normally stay, be sure you have room for 1-2 playpens for ferrets that don't get along or are sick. If you don't have room to set up playpens outside of your normal ferret territory, please don't feel bad about having to ban outside ferrets from your home. This happens and we all understand. The members of this group would never want to impose on you, so be specific and let everyone know before the sew day whether ferrets are allowed or not. When allowing ferrets into your home, remind owners to bring their own supplies for their ferrets (i.e. food, litter, playpen, etc.)

If you have other animals (such as dogs or cats) that may get in the way or jump on your guests, you will want to think about putting them outside or in a bedroom. There may be a few members who are allergic to these types of animals, so please include in your post what kind of animals you have in your home. Some members may not like dogs or cats or could possibly be afraid of them. As guests, we do not want to impose, but we would like everyone who wants to attend to be there without fear or discomfort. Please think about this before committing to hosting.

The sew day normally runs from about 10 am to 6 pm. People will come and go all day, so do not expect everyone to show up at 10 am. Also, a few people tend to stay later than 6 pm and have even stayed as late as midnight to finish up, so be prepared to politely tell everyone when it is time to leave. Members usually won't be rude and will usually ask if staying later is alright, so that would be the time to tell them whether they need to leave or not.

Supplies the host should provide

* if you don't have these supplies, you can ask that members bring them

Main dish for lunch, other members will bring sides, desserts and ice if needed

2-6 Sturdy tables

Chairs

*Ironing board and iron

*Lots of waste baskets (or other small containers like boxes) for threads, pins, scraps, etc

*1-2 unscented pillar or jar candles for burning ribbon ends

*Cutting tables with mats and scissors or rotary cutters

*Surge protected extension cords

Information to include in your post to FBOG

- Be sure to provide the group with your address, phone number, and clear directions to your home. You can even give a short description of what your house looks like or lawn décor to help guide your guests to your home. *This information needs to be provided 3-6 days prior to the sew day.* You may consider posting it again the day before sew day just to be sure to remind everyone.
- Include the starting and ending times that you would prefer your guests to follow. The normal time is 10 am to 6 pm. If this time is fine with you, please post it anyway as a reminder.
- Provide specifics about whether ferrets are allowed or not, following the guidelines above. Be sure to include your home status – ADV Negative or ADV untested.
- Also list the other types of animals that live in your home.
- Include a list of foods you specifically would like people to bring.
- Specify any necessary items from the list above that you do not have so that the other members can be sure to bring them.
- Ask for a head count, but plan for 2-3 times as many people.

Tips from previous host/hostess

- Prepare your home a day or two before the sew day. If you want help, ask and it shall be given. Go ahead and set up tables, pull out the extension cords and extra chairs. Have trash cans set up around tables and seating areas. You will be busy the morning of the sew day and will not have time to set up bulky stuff like this.
- Try not to spread everyone too far apart; the process runs smoother if everyone is within ear shot or at least grouped together (people doing the sewing in one room, people doing pinning and ironing in another).
- Kitchen/dining tables usually work very well for sewing machines, but in order to keep it protected from the vibrations of the sewing machines you will want to put a table cloth or even placemats on the table.

- You will need areas set up for matching, cutting, pinning, ironing, sewing, and burning ribbons.
- The people sewing will definitely need good lighting, surge protected extension cords, and easy access to electrical outlets.
- When asking for a head count, don't expect an accurate count. Always plan for more. Average attendance is 10-15 people, but a few sew days have been from 20-30 people. Be prepared.
- Don't be surprised or upset if you end up with lots of one type of food and little to none of another...everyone brings what they want to share. If you need someone to bring something specific, be sure to post it to the group saying that someone needs to bring that item.
- Make sure someone is there to delegate tasks. If no one delegates and everyone starts jumping around to different jobs, things may start getting crazy and cause problems with the process.
- We always try our best to clean up any mess we make, but it always happens that pins and scraps are found on the floor after the guests leave. Be sure to go back behind everyone checking for pins so that you and your animals do not end up with one stuck in the bottom of your foot. Yes, it has happened before.