



10 Reasons to become a Volunteer

1. It's good for your health

Studies show that having a good social network extends your life, keeps you healthy and staves off mental deterioration.

2. You meet new friends

Get to know new people and work with them on things you all care about. How many people have met their future partners at the club?

3. You make new contacts

Keeping your networks in good repair helps you to see opportunities when they come up and gives you people to call when you want help.

4. You learn new skills

You can learn workplace skills from being a volunteer. You can learn governance skills – committee management, business planning – from joining a Committee.

5. It's good for the community

The more people work together and get to be familiar with the way things work around the area, the more people support each other through the tough times.

6. You can follow your interests

Whatever you like to do, there are other people out there who like it too. Join a group and you can share your passion.

7. You can build up your resume!

If you're applying for a tertiary place or a new job or a new relationship, it helps to be able to point to the unselfish efforts you're putting in for the community.

8. You can learn how to win your battles

Experience in operating as part of a community group gives you the tools you need to get your voice heard in the centres of power.

9. You can make a contribution

We all want to make the world a better place, even if it's only by making sure our team has its turn at taking the flag.

10. It's good for the country

Australia needs a strong civil society, where the government and business don't run everything and people manage their own organisations for community goals.



10 Tips to Ease Your Way into a New Community Group

1. Follow your heart

Find a cause or a social activity you're passionate about – one that involves you and satisfies you.

2. Two's Company

Take a friend along. You can support each other and you'll have someone to discuss it with while you're getting to know the scene.

3. Read the manual

There should be an induction manual and there certainly ought to be a constitution and some other materials that will help you get to know the group a little better.

4. Find a Mentor

Ask one of the longer standing members to show you the ropes. Get them to write down people's names too – you'll never remember them on the first day.

5. There are no stupid questions

If you don't understand something, don't hesitate to say so.

6. Cut them some slack

Unless you're joining the Utopia Paradise Club, you'll find that some people are sometimes irritating. Grin and bear it.

7. There's no such person as somebody

Where you see something that needs doing, don't just say "Somebody ought to fix that" and walk away. Fix it yourself.

8. Look to the long haul

Don't expect to have everything hunky-dory immediately and don't expect people to let you run the place on your first day.

9. Play to your strengths

You've got special skills and things you're particularly good at. Make sure the group knows that they are so that they can put you where you're most needed.

10. The first time is the hardest

You don't have to confine yourself to one community group. Widen your horizons and lend a hand over the road as well.