

# How to Run a Great Quiz Night

## "A great quiz is much more than just a list of questions"

A quiz night should be enjoyed by all who take part – not just the winners. The two basic ingredients are **great questions** and **great organisation**

### Great Questions

The secret of a good quiz is variety – keep your audience entertained with a mix of subjects and styles. Combine general knowledge Q&A rounds with picture quizzes, song lyrics, marathon rounds, dingbats, anagrams, puzzles etc.

Make sure that your questions suit your quiz teams – a mix of topics and eras is usually best. Themed rounds mean that participants can have a go at working out some of the answers and are better than "you either know it or you don't" type questions. The questions should be pitched at an average level of general knowledge with a few "challenges" thrown in to sort the winners from the losers. Too many obscure questions can just leave teams bored – the old 80:20 rule works well here.

It can help to judge your questions as your quiz progresses – particularly if you are quizzing a new crowd. If you sense they are struggling make the questions a little easier by adding clues – eg say which pop star, footballer, newsreader etc instead of just asking "who". Do the reverse if they are finding it a bit easy.

### Great Organisation

#### Before the Quiz

**Decide what type of quiz you are going to have**

**A regular quiz night** – same place, day and time each week – great for turning a quiet night in your pub/bar into a busy one.

**A special one off quiz night** – fundraising event, party or themed quiz – Christmas, Halloween, Valentine's etc

**A printed quiz** – sell sheets to teams or individuals to take away and return by a set date – good for office festivities, fundraising etc

#### Practicalities

Choose a **date** and start **time** and if necessary a **venue**

Check the venue has any **equipment** you require – table for quizmaster and any helpers, PA system, CD player etc

If it's not you – nominate a **quizmaster** and make sure that they have a "dry run" at the questions

Purchase/write quiz and prepare your **question and answer sheets**

Organise **publicity** – Posters, Noticeboards, Press, Newsletters, Websites, Email

Decide **quiz format** and **rules** – which rounds in which order, timing of breaks etc

Decide on the maximum number of **team members** – six or less is usually best

Decide on **entrance fees** and **prize money**

## On Quiz Night

**Announce** that the quiz will begin shortly and make sure all contestants have answers sheets, pens etc.

Briefly outline the **format** and **rules** of the quiz - number or rounds, two readings of each question - no repeats etc. State that **the questionmaster's word is final!**

**Rule 1 The Questionmaster is always right!**

**Rule 2 The Questionmaster is never wrong!**

**Rule 3 There are only two rules!**

## Prizes

**First Prize** - Have a reasonable first prize - but beware of making it too good as it can attract overly serious quiz goers who may argue about the answers and can spoil the fun for everyone else.

It's better to **spread the prizes around**, keeping everyone interested throughout the quiz. Consider having;

**Spot prizes** - bottle of wine, box of chocs etc for answering a particular question within the quiz or a separate question

**Bonus prize** - eg a free round of drinks for any team who gets full marks on any given round

**Jackpot prize** - a separate multipart question - if no-one gets all the answers correct then prize money is rolled over to the following week

**A joker card** - give each team a double points card which they can decide when to use

**Fun prize** - a small prize for the silliest team name or the daftest wrong answer!

## Other ideas

If you have the time and resources there are a number of ways you can customise your quiz - why not try -

**Photo Quiz** of friends, colleagues etc when they were younger - fit them to the quiz eg wedding photos for a Valentine's Quiz

**Cocktail Quiz** get the barman to mix cocktails (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and get your teams to guess the ingredients

**Mystery Presents** - for Christmas Quiz get your teams to identify some well wrapped gifts or have contestants blindfolded

**Specialist Round** - if you are running a tailored quiz for a specific group you can add a specialist round - eg pictures of past headmasters and teachers for a school quiz

**Fancy Dress** - great for Halloween etc - award prizes for the best costumes

**Creative Quiz** - great for a long break - give teams a selection of materials and get them to make a Christmas decoration, an Easter Bonnet or a Halloween Mask. Only attempt this if you have the time and the space for the chaos that can ensue!

The possibilities are endless - it's your quiz!

Just remember that the focus is **fun!**