

## Project Planner spreadsheet

The Project planner spreadsheet is a tool to help you get all of your ideas in order when you are planning an event or activity. It has two parts. The first is for you to list all the parts of the project, get them in order, work out who is doing each job and when they need to be done by. The second is a timeline, which makes it easier to see at a glance what needs to be done next. We'll explain how it all works soon, but first, here's some general info about the tool itself.

The Project planner tool is a spreadsheet, which means it looks like a grid of lots of boxes, and will open in Excel or another computer program on your computer. Each box is called a **cell**. Other than that, you don't need to know anything much about spreadsheets to use it. Just follow these instructions step by step. Like other tools in the Youth Officers' Toolkit, it has yellow spaces that let you know where you can fill things in, and the rest are 'locked' so you can't mess them up. And just like the other spreadsheets, you can unprotect them if you really want to fool around with the codes and formulas.

The Project planner tool has three main parts. The main set up cells at the top, the project planning section on the left (mostly in yellow) and a timeline on the right.

After you have filled in the set up cells, you can print the whole thing out and just use a pen or textas instead of using in on the computer if you want to, but you'll find that lots of the work is done for you if you use the computer instead.

Ok, lets get started.

### 1. Setting it up

Organisation name:	Reclaim the Night Committee	
project goal:	To raise awareness of sexual violence amongst the Dubbo community	

Give the project a name and type it into the first yellow cell, and write down the purpose of the project. (Writing down your overall purpose like this is a good, constant reminder of what you're doing all this for. It's surprising how often people need reminding). In our example, the group is called the Reclaim the Night Committee, and their purpose is to "raise awareness of sexual violence amongst the Dubbo community."

Organisation name:	Reclaim the Night Committee			start date:	01-Jan-09				
project goal:	To raise awareness of sexual violence amongst the Dubbo community			today (date):	12-Jan-09				
task no.	strategies	tasks	Who	(optional) Start week no.	Finish week no.	done?	win	1	2
								3	4
								5	

The next yellow cell is where you type in the date you will start working on the project. This sets up the dates in the timeline. Under that cell you'll see a space that tells you what today's date is. It's just there as a reminder.

### 2. Making your plans

The first next few columns are a tool for you to write down your ideas on what needs to be done when planning your event. Think about each strategy to your event, then break it down into tasks. Keep going until each main area (or strategy) has been broken down into individual tasks, and every task has been given to one of the organisers. (HINT: Some people find this easier to do on big sheets of paper or whiteboards first. Or you can print out the spreadsheet after setting up the cells in step 1. It's up to you- see what works best for your group.)

Add a new row

Remove row

will appear.

These two buttons have been added to make it easier to add (or remove) a new line in the plans. Just click where you want a new row, press the 'add a new row' button, and a new row

Organisation name:		Reclaim the Night Committee	
project goal:		To raise awareness of sexual violence amongst the Dubbo community	
Task no.	strategies	tasks	Who
1	march through main street on March 17		
2		contact local community groups and ask if they want to be involved.	David
3		hold planning meeting with local community groups	Sarah
4		prepare run sheet	mike
6		prepare budget	
		contact SES, council for permission	Mike
		phone police	David
		explore funding options	David
		apply for funding	David
7	raise awareness through media campaign		David
8		write press release	Sarah
9		arrange photo opportunity before the event	Sarah
10		arrange t shirts for participants	David
11		organise main speakers	Mike
12		write thank you letters	David
13		follow up phone calls, thank you letters	Sarah

Here's some of the committee's ideas.

The next step is to work out when each task will need to be done. Once you have the strategies and tasks in place, think about how long each will take, when you will start them, when you will finish them. Hopefully, this saves you from leaving everything until the last week or two, or cramming everything into the same couple of weeks. Some could take a while, while some have a date they must be completed by. If it needs to be done in the first week, type a 1 in the 'finish' column. If it needs to be done in three weeks' time, type in a 3 in the finish column. If it needs to be done between week 3 and week 5, put a 3 in the start column, and a 5 in the finish column.

Organisation name:		Reclaim the Night Committee		start date:		01-Jan-09
project goal:		To raise awareness of sexual violence amongst the Dubbo community		today (date):		12-Jan-09
Task no.	strategies	tasks	Who	(optional) Start week no.	Finish week no.	done? y/n
1	march through main street on March 17				12	
2		contact local community groups and ask if they want to be involved.	David	1	3	
3		hold planning meeting with local community groups	Sarah	3	5	
4		prepare run sheet	mike	1	5	
6		prepare budget	mike	2	2	y
		contact SES, council for permission	Mike	4	5	y
		phone police	David		5	
		explore funding options	David		2	
		apply for funding	David	3	8	
7	raise awareness through media campaign		David	5	12	
8		write press release	Sarah	7	9	
9		arrange photo opportunity before the event	Sarah	8	11	
10		arrange t shirts for participants	David	9	11	
11		organise main speakers	Mike		7	y
12		write thank you letters	David	11	14	
13		follow up phone calls, thank you letters	Sarah	15	15	

In this example, you can see that it was important to contact local community groups and ask if they wanted to be involved', right at the beginning of the project. The police had to be contacted by David in week 5, while the SES and council would be contacted anywhere between weeks 4 or 5 by Mike.

The final column gives you a chance to show whether a task is completed, by simply typing the letter 'y'. In our example, you can see that the tasks 'prepare budget,' 'contact SES' and council' and 'organise main speakers' have been completed.

The reason you write everything down like this is so that:

- It allows the whole group to check that everything has been thought of;
- It gives the whole group a reminder of what jobs each person has responsibility for;
- It helps 'even out' the task list, so that everything doesn't end up happening in the last few days; and
- It helps the whole group keep track of the things that still need to be done.

### 3. Using the timeline

The second half of the spreadsheet- the grey and white cells on the right hand side- is timeline, which helps you see what happens each week. If you filled in the yellow cell marked "start week" (right up the top) it will work out the dates for 26 weeks starting on that date.

You don't need to do anything more to make the timeline- once you have put in all the info in the other columns, it will just happen, automatically. The timeline shows when the jobs are starting and finishing, and whether they are finished or not.

Lets look at our example to see what it looks like.

Organisation name:		Reclaim the Night Committee			start date:	01-Jan-09																
project goal:		To raise awareness of sexual violence amongst the Dubbo community			today (date):	12-Jan-09	10/1/09	15/1/09	22/1/09	29/1/09	5/2/09	12/2/09	19/2/09	26/2/09	5/3/09	12/3/09	19/3/09	26/3/09	2/4/09	9/4/09		
task no.	strategies	tasks	Who	(optional) Start week no.	Finish week no.	done? y/n	Week number															
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
1	march through main street on March 17				12																	
2		contact local community groups and ask if they want to be involved.	David	1	3																	
3		hold planning meeting with local community groups	Sarah	3	5																	
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		contact SES, council for permission	Mike	4	5	y																
		phone police	David	5	5																	
		explore funding options	David	2	8																	
		apply for funding	David	3	8																	
7	raise awareness through media campaign		David	5	12																	
8		write press release	Sarah	7	9																	
9		arrange photo opportunity before the event	Sarah	8	11																	
10		arrange t shirts for participants	David	9	11																	
11		organise main speakers	Mike	7	14	y																
12		write thank you letters	David	11	14																	
13		follow up phone calls, thank you letters	Sarah	15	15																	

In this example, you can see two thin red lines going down the page. This shows this week's date. We can see at a glance all the jobs that the group should be working on this week- contacting community groups, preparing a run sheet, preparing a budget and arranging funding options. There is a smiley face in the timeline for the task 'prepare budget', because Mike has completed it, but David hasn't yet finished 'exploring funding options' even though it is due this week.

**During planning sessions:**

Bring a printed copy of the timeline along to planning meetings for each member.

The timeline is the whole group's reminder of:

- What we should be doing now;
- What is coming up;
- What is complete and what still needs doing;
- Which weeks are especially busy, and which don't have much on; and
- Which people are especially busy, and who doesn't have much on.