



Starting a Local Group

Why be a part of your local Permaculture group?

- Spread Permaculture ethics and skills for our future
- Look at and learn from local ideas for your backyard food crop
- Learn from guest speakers
- Get to know your community
- Share produce, plants, seeds, tools, labour
- Create local food production resilience
- It's the right scale, the local scale, Perth and WA is just too spread out.

Getting Started

If you would like to start a group in your area here are some easy ideas:

- **Check the PermacultureWest (PW) website** to see if there already is a local group in your area. If not then contact PW to see if there are members in your area.
- **Gather a working group.** Decide if there is interest, time and energy to start the local group. What do you want out of the group? What will be your catchment area? What will be the purpose of the group?
- **Decide some details:** Who will be the initial contact person? Dates, times and frequency for meeting. Venues for meeting, this could be people's gardens or a hired place or a park. Will you collect money? Or just donations for refreshments. Will you have a guest speaker for the first event, or start small and work up the numbers? Some of these things might be addressed after the first meeting.
- **Advertise first event:** Contact PW to list your event on the calendar and in the next enews. They can also forward the invite to all PW email subscribers. Put a free ad in the local paper and any other local newsletters. Tell family and friends.

Ask the PW committee for help at any stage. It's also a good idea to visit other local groups and see how it's done if possible.



For the First Event

Designate a welcoming person or two.

Have paper to collect names and email address of attendees. Also ask their interest in Permaculture or what they would like from the group.

Have some PW information and membership forms on display including a small flier with your group's contact details.

Have someone introduce the group and talk about PW including the website.

If you are in a garden the owner might lead a tour and tell their story. If you have a guest speaker or several speakers introduce them.

You might start with refreshments (seems to work well and gets people talking) or have a mid-way break, or both.

Have fun.

Ongoing

Keep a record of group members and events, this can be very simple or a group newsletter.

Encourage everyone to feel ownership of the group. Reconsider the roles within the group every year.

Expect change, be flexible.

PermacultureWest Services

In order to support local groups please consider using the services provided by PW:

- Experience and advice of the committee and its members to help you get started
- Events Calendar on the PW website. Submit local group meetings, workshops, etc... so that people can easily see what's happening with your local group.
- Local Groups webpage on the PW website. Provide us with the content (text, images, video) and PW can manage one or more pages on the PW website for your local group. In addition we can post news items related to your group as needed.
- PW eNews. Some local groups will produce their own newsletters, or just send out regular emails – but you are welcome to participate in the PW newsletter by submitting articles, highlighting upcoming events, etc... Just contact the enews administrator at enews@permaculturewest.org.au
- Official PW contact email address. PW can provide a "localgroup@permaculturewest.org.au" email address set up to forward email to the local group organiser(s).



Other Guidelines

1. Local groups are self organising and self governing but will abide by the PW constitution, and Permaculture ethics. Copy available on request.
2. Attendees are encouraged to join PW (further encouragement can be in the form of a small fee, for example: “free to attend for PW members, \$3 for non-members”).
3. Local groups are responsible for handling their own monies. In the case of PW memberships then encourage the use of the online membership form and direct deposit for payment – it saves paperwork and double handling of monies. In some cases it may be required or helpful to use a bank account in which case please contact the treasurer.
4. Someone from each group should keep regular contact with PW and attend local group committee meetings when organized.
5. PW may call on your local group to help spread news/activities PW itself is holding. For example on-forwarding an email to your local group mailing list.
6. Do use the PW website services because it helps to build a focal point for Permaculture activity in WA as well as highlight the local group activity.