

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 [website](#) to see if there already is a local group in your area. If not then [contact](#) PermacultureWest 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 meetings – 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 the first event. [Contact](#) PermacultureWest to list your event on the calendar and in the next e-news. They can also forward the invite to all PermacultureWest email subscribers. Put a free advertisement in the local paper and any other local newsletters. Tell family and friends.
- [Ask](#) the PermacultureWest 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.
- [Ask](#) PermacultureWest to send you the official attendance sign in sheet.
- [Ask](#) PermacultureWest about getting an "@permaculturewest.org.au" email address for your group.

For the First Event

- Designate a welcoming person or two.
- Have attendees fill in the attendance sheet including their email address. Also ask their interest in Permaculture or what they would like from the group.
- Have some PermacultureWest information on display including a small flier with your group's contact details.
- Have someone introduce the group and talk about PermacultureWest 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 PermacultureWest:

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

Other Guidelines

- Local groups are self organising and self governing but will abide by the PermacultureWest constitution, and Permaculture ethics. A [copy](#) is available on the website.
- Attendees are encouraged to join PermacultureWest (further encouragement can be in the form of a small fee, for example: “free to attend for PermacultureWest members, \$3 for non-members”).
- Local groups are responsible for handling their own monies. In the case of PermacultureWest memberships, use the online [membership form](#) to join. In some cases it may be required or helpful to use a bank account in which case please contact the treasurer (<mailto:treasurer@permaculturewest.org.au>).
- Someone from each group should keep regular contact with PermacultureWest and attend local group committee meetings when organized.
- PermacultureWest may call on your local group to help spread news/activities PermacultureWest itself is holding. For example on-forwarding an email to your local group mailing list.
- Do use the PermacultureWest website services because it helps to build a focal point for Permaculture activity in WA as well as highlight the local group activity.