

FIVE STEP GUIDE TO GIY



change **X**

STARTING A GIY GROUP

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

TIME



As a champion you'll need up to 4 hours per week to start and maintain your group.

PEOPLE



Ideally, you're a team of around 5 people, so that you can share ideas and divide up the work.

FUNDING



Funding is needed for venue costs, seeds, soil, tools, printing and refreshments for meetings.

Who typically starts a GIY group?

Someone who is:

- Interested in food growing
- Passionate about the GIY ethos
- Enjoys bringing people in the community together

5 Step Summary

- 1 Complete your 30 Day Challenge
- 2 Get help
- 3 Find a suitable venue
- 4 Prepare for the launch
- 5 Launch your GIY group

Support and Additional Resources

www.giy.ie

www.giy.ie/get-involved/grow-in-the-community

www.changex.org/giy

WELCOME

“I believe in food empathy. By growing my own vegetables, I really started to understand where food comes from. With GIY we’d like to encourage people everywhere to give food growing a try. We’re building a global movement of food growers and we’re excited to have you on board!”

**Michael Kelly,
Founder of GIY**



Introduction to the Idea

Why GIY?

GIY’s vision is for a healthy, happy and more sustainable world, where land, food and people are fully nourished. The way the food chain currently operates has profound implications for our health, community, environment and local economies. Valuable nutrients are wasted transporting food around the globe and there is an ever-widening gulf between food production and consumption. GIY believes that change begins with the decision to sow a seed and if we can encourage enough people to grow some of their own food then we can build a movement of people who have ‘food empathy’ and fundamentally change the way our global food chain operates.

Who is GIY for?

GIYing is for everyone! It’s not just for experienced growers or people already involved in growing - anyone can start!

What do GIY Groups do?

GIY Groups are run by a ‘local champion’ and groups have anything from a handful to hundreds of people meeting in various places - workplaces, schools, or community venues. Most GIY meetings are free of charge and open to all, but every group is different. The magic lies in a group of people coming together, learning, sharing and having fun.

There are no rules when it comes to what GIY groups do - it’s up to you! Some groups do garden visits, swap seeds or work with local schools and organizations to establish community gardens. It’s really up to the members of each group, but at the most basic level a GIY group is an excuse to come together with like-minded people to talk about growing.

STEP 1: COMPLETE YOUR 30 DAY CHALLENGE



The 30 Day Jumpstart Challenge has been designed to get your project off to the strongest possible start by building momentum in the first month. Once you have completed your challenge your first funding payment will be unlocked.

- Learn more about the idea you're starting**
This '5 Step Guide' includes all you need to know about the specifics of starting your project.
- Schedule a Call**
Pick a time that works for you to talk to a ChangeX team member about what's involved in your chosen project as well as to ensure that you understand the Guidelines & rules associated with the Challenge.
- Find 5 interested people**
You already have your own project page on changex.org. Use the site to share the project with others and recruit neighbors, friends, or other folks with an interest to be your first supporters.
- Set up a casual kick-off meeting**
Host a meeting with your team at your home, at a community center or in a coffee shop and come up with an action plan. You can use your page on changex.org to set up an event and invite people.
- Share a team photo and your plan of action**
Upload a team photo taken at your first team meeting to changex.org. In addition, provide us with a narrative on what you will spend the funding on, what your next steps as a group will be, and how you hope the project will ultimately benefit your community.

STEP 2: GET HELP

The most successful GIY groups are a collaborative effort, where a group of people come together to start and maintain it and share diverse perspectives. The GIY ethos is not wild about committees, titles, chains of office and all round stuffiness – but it does make sense to have a steering group and to get people involved that can provide practical help. For example, one person can do your group's web stuff, another works on promotion, another tries to organize speakers, another organizes garden visits, etc.

It's also tremendously valuable if you can get an experienced grower involved in your group. They can act as a mentor to novice growers and even give a talk on nights you can't get a speaker.

The steering group can help to organize your launch event and get other interested people involved. On the night of the launch, you can also ask some people to join the steering group. This can be a great chance to find more folks who are willing to help out.

Following the launch, it'll help for the steering group to meet regularly to plan the activities of the group. It's also helpful to continually expand the group. When recruiting, keep in mind the roles that need to be filled - check out the 'roles box' on the right side of this page.

ROLES



The Marketing Guru

Does advertising and PR.
Gets great photography from meetups and other activities

The Money Person

Manages payments and maintains records and receipts

The Techie

Updates your group page, social media, email etc

STEP 3: FIND THE RIGHT VENUE

A key action in getting your GIY group up and running is to get a venue for GIY meetings. Typically, GIY meetings take place once a month in a community venue and last for 1 - 2 hours. A key principle of the GIY network is that the meetings should be free of charge, if possible. Getting a venue for free helps keep costs low. If there is a small rental fee, you can cover it with your funding from ChangeX.

GIY Groups base themselves in libraries, town halls, community centers, hotel meeting rooms, coffee shops, restaurants, schools and many other venues. Where you base your group is not particularly important, as long as the venue is comfortable and provides a nice environment for meetings.

You don't necessarily need facilities, although it's handy if the venue can provide a projector and screen. If this isn't the case you could look at renting or buying second-hand models. Coffee, tea and cookies makes for a more sociable meeting. Check if the venue can provide them, or ask members to rotate bringing the snacks.



Claire hosts her GIY group meetings in the back room of the local library.

Venue Checklist

- Accessibility**
Can people who are mobility impaired get into the venue, to the room and also access restrooms?
- Parking**
Is there adequate parking nearby?
- Technology**
Can the venue provide a microphone, screen and projector? These might be useful.
- Natural light**
Not a must, but it will be helpful once you take the first photos of your group to encourage others to get involved.
- Seating**
 - Check whether you'll have to arrange seating in advance of each meeting
- Commitment**
 - Is the owner of the venue excited about your cause and will they be excited to support you in different ways? For example, will they help you spread the word through their social media channels?

Check out additional tips on finding a suitable venue and more here:

www.changex.org/blog/category/how-to

STEP 4: PREPARE FOR THE LAUNCH

Pick a date

Picking a date for your GIY group launch is an important step, as it focuses the minds of all involved in the run up to the launch meeting. The launch is often the point at which GIY groups start to feel real for the organizers, with a real-world date to work towards.

Here are a couple of simple pointers in terms of when to kick off.

- Leave enough time to prepare for the event and to promote it as widely as possible.
- Think about the season. The end of summer or early fall tends to work well to launch a group so folks can start planting during fall.
- Be consistent; pick a day of the week that is likely to work in your community. For example: the last Wednesday of the month.

Promote

Once you have a venue and have picked a date, the next step is to promote your event. Treat the launch as a powerful opportunity to reach out widely in your community. Start talking to EVERYONE on every media channel available to you.

- Put up posters at your local places of worship, the town hall, community center, shopping center, garden center, coffee shop, sports grounds - anywhere there are potential GIYers.
- Use social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook to communicate and spread the word locally.
- Post your launch event on your GIY page on changex.org.
- Connect with other volunteer and community groups in your community. Don't be afraid to go and meet these groups, tell them what you're planning and why you're excited about it.
- Get on the local radio, and send emails to local papers for the local notice section. They should be interested and will be particularly effective in getting the word out. You'll need to send a press release typically 2 - 3 weeks before the launch.

IDEAS FOR YOUR LAUNCH



Invite a speaker - A locally known person will get people's attention for your kick-off.

Do a seed or plant swap - Ask people to bring plants they have to give away

GIY film - Show a short video about the GIY movement

Breakout Groups - Get people into groups to talk about what they'd like to learn

Free snacks and refreshments are always increase attendance!



STEP 5: LAUNCH YOUR GIY GROUP

At the launch

A launch event is a powerful way to get a group started. An event helps create a buzz around the idea of GIY in your community.

Your GIY Group Launch - Agenda Example

1. Welcome
Explain important things about the venue (where the restrooms are), ask for permission to take and share photos of people if you have a photographer.
2. Circulate attendance sheet for contact details, including cell phone number and email addresses.
3. Show the GIY video
4. Explain the purpose of GIY and tell your own story of why you got excited about the idea. Give others a chance to share their stories.
5. Group breakout session (around 20 minutes)
6. Collect ideas from groups
7. Tell everyone about the next meeting and how to engage with the group in the meantime.
Ask people about their preferred ways to stay in touch.
8. Say thank you and invite everyone to stay longer, continue talking and get to know each other.



After the event

Following up with people after the event is just as important as the event itself. You've created some excitement, so don't wait too long to follow up. Use the momentum to pull people into more conversations online and grow their commitment to the new group.

FOLLOW UP CHECKLIST

- Invite people to your GIY page on ChangeX**
Using the "Invite Friends" functionality you can invite people to your page on ChangeX.
- Create an email list or text chain**
Depending on how people want to stay in touch, you might want to add additional tools.
- Post an update to your page**
After you've invited people, post an update telling a bit about what happened at the launch event. Add a couple of photos. If any questions stayed open, ask them now.
- Encourage people to share ideas.**
Some people might be more inclined to share their thoughts and ideas online than speaking up at an event. So give people another chance to add their thoughts.

To get conversations started, it helps to ask clear questions like:

- "What would you like to do at the next group meetup?"
- "What's the first growing project we could get started together?"

10 THINGS YOU CAN DO IN GIY GROUPS

“I am a passionate believer in sustainability and believe being able to feed ourselves independently is a necessary skill for all to achieve.”

“We want to start a group around horticulture, planting, growing and harvesting. It will be inclusive of everyone: older persons, those with disabilities, young people, those in recovery and anyone with an interest.”

GIY groups start with a few people meeting up to nerd out about the most tasty type of potatoes you can grow, or which natural fertilizers are most effective.

But over time, there are many more ways people connect around the idea of spreading more love for the home-grown and contributing to the whole community. That's the magic of GIY. Here are a few things GIY groups do:

1. Start community gardens
2. Swap plants or seeds
3. Teach kids to grow in school gardens
4. Start Open Orchards
5. Host street feasts with home-grown food
6. Set up urban gardens
7. Do Guerilla Gardening
8. Set up Cottage Markets and sell home grown food
9. Grow peas and more in the office
10. Live healthier together

“We're trying to make our village the best place to live. We want to use the green space we have to run projects to benefit the whole community.”

www.changex.org

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