

HOW TO GET STARTED:

It is not difficult to form a new group. Three or four women over a cup of coffee and armed with a few topics for discussion is the best way to hold your first meeting.

Choose someone to lead your Group. This person will be called the Local Organiser or LO. The LO's role is to ensure the program is distributed to all her members and that a discussion leader and a venue are organised for the next meeting.

The LO keeps a record of all meetings, which includes the name of the hostess, the address of the venue, the topic for discussion, date of meeting and a register of all members and guests in attendance. Each person must sign the attendance book (for public liability insurance cover). An exercise book is sufficient.

Where possible a member of the National Committee or experienced NWR member, will be delighted to attend your first few meetings to make it easier to sort out any problems that may arise and answer any questions about the organisation.

The important points to decide at your first meeting are:

Where to hold the meetings

Most groups hold their meetings in each other's homes on a rotating basis.

A member volunteers her home for the meeting – there should be no pressure on any member to host a meeting. A light supper is usually provided by the hostess and/or other members after the meeting. Coffee and biscuits is sufficient which helps close the meeting on a social note.

When to hold the meetings

Most groups meet one day/evening every month. This gives members plenty of time to prepare for the meetings. However, you can meet as often as you like depending on what the members want to do.

What topics to discuss

Your first meeting will be your Planning Meeting where the group will decide on a small program which will consist of topics for your first three or so discussions.

Remember that for your first few meetings you are going to be feeling your way, so make the topics light and easy to handle. Decide on the venue and start time for your meetings. Once this has been decided, your LO will write or type this program out and distribute it to all members. Keep a few spare copies to hand out to any potential members.

The program should include the dates of the meetings, the hostess's address and phone number, discussion topic and name of the discussion leader. (Discussion leader's role listed below).

You may find that after a few months of discussions your group will enjoy the visit of a guest speaker. If unable to attend a meeting please advise your hostess as soon as possible as this helps in preparing seating.

Meetings are conducted without the interruptions of children. Remember it is your time for discussion.

By making time to research the topic before coming to the meeting you will contribute to the success of the discussion.

HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR MEETING

The LO opens the meeting, deals with any business and then hands over to the discussion leader. The discussion leader should not be the hostess and she will ensure the following:

- Discussion starts on time
- Members keep to the topic
- Everyone has her say
- One person does not dominate
- Keeps the discussion flowing
- The discussion finishes on time.
- Members are aware of next meeting's topic and venue.
- Everyone has fun.

HELP YOUR GROUP GROW – PUBLICITY

Use the publicity material provided to publicise NWR in any likely place – library, doctor/dentist surgery, hairdresser, local shops, church, post office, community information centre etc. The list is endless. Don't be overwhelmed by these suggestions – try a few first.

Remember to include a contact telephone number.

Some areas have pamphlets which provide information on activities available locally. These are often produced by local councils via the library or the council's community information and liaison officers. If your area has such a service it is very likely NWR can be included. Publicise meetings in the local papers (under Community News). Do this regularly as readers often need to see or hear about any group several times before they respond. Send in a short

report on a recent meeting to the Editor, or the date and topic to be discussed at your next meeting. Never publish an address or surname. First names and telephone/email address are quite sufficient for publication.

The very best method is word of mouth.

If each member brings one member the numbers of your group will double.

MONEY MATTERS

New groups have six months to establish themselves before paying subscriptions. Each member must then complete the Application for Membership Form, which should be returned to the Treasurer with the subscriptions.

New members of established groups are able to attend three meetings, they are then liable for subscription fees.

Subscriptions are collected each year and are sent to the National Committee. These cover publication of the annual newsletter, publicity costs, public liability insurance for members whilst attending meetings and national committee administration costs. Most groups levy an extra few dollars per member per annum to cover local group costs, (mail, small gifts for guest speakers etc).

NATIONAL COMMITTEE & OTHER NWR GROUPS

Although NWR groups are autonomous they are never alone. The NWR National Committee and other groups are always available to provide assistance, support and advice to any group that asks for it. The Committee consists of the National Organiser, Vice National Organiser, Secretary,

Treasurer, Public Officer and LO's. Any member of NWR is welcome to attend committee meetings.

The Committee meets several times per year to discuss the views and opinions of the groups and to take in the overall running of NWR. Two sub committees are formed annually, one to organise a yearly Conference for NWR members and friends and the other committee to edit and publish the annual newsletter.

Should you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to contact NWR. Looking forward to you joining our organisation.

CONTACT

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Group: _____

NWR

**National Women's Register Australia (NWR)
Incorporated**

WHAT IS NATIONAL WOMEN'S REGISTER?

National Women's Register (NWR) is an international organisation of women's discussion groups. Each group aims to provide its members with the opportunity to take part in stimulating discussion on a wide range of topics, both serious & light-hearted. By holding meetings on a regular basis the members of NWR groups have the opportunity to learn, appreciate other points of view, express their opinions and ideas and develop friendships in an informal atmosphere. Women of all ages are welcome.

This is not a new concept. It was first introduced in England in 1960 by a young housewife named Maureen Nicol. At that time the organisation was called "National Housewives Register." The organisation flourished eventually being renamed "National Women's Register." There are now members in many countries worldwide. "Women in Touch" (Australia) was officially founded in 1981 and continued growing until 1992 when the organisation underwent a name change to **National Women's Register (NWR) Incorporated.** This has brought the Australian membership in line with the international organisation of NWR. The register of groups around Australia and world-wide provide a "network of friendship" to women who by choice or necessity, move to a new area, city, state or country. NWR has already provided this network for many women.