

Fundraising Help Sheet - Raffles/Tombolas

What are raffles and tombolas?

Competitions in which prizes can be won by a winning number or name being selected with a corresponding prize. A raffle tends to have better quality prizes than a tombola.

How do I organise one?

Raffles and tombolas are governed by the Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976 and, as such, have specific guidelines which should be followed. Generally speaking if you hold and draw your raffle or tombola on the same day, there shouldn't be a problem with needing a licence.

What kind of prizes can I offer?

If you're doing a raffle, you will need some good quality ones, for example food hampers, holiday vouchers, gift tokens, large or superior quality cuddly toys, bottles of champagne, and the like. For tombolas, most people choose to do soft toy or teddy bear tombolas, which are always popular, particularly with parents and children.

How do I go about getting the prizes?

If you're looking for good quality gifts, try approaching local shops and businesses. Write them a letter explaining what you want to do and who you want to raise money for, and attach some information about the charity (we can supply you with leaflets for this purpose). Ask them if they would be kind enough to support your raffle with a prize, and offer to publicise their name in any advertising you do, and credit them on the day. The types of businesses you could write to could include travel agencies, off licences, supermarkets, toy shops, hotels, cinemas, theatres, ice rinks, etc.

If, on the other hand, you're looking for second-hand or nearly new goods for a tombola, see if your friends and family can donate clean, reasonable-condition cuddly toys and teddies, or you could try your local toy shops and greetings card shop for old stock.

Where can I hold my sale?

It may be that you've already booked a table at an organised fair or show. If not, find out about other local venues, such as social clubs, pub hospitality rooms, or church halls, and find out if you can hire a room for free or a reduced price. Or you may be able to hold your sale in your own house or that of someone you know.

How can I let people know about my sale?

Put an ad in the notices section of your local paper - it should be free. If you've a community notice board somewhere in your town, advertise there. Put notices up on your work noticeboard, or send an email message round. If you give us plenty of notice, we could also publicise your event in our fundraising newsletter.

Can I get hold of posters or leaflets so that people know what I am raising money for?

Yes. We can send you sample posters that you can modify and print for your event.

How do I actually set the raffle/tombola up?

Make sure you've plenty room to display your prizes. For tombolas, you'll probably need a book of cloakroom tickets, available from stationers, to put on your prizes. It'll be easier to locate winning tickets if you only choose numbers with, say, a 0 or a 5 at the end. Stick tickets ending in these numbers to each of your prizes, and then tear off and fold each ticket on the corresponding sheet, remembering to include numbers that don't end in a 0 or 5. Fold them up and put them in a box, or hat, or similar, ready for people to pull out.

For a raffle you just need to sell tickets as and when people want to buy them. Check if your participants are going to be around for the draw later. If not, you should give them their tickets, and on the corresponding ones that you keep, take down their phone number so that you can contact them if they do win something and they're not there to collect it.

Don't forget to count up and send in the money you've raised at the end of the event!