

Twins
trust.

We support
twins, triplets
and more...

Starting your own TWINS OR MULTIPLES CLUB



A Twins or Multiples Club can be a great source of support and fun for families with **twins, triplets or more.**

If you're thinking about setting up a club of your own, then Twins Trust are here to help you get started.

This pack is full of things for you to consider when starting your club and will point you in the right direction to get your club off the ground.

Don't forget to register your club with Twins

Trust. There's more information on why this is a great idea at the end of this guide. You can use the registration form that came with this pack or download a copy from our website: www.twinstrust.org/let-us-help/clubs.

If you have any questions about starting a club please email Twins Trust's Club Co-ordinator: clubs@twinstrust.org or call Twins Trust on 01252 332 344.

GETTING STARTED

Things to think about...

- **What does a twins and multiple births club offer?**
- **Where and when you will meet?**
- **What will happen at your club?**
- **How will your club cover its costs?**
- **What insurance will you need?**
- **How will you publicise your club to attract attendees?**
- **Club Committee roles – who's going to do what?**
- **How and why should you register your club with Twins Trust?**

What does a Twins or Multiples Club offer?

- A chance for multiple birth families to meet regularly, support each other, make friends and share information and experiences.
- Create an understanding environment for multiple birth children and their parents.
- An opportunity to organise group outings and events and raise awareness of multiples in the community.
- Build relationships with interested local Health Professionals (Midwives and Health Visitors).
- Access to support from Twins Trust



I turned up at the twins and multiples club and three sets of arms took three babies. Another set of hands brought me a hot cup of tea and I sat there not holding a baby and drinking a hot cup of tea and thinking 'these people understand'

WHERE WILL YOUR CLUB MEET?

This is one of the first decisions you will make when setting up your club. Will you meet in someone's house or hire somewhere public? You might need to begin in someone's house until you have enough attendees to consider hiring somewhere bigger. Remember the decision you make doesn't have to be final, your club can always move locations. To help you make this decision we have listed below some of the pros and cons for both options.

Meeting in someone's house

When your club first starts you may have a limited amount of money and this may mean that meeting in the homes of your club attendees is the only option available to you.

There are two ways this can work; either one or two of your attendees with the largest homes always host the meetings or your attendees take it in turns to host.

The benefits of hosting at attendees homes are:

- It's the cheapest option as you will not need to pay any venue hire costs.
- It means your club can move around and meet in all areas of your locality.
- The venues will already be set up for children with baby changing facilities, feeding areas and toys to play with.
- The venue will have a kitchen for making tea and coffee.

The downsides of this option are:

- Not everyone may be able to host a meeting. Some attendees may live with relatives or have limited space in their home and this could potentially put them off coming to the club completely.

- New attendees may find attending for the first time more intimidating if they have to go to a stranger's home rather than a public building.
- Having a meeting at a member's home may restrict the numbers who can attend.
- If someone misses a session they may not know where to go for the next session.
- It can be a lot of work for the person who is hosting the group. They may feel pressure to have a tidy home!
- If the host is unable to attend lots of people have to be contacted at short notice.
- People with toddlers may be put off going to other peoples' homes as they may feel they are disruptive.
- There is the possibility that damage could be caused to the hosts personal property.
- People with disabilities or with disabled children cannot be guaranteed easy access to every home.
- There may not be anywhere suitable to store pushchairs if people need to walk to the location.
- Peoples' homes may not be as easy to find as a community centre or hall.

Meeting in a public building

Meeting in a public building may be an option for your club immediately or it may be something that you will look at in the future. You could consider a local village/church hall, Surestart Centre or Health Centre Clinics. You could also research other groups in your area as this may give further ideas of potential places.

Meeting in a public building is a good idea because:

- People will not need to check the location each time they attend as it will always be in the same place.
- You can choose a building that is accessible for all, no stairs and access for double/triple buggies.
- It will be easier for attendees to find. Often local people will already know where the community centres/church halls etc are and if not they are usually easy to find with a quick internet search.
- There may be other groups that meet at the venue and you may be able to share toys and equipment.
- There may be storage space for toys and equipment.

- There is no danger of attendees' personal items being damaged.
- It's a little bit like having a school uniform - you can't see who has the most expensive trainers - this way people won't worry about whether their home is 'nice enough' to host a meeting.

The downsides to this may be:

- It may be difficult to find somewhere that fulfils the needs of the group.
- It can be expensive. The cost of hiring the venue and insurance will need to be considered.
- There may not be a kitchen or baby changing area.
- There may not be adequate car parking spaces.
- You may need to provide toys and equipment.
- The venue may not have a suitable day/time available.



WHEN WILL YOUR CLUB MEET?

Once you have decided on the best venue option for your club the next step is deciding when the best time to hold your meetings is.

Things to consider are:

- Other local groups and activities. Make sure that you're not running on the same morning/afternoon as something similar in your local area.
- Consider how often you wish to meet. You may want to start small and meet monthly or fortnightly with a view to working up to weekly group. Or you may just wish to jump straight into meeting weekly.
- Consider if you wish to run all year round or during school term times only. This may be dependent on the venue and the volunteer's availability.
- You may find people with older children are less likely to attend during school holidays. However, those with younger children only may be happy to have a place to go that isn't suddenly overrun with school age children.
- Think about practicalities; for instance, morning toddler groups from around 10am-12pm are generally popular because breakfast is finished and older children are at school but there is still time to be home for lunch and a nap if needed.
- Think about how long you want your meeting to last. Consider what you're going to be doing during the meeting and allow enough time for the activities you have planned eg, play, snack, song time etc.
- Consider if your timings are likely to work for families. For example, a 2 hour meeting starting at 2pm will not allow people with older children to attend as they will have a school pick up to do.
- Don't be afraid to experiment a bit. You may find that you start on a certain day or time and don't have the best start, if this happens don't give up, just have a think about why this might be and maybe try something different such as an earlier/later start time. You could chat to any of the people who do attend your group to see if they have any views on the best day or time.
- As the Club grows you may also like to consider having special events such as evening events for parents only which will give the parents time to talk without interruption or weekend events to include the whole family.



CLUB ACTIVITIES

Once you have decided when and where you are meeting you will need to decide what you would like to happen at your group. Below are a number of things you could consider depending on the suitability of your venue

- You could opt to keep things simple with toys for the children to play with and drinks for the parents.
- Some groups prefer a little more structure with set themes or activities set up in different areas or at tables.
- A craft table is something you might want to think about including. This could be as simple as some paper and crayons for the children to do colouring or you could attempt a more elaborate craft activity.
- A singing session or story time can be a great way to end the group.
- Consider if you will provide the children with a snack and drink or if you will ask parents to provide them for their own children. If the group is providing the snack, think about where children might sit to eat and be sure to check for any allergies.
- Think about if you would like to arrange any outside companies to visit. Some entertainers or music/dance type companies will come and do a free taster session for groups.

COVERING COSTS

When setting up your club you are likely to incur costs. This could be down to venue hire, advertising, insurance and many more things. Initially you may be happy to pay some of the upfront costs to get the club off the ground, but you don't want to be doing this long term.

There are a few things you can consider that may help your club financially:

- Most clubs and toddler groups charge a fee to attend, this generally helps to cover the venue hire drinks, snacks, insurance etc. The price to attend varies hugely depending on the area where you are located. It may be worth checking out some of the local toddler groups to see what they charge per person/family.
- You could consider asking people that attend to either bring their own drinks/snack or donate items such as a piece of fruit each towards the snack.
- Contact your local supermarkets, many now have ways they support local charities and community groups such as token schemes and community funds.
- Once you have a few people regularly attending consider setting up a fundraising event. This could be something simple such as a bake sale or a nearly new sale.

GETTING INSURANCE FOR YOUR CLUB

It is very important to get adequate public liability insurance for your club to protect you in the event of any accidents or incidents involving your club members while they are at one of your meet ups or events.

Many venue hirers will now ask to see evidence that your club has sufficient public liability insurance cover before they will let you use their venue even if they have their own public liability insurance for the building you are planning to hire.

Twins Trust registered clubs can apply for a Twins Trust insurance grant to help cover some or all of the costs of insurance, as we want to make sure clubs are adequately covered. Further information on the grant and the eligibility criteria can be found on the Twins Trust website at www.twinstrust.org/let-us-help/clubs.

Below we have provided some further information and things to consider regarding insurance.

Getting a quote:

- The easiest way to get insurance quotes is to search online. Alternatively, you can approach a local insurance broker and ask them to get quotes on your behalf.
- Make sure you get at least three quotes so that you can do a comparison of both the cover offered and the price.
- Ensure you read each quote carefully to make sure that it covers anything you do as a club and covers the age range of children attending. Some policies will only cover up to five year-olds so if you have older children attending during school holidays or to special events ensure the insurance you choose covers this.

Making sure you're prepared in the event of a claim:

- If an accident occurs at your club or one of your events it is possible it may result in someone making a claim against the club. For this reason, it is important that the club properly record the details of any accidents that occur, whether the club is at fault or not. This can be done in an accident book, available at a low cost online. Most venues will also have a book to record accidents too.
- Twins Trust recommends that you nominate someone to be in charge of health and safety. This person would be responsible for ensuring any incidents are recorded in the appropriate manner and for carrying out a risk assessment for any event you hold.
- It is important to make sure that parents/carers attending the group are aware that they remain responsible for the welfare and well-being of their children whilst they are at the group. It is worth putting this as a disclaimer on any information relating to club activities or individual events.



HOW TO PUBLICISE YOUR CLUB

It's vital to publicise your club to make sure that the relevant people know who you are and where to find you. We have some suggestions below on how you can advertise your club and make sure you get attendees through the door:

Facebook:

Consider making a Facebook page for your club if you don't have one already. Many multiples groups have Facebook pages where they post updates of what's happening at their clubs and encourage people to attend. If you're unsure what to put on a Facebook page why not check on the Twins Trust website for clubs with Facebook links to see the content they have, you might just be inspired to start your own page.

Website:

If you have the expertise to do so you may wish to set up a website. This could contain things such as information on the group, events and dates of meetings and items for sale. It may help to publicise the group and act as a reminder of meeting dates.



Posters:

If you are able to, print some posters advertising your club. You don't have to have anything fancy, just a simple document with basic details of who you are and when and where you meet. Try to display these in places that parents of multiples might attend such as local GP Surgeries, Children's Centres, Community Centres and Church noticeboards. Twins Trust have an editable poster template available for clubs to use. For a copy please email clubs@twinstrust.org.

Health Professionals:

Make contact with your local Health visiting Team and let them know about your club so they can encourage any families with multiples that they support to attend your club.

Try visiting local Maternity Units or hospitals to see if they would be prepared to let you display a poster.

Check if your local Maternity Units/hospitals run any multiple specific antenatal or parenting courses. They may be happy to mention your club to expectant parents or might even welcome you along to talk about your club.

Network:

If there are any other multiples clubs in the area get in contact with them, they may have people at their group who would like to attend your club as well. You can also contact other local toddler groups and see if they have any families with multiples that attend, they may be happy to share news of your new club.

COMMITTEE ROLES

WHO'S DOING WHAT?

When setting up your club if you can it's a great idea to set up a committee of volunteers. This way the work is spread and if a volunteer is unwell or unable to attend a meeting there is a back up to step in. Below we have listed some of the key roles that you may wish to appoint within this committee:

Chair/Co-ordinator:

This is the person who oversees the main running of the group and gives the group direction. To begin the Chair would probably be the person the club chooses to be responsible for ensuring that any safeguarding issues are dealt with appropriately, unless there is anyone else within the club with sufficient experience to hold this role.

Secretary:

This is the person who is responsible for the administration of the group. They will take minutes in committee meetings, in the early days they will also coordinate the strategy for publicising the group.

Treasurer:

This person is responsible for the finances of the club. They will keep a record of all financ-

es and will be responsible for looking after the clubs bank account (if you choose to set one up). The Treasurer would also be required to keep the Chair and Secretary up to date with the financial situation of the club with the appropriate records.

Membership Secretary:

This person is responsible for the process of joining the club and contacting anyone who wishes to come along. They would also be required to keep contact details for club members up to date.

Other Roles:

Going forward you may have more people willing to join the committee and lend a hand, some other roles you could consider are; Fund-raising, Event Organiser, Marketing and Social Media, Newsletter Coordinator.



REGISTERING YOUR CLUB WITH TWINS TRUST

At Twins Trust we understand the importance of multiples clubs. Clubs provide invaluable support to local families and offer them a dedicated place to chat to other parents with multiples about the amazing joys and the challenges that come with parenting twins, triplets or more. We really do appreciate all the work that goes into starting up and running a club and we want to make this as easy as possible for you and support you in any way that we can. Below are a number of ways that Twins Trust can support you on your journey if you choose to register your club with us.

For any advice or support regarding your club please contact our Membership Team at clubs@twinstrust.org or on 01252 332 344.

- As a Twins Trust registered club you will have your own designated page on our website that will display all of the relevant details about your club, including links to your website and Facebook page if you have them. Our clubs pages get over 70,000 visits per year so these pages are great publicity for your club.
- Committee members of registered clubs can join the Twins Trust Registered Clubs private Facebook page: [twinstrustregisteredclubs](https://www.facebook.com/twinstrustregisteredclubs). This is a great way of chatting to other club committee members to discuss ideas, tips and questions. All we need to know are the name of your club and the role you hold.
- As a registered club you would receive e-newsletters from Twins Trust twice a year that will include information on what's happening at Twins Trust together with other information that may be relevant to your members. We also like to include updates and news from clubs themselves - it's a great way to share events and ideas.
- Lots of resources are available to Twins Trust registered clubs including booklets on breastfeeding, neonatal care, healthy multiple pregnancy and preparing for parenthood and leaflets on weaning, potty training, individuality, PND and sleep.
- Twins Trust registered clubs benefit from discounted rates on our Multiple Behaviour and Sleep Webinars when completing a group booking of a minimum of 10 places. This is a brilliant opportunity for club members to get some great information at a reduced price. For more information on this please visit www.twinstrust.org/let-us-help/clubs.
- Each quarter registered clubs receive the latest copy of our Multiple Matters magazine to share with their members.
- Once a year we have the Twins Trust Grand Annual Raffle. This is a fantastic chance for registered clubs to make some money for their club whilst also supporting Twins Trust. Registered clubs receive books of tickets to sell on behalf of Twins Trust and their club will get to keep 50% commission of any tickets they sell.
- We provide a set of Best Practice Principles for clubs so there is a guideline for clubs to agree and adhere to. To view the principles please visit www.twinstrust.org/let-us-help/clubs.
- Registered clubs get a copy of our clubs resource pack, which is filled with information to help you run your club successfully.

You can register your club by completing the registration form that came with this pack.