

How to Hold Your Own Salon

The first Salon in August 2010 was an intimate gathering of Adult Education SIG members: friends and colleagues sharing ideas on pronunciation games. Since then, the concept of a Salon (or a small group gathering with wine, cheese, shoes-off, interactive and joyful) has generated interest across the states and across the SIGs. Here are the dozen easy steps for holding a Salon and the agenda from the first Salon to help you visualize the evening.

For other “images,” take a look at Salon photos on our SIG page. For Program ideas, look at handouts from other Salons and read the research presented on the PowerPoint on the SIG page.

Now on to the dozen steps for holding a Salon:

1. First things first: Find a **venue** that will comfortably seat **up to 12 people**, preferably in a circular formation to facilitate sharing. A living room or someplace cozy is ideal.
2. Decide on a **topic** for the first Salon. You can use our survey (www.nystesol.org and click on the Adult Education SIG page), or talk with others about your area’s specific interests.
3. Invite your co-facilitator to a **planning meeting** (six to eight weeks before the Salon). A Salon can be facilitated by 1-2 members or invited “experts.” Invite your prospective facilitators to bring a few “best practice” activities that relate to the topic. These should be activities that they have successfully implemented in their ESOL classes. In addition to interactive activities, an article to read and discuss is another idea.
4. As a planning group, decide which **3-4 activities** should be presented to the group for a diverse, yet cohesive, Salon on the chosen topic.
5. Decide on a **date** for the Salon and who will bring the **wine and cheese**.
6. **The Adult Ed SIG Chair will email all Salon** invitees with the topic, date, and time, reminding them that there are limited seats: no more than 12 Salon participants to keep the spirit of comfort and coziness.
7. **The SIG Chair will collect RSVPs** and forward them to the lead facilitator. She/he will send **another email to confirm** participant list for the big night.
8. Collect electronic copies of the activities from co-planners to **create a hand-out** for all Salon participants. Several Salon Programs are on the Adult Ed SIG page for you to review.
9. **Create an agenda** that includes materials for each activity (from the co-planners) that can be handed out at the Salon. Create this with the idea in mind that participants could replicate each activity in their own classrooms without too much preparation.

10. Arrange for any audio-visual equipment for the Salon. Ideally, though keep it simple and intimate. **Very important:** Take photos to display on the SIG page.
11. Be sure to **take time to greet and talk** at the beginning and at the end of the Salon! At the beginning, take about 20 minutes for everyone to get a glass of wine, eat some cheese, and mingle before the professional development part of the Salon begins. Provide name tags, too.
12. After the event, get some **feedback** from the participants, and send the comments to the SIG Chair for posting on the SIG page. Also, write about your Salon for our Adult Ed SIG page, and for NYS TESOL “Dialogue” or “Idiom.”