



Protest Organizing Checklist

■ Set clear goals and messaging

- When setting goals, organizers can use the SMART framework by making each goal Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound. When setting a strategy, organizers can keep it simple by thinking of a strategy as consisting of several activities – each meant to build toward a larger objective like passing or repealing a law.

■ Determine the type of action

- Organizers will need to consider several factors when choosing what type of action to mobilize around. Considerations include the goals of the protest, likely amount of participation, resources needed, relevancy to the issue, etc. Examples include marches, candlelight vigils, Burma Shaves, picketing, sit-ins, lock-ons, etc.

■ Determine time and location

- If the goal is to get as much participation as possible, organizers may want to consider setting their protest for the weekend. If, however, the goal is to call attention to a specific issue or event, a protest may need to coincide with an event such as a high-level meeting, government decision, or the arrival of a public official. If there is no obvious location to choose from, organizers may want to consider symbolic locations or a location that will get high visibility.

■ Estimate cost

- While protests can be organized for free, a good starting budget for a single protest might be \$250 for promotional materials, supplies, equipment such as a megaphone, and any permits. For long term initiatives, \$1000 may be a good initial goal for materials, permits, professional branding, etc.

■ Develop materials and program

- Organizers will want to consider what types of materials they will need such as banners and signs. **The most important point is to have a very clear message that a wide audience will understand.** Organizers may also want to set a rough agenda for the protest. Some programs may combine actions; for example, a protest could begin as a march and end as a picket around an important building.

Read More [Here](#).





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Organize support roles

Depending on the level of community support and participation, organizers may want to decide on what roles to play during the protest. Example roles include:

- Frontline organizers
- Floating coordinators
- Speakers
- Police Liaisons
- Press Contacts
- Videographers/Documentarians
- Off-site Legal Contacts
- Legal Observers
- Logistics & Donation Coordinators
- Fundraisers
- Medics
- "Firefighters" (to handle tear gas)
- Scouts

Determine if permits are required

- In general, protests don't require permits if they take place in public spaces and don't block car or pedestrian traffic. However, marches and large rallies that block traffic, have oversized crowds at parks or plazas, or require sound amplification may require local permits. Protests in response to breaking events or news do not require permits, but law enforcement can ask demonstrators to clear an area to allow car or pedestrian traffic through.
- For local protest laws see [this chart by FindLaw](#).

Understand civil disobedience

Civil disobedience is a peaceful and usually pre-planned strategy for creating political or social change. In such acts, activists break the law without using violence, vandalism, or rioting in order to call attention to injustice; hence the term, 'civil' disobedience. Organizers should not take civil disobedience lightly and, as always, [understand local laws](#) and know who to call for legal assistance. (Pro tip: Start with the [National Lawyers Guild](#).)

Advertise the protest

When advertising an upcoming protest, make sure the following information is included:

- 1) The issue being protested.
- 2) Where the protest will take place and at what time.
- 3) If it is a march, the route protesters will take.
- 4) Any relevant information and/or messaging guidance.

Prepare Yourself

Organizers should be familiar with three things before leading (or joining) a protest:

- 1) [What to wear](#)
- 2) [What to bring](#)
- 3) [Law enforcement tactics](#)

Read More [Here](#).

