



Earn Money Hosting Your Own Trivia Contest

By

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Notice

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Introduction

For as long as there have been pubs there has been trivia. After all, The Guinness Book of World Records was written to solve bar arguments. If you have spent any time in a pub then there is a good chance that you have seen a trivia contest.

These contests come in many styles but they have two things in common; people enjoy them and they can make you some money on the side. While putting on a trivia contest may seem like an easy task, there are many pitfalls to avoid if you want your event to be successful.

This e-book will help you to go about setting up a trivia contest without falling into these mistakes. Good Luck.

Never Have The Wrong Answer

There will be many people out there taking part in your contest and some of them will have more knowledge of facts than you. If you provide an answer which is incorrect then you lose all respect. How can this happen? I was at a trivia contest one time and the question was, "What was Columbus's first name? As far as I knew, the name was never given but I was not a fan of the show. So when the host said the answer Philip I just shrugged. A person at the next table objected saying that Columbus's first name was never given.

The host then defended her answer by saying that she got her answer from Trivia Pursuit. And that was when she learned two things. The first was about the lawsuit filed against the creators of Trivial Pursuit by Fred Worth, the author of The Trivia Encyclopedia. To protect his work from being copied, Worth included wrong answers in his book. One of these answers was Philip. (Long story short: The games creators admitted they used the book for a source but argued that trivia facts can't be copyrighted. The courts agreed and the wrong answers were fixed). The second thing she learned was that some trivia players take their trivia very seriously.

Another way to make mistakes is to use out of date material. Sports records have a way of falling and if you want to make sure that your answers are still correct, and then check with the latest records. A way of avoiding this problem is to phrase your question as follows: "Who was the first person to..." This information is not going to change. You are also safe to ask who broke Babe Ruth's homerun record because this is not going to change either. But don't be afraid to ask more modern day questions. Just be sure to check the latest standings.

And the quickest way to make mistakes is to copy your questions of some random site off the internet. You will get answers that say Louis Pasteur cured smallpox and that Juan Ponce de Leon discovered Hawaii. (Edward Jenner found the vaccine for smallpox and James Cook is credited with discovering Hawaii.) If you are using the internet to get your questions, make sure the site is respectable and then double-check your answers.

If you are in the awkward position of having to defend your answer you should follow this suggestion. Apologize to the person and agree that he or she may be right and that you will check the answer later.

However, for the purpose of the contest you have to go with the answer that was given in your source.

If you follow these suggestions then your next trivia contest should run smoothly.

Your Questions Are Too Hard

This is a complaint that you are going to hear no matter what. Some people think that all the answers should be easy. I once had a person walk out of a contest I was hosting after I asked the first question. It went something like what famous wall is a tourism destination in Jerusalem. Now you might or might not know the answer is the Wailing Wall. Granted the question was not too difficult and it was a perfectly sound question. If I had asked that question as my second question, he probably still would have walked out.

So for the first question or two you can feel free to insult their intelligence and ask real easy questions. Sooner or later though the tough questions need to be asked and you might need a thick skin to handle some of the complaints. There are some trivia hosts who take pleasure in asking hard questions. This can really keep people from coming back unless the trivia contest has been advertised as "hard" or "impossible"

I once hosted an Impossible Star Trek Trivia and promoted it that way. Normally if a person only got two correct out of ten, they would be upset. But since this was supposed to be impossible and I kept telling people they weren't going to get any right, they were happy with getting one or two right per round. If I had advertised it as a regular trivia then I would have had everyone walk out on me. How you promote your trivia is a big part of being successful.

Your Questions Are Too Easy

Those four genius wearing pocket protectors and drinking water know they are smarter than everyone else in the room. They also know that the harder the question the happier they will be. Why? Because they can show off how smart they are. Now if your questions are so easy that everyone, including the four dropouts wearing AC/DC t-shirts, will get the answer, then any team can win. And this possibility will mean that some teams will complain that your questions are too easy.

Sometimes your questions are too easy and that can be fine. The main thing is that the majority of your questions can't be too easy. If you are finding that most of the teams are scoring 7 or above out of 10 then you might want to make your questions a little tougher.

A Question Can Be Easy Or Hard?

Depending on how you ask a question, most can be used to fit into more than one category. Let us look at Blackbeard as an example.

Easy

What famous pirate was nicknamed named for a facial feature?

Medium

By what name was the pirate Edward Teach better known?

Hard

What was Blackbeard's real name?

To answer the first question a person needs to only know of Blackbeard. It does not matter if they know of any other pirates at all. To answer the second question a person can know of more than one pirate and narrow down their selections and choose one answer. To answer the hard question a person needs to know the answer. What are the odds that someone will simply guess Edward Teach.

So if you ever find yourself with too many questions from one category, a simple re-asking of the question can help solve the problem.

How To Structure Your Trivia Contest

Never forget that the purpose of a trivia contest is to get people to show up and buy a few drinks. The longer they stay in the bar the more drinks they will buy. Two hours is long enough to stretch out a contest. Of course a trivia contest can be stretched out longer. The following is how to run a good contest:

Step 1: People show up and register for the contest. If there is an admission charge it is usually your job to collect the money. People don't mind paying two dollars each to play but if you charge more you had better have a good prize.

Step 2: Give the players a pen or pencil and a piece of paper with numbered blank spaces. Ask them to choose a team name and to write the team name down on the paper.

Step 3: Ask a round or two of questions making sure everyone can hear you and be sure to give people enough time to answer each question. Sometimes the team needs to debate the answers.

Step 4: After the round has ended ask your quarter questions. Make sure you wait until the end of a round so you don't confuse people. Make sure you let them know that it is a quarter question and not a team question.

Step 5: Start the next round.

Step 6: At the halfway point take in all the questions and correct them. This should not take more than a half hour. Some trivia hosts re-distribute the sheets and let the teams correct each others answer. This is not a good idea because you do not get the same results. Some teams may mark harder or easier than other teams. If you correct the answers, then the corrections will be uniform.

Step 7: Hand the questions back to the team and announce who the leaders are. Then give the answers and make sure you did not make any mistakes in adding up the scores or marking an answer wrong. Most teams won't complain if you marked an answer right when it was wrong.

Step 8: Continue with the contest. Ask your quarter questions after each round.

Step 9: When the last questions have been answered, take in the answer sheet and correct the answers. Hand back the sheets and give the correct answers. Ask if there have been any mistakes. If not announce the winners.

What Are Quarter Questions?

A quarter question is a question that does not count against the score. If a person gets the question right then they win a prize (Usually a drink) If they give the wrong answer then they have to pay a quarter. Now most pubs will donate some drink tickets or other prizes. The quarter questions are where you make your money. So be smart and make sure that you get lots of quarters. If you get only 15 wrong answers for 6 quarter questions you will have made \$22.50. If there are 30 wrong answers to 6 questions you have earned \$45.00. The trick is to ask the right kind of question.

The question can not be so obscure that people cannot gauge what the correct answer would be. Question such as how many miles to the moon may as well be what number am I thinking of. You would not want to ask a question such as what country has the highest mountain. The question has to be hard enough that no one knows the answer outright but not so hard that people don't think they can guess the answer. (We also included a list of quarter questions for you.)

A good question is as follows: The top ten money making movies of all time have just be released. I am looking for numbers 4 and 8. If someone guesses a movie that is on the list but not ones you are looking for tell them one number their guess was.

Another good quarter question is: What animal is responsible for the most human deaths worldwide each year. (The mosquito)

Now sometimes people will fluke out the answer on the first few guesses. There is nothing you can do about it. Just smile and give them the prize. I have seen some hosts make over a hundred dollars in a night on the quarter questions. They are your best friend.

Be Careful Of How You Phrase A Question

Let us take a look at the question How tall is Mount Everest? Now you might not think that there is anything wrong with the question. One of the few things I learned in an Education class was how to validate a question. On your answer sheet you have 29029 feet. Now someone has answered 8848 metres. Well that is correct as well. If they answered 348,348 inches then they have also answered correctly. Since you did not specify what the measurement should be, you are now responsible for converting their answers. If you asked the question In feet, how tall is Mount Everest then the contestants are responsible for any conversions that may be required.

The same holds true for temperature. Unless you have both answers down on your sheet you had better state if you are using Celsius or Fahrenheit. An improper question is: At what temperature does water boil? Well it boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit and 100 degrees Celsius. But unless you are prepared to accept both answers, you will want to specify what measurement you use. The only time this would not be a problem is if the answer was -40. This temperature is the same in both Fahrenheit and Celsius. But then some genius might answer the question 233 degrees Kelvin, which would also be right. Be aware that these temperatures only apply at sea level.

Always be specific when you ask your question. On the surface there might not seem to be anything wrong with the question of who was the first player to score 50 goals in 50 games. But let us look at the problems with this question.

- 1) It does not specify a sport. You might assume it refers to hockey but other sports including soccer have goals.
- 2) It does not specify a league. It could be taken to mean who was the first person locally to score 50 goals in 50 games.
- 3) It does not specify a time period. Were these fifty games spread out over numerous seasons?

The correct form of this question would be: Who was the first NHL player to score 50 goals in 50 games in one season. (Maurice Richard)

Use One Answer Questions

I recently attended a trivia contest and was given an answer sheet numbered 1 through twenty. I figured that the score would be out of twenty but the winning score turned out to be 37 out of 50. Some of these questions were four pointers. Question 10 was name the Little Women (Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy) and you were given points for each correct answer you gave. This complicates things when it comes to correcting the question. And if you never heard of Little Women, you are not missing out on one point but four. Most players don't complain over a four point question but if you look at it carefully, what is being asked is this:

Question 9: Name one of the little women.

Question 10: Name another of the little women.

Question 11: Name another of the little women.

Question 12: Name another of the little women.

If the questions were asked in this fashion and a person did not know anything about Little Women, then you would here complaints.

An Answer Is Either Right Or Wrong

This is your contest and so you get to make the rules. One rule you should have it that everything is black or white. There is no grey. In others words and answer is either right or it is wrong. You get to decide. Never award a half point. If you ask for a person's first and last name, then they are required to give you both names. Just remember to tell people that both names are required (that is if you require them. If you decide not to require the first name you can skip over this section). If the question was, who was the first MLB baseball player to hit 61 homeruns in a season.

The answer is Roger Maris. Well you can't accept Roger as a correct answer. If someone to answer Benny Maris then you would have to mark that wrong as well. If they only answer Maris then you have the

choice of giving them a full point or no point. Do not fall into the slippery slope of awarding partial points.

In a previous example I asked "who was the first NHL player to score 50 goals in 50 games in one season". The answer was Maurice Richard who was known by the nickname "Rocket". So if someone had answered Rocket Richard to the question, what should you do? Unless you are up on the nicknames of people, this can cause a problem. So if you are demanding a first and last name, specify no nicknames. The answer Refrigerator Perry would be wrong while the answer William Perry would be correct.

Just remember it is your contest so you can set the rules. Just be consistent with your marking.

Keep It Simple

Some trivia contests have music questions and there is nothing wrong with that. But in some cases the host plays you a part of a song and you either name the song, the singer or both. The problem arises with the sound system. Unless the system is top of the line, the sound will not be clear to everyone in the room. Those sitting closer to a speaker might be able to hear more clearly than those sitting further away.

Then there is the problem of the CD player not working or the sound system not working. I was at a contest one time and the host could not get the CD player to work. She did a good job of improvising on the spot but not everyone can think quickly on their feet.

If you just ask questions that do not need props then you do not need to worry about equipment failure. Your microphone might stop working but you can always speak louder.

Hosting An Impossible Trivia

As a general rule every trivia contest should have a mixture of easy and hard questions. If you ask all easy questions then there is no challenge. If you ask all hard questions then there is no fun. It can be a hard mixture to get right. There is an exception to this rule, however, and that is when you host an impossible trivia contest.

Like the name suggests, an impossible trivia contest prides itself on asking very hard questions. This type of contest is usually theme related and is designed for the fanatic fringe. An impossible trivia dealing with football will draw out the football fans while an impossible trivia contest about Star Trek will attract the Star Trek fans. These people know the questions will be hard and want to see how well they can do.

When you set out to advertise your impossible trivia contest remember to take it to the extreme. What you want to do is throw down the challenge to the self-professed experts and tell them they have no hope of scoring well in your contest. Make it sound like only the brightest and the best are worthy to enter your trivia. The more hyperbole you use, the more the true fan is going to want to take your challenge.

Should the questions be hard? Yes. Don't apologize if people complain the questions are too hard. This is not likely to be a problem, however, as they will be fully aware of what they have signed up for. Feel free to egg on the players by throwing in the occasional comment such as "here is another question nobody will get" or "save me the trouble and just mark this one wrong".

Another way to have fun with the contestants is to start off disguising your question as easy but then letting the other shoe drop. An example of such a question would be as follows: "Babe Ruth was the first MLB player to hit 60 home runs in a season. Who broke this record and with how many?" Now that is a simple question since most sports fans know the answer the answer is Roger Maris with 61 home runs." Hold your question for a beat as the contestants start to write down their answers and then continue your question by adding: "And what other players have hit more than 60 home runs in a season and how many did they hit."

Remember to use some restraint when asking your questions. You really don't want to ask a question like; "How many episodes of the original Star Trek where there and name them." If run correctly an impossible trivia contest will provide a good bit of entertainment and the contestants will be happy to walk away with only a few correct answers.

How Do You Go About Getting Hired As A Trivia Host?

Unless you have a reputation as a trivia expert, you will most likely have to approach the manager of an establishment and suggest they run a trivia contest. Tell the manager that you will take care of the questions and answers and run the contest. The standard rule for running a trivia contest is that the establishment does not pay you to run the contest but if they are willing to offer you money, then take it.

You agree to do the following:

- ❖ Supply questions and answers
- ❖ Provide all the supplies
- ❖ Run all aspect of the contest
- ❖ Award the prizes at the end of the contest

The establishment should provide the following:

- ❖ A reasonably quiet section to hold the contest
- ❖ Provide the prizes for the quarter questions
- ❖ Provide a prize for the winning team

Now some establishments may be hesitant to provide prizes for both the quarter questions and the winning team. If this is the case, suggest they charge \$2.00 per player and the winning team will get the money as a prize.

If the establishment has no problem with providing a prize for the winning team then you should negotiate the \$2.00 fee as part of your pay.

Once you have proven that you can run a successful trivia contest and start bringing in bigger crowds, then you can re-negotiate the terms. If

you are approached by an establishment to host a contest then feel free to set a flat fee for providing this service.

Team Sizes

Since you charge by the individual, your bottom dollar will not be affected by the size of the team. I have been in contests where the team size ranged from two people to twelve people. This seems hardly fair. Besides if the prize for the winning team is a \$50 bar tab then each team member's share of the prize is \$4.16 and they paid \$2.00 to enter. Granted most people enter the contest for the fun and not the prize.

Still if you have only three people on your team you are not going to be happy with going up against 12 people. A good rule of thumb is that a team needs at least two players and can have no more than six. Four seems to be the ideal number of participants for a team.

Unruly Interruptions

Since you are in a place where people are drinking, you will find some of the players might become inebriated and begin to cause a disturbance. You should try to convince that player to be quiet but if you have no luck refer the problem to the manager.

Likewise, sometimes a person who is not playing will shout out answers or become a problem. Ask this person not to ruin the game and he or she continues to be a problem, refer the issue to the manager.

Use For A Fundraiser

Instead of using this kit to put on a trivia contest in a pub, it can be used to put on a trivia contest for charity. Since it is a fundraiser, you can use donated items for prizes and charge more for the entry fee. Plus all the money from the quarter questions all go towards the cause. If you have purchased this kit for this purpose then why not turn the contest into a super trivia contest and use all the questions.

Space the contest out over 10 weeks and the cumulative score will be the overall winner. If you get 50 people a night to play, that will equal \$2500.00 if you charge \$5.00 as an entry fee. To raise even more money in the quarter questions have the prize for a correct answer be worth a bonus point. If teams are close together then they will be winning to spend more quarters to get these bonus points.



Looking to host your own trivia contest? We have done all the work for you. With our kit, you get

- You get 360 questions divided up into easy, medium and hard and already sorted into pre-arranged contest. This is enough questions for ten separate contests.
- You get 50 "Beer Questions" designed to earn you those extra quarters.
- You get a product that you simply print out and you are ready to go.
- You get the questions in these categories: History, Sports, Entertainment, Geography, Science and Literature.

This kit uses a rotating game grid so that there is an even balance between the categories and the question difficulties. Each category will have two questions that are easy, two questions that harder and two question that are the hardest.

Difficulty	Round1	Round2	Round3	Round4	Round5	Round6
Easy	Entertainment	Geography	History	Literature	Science	Sports
Easy	Geography	History	Literature	Science	Sports	Entertainment
Medium	History	Literature	Science	Sports	Entertainment	Geography
Medium	Literature	Science	Sports	Entertainment	Geography	History
Hard	Science	Sports	Entertainment	Geography	History	Literature
Hard	Sports	Entertainment	Geography	History	Literature	Science

"Sample Of One Round Of Questions"

1. *What class of animals carry their young in pouches?*
2. *In Golf what is an Albatross?*
3. *What was the first song to be played on MTV?*
4. *What is the address of the White House in Washington DC?*
5. *What was the 8 year long insurgency by Kenyan peasants against the British colonialist rule called?*
6. *What book featured the character Allan Quartermain?*

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And Now For The Answers

1. Marsupials
2. A double eagle or three under par
3. Video Killed The Radio Star
4. 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
5. The Mau Mau uprising
6. King Solomon's Mines