When starting a club, you’ll need to choose a meeting location, frequency, and format. In making
these decisions, consider the needs of club members, available resources, and the image you want
to project to the community.

MEETING LOCATION

The first Rotary club held its meetings in the
offices of its four founding members, a practice
that was effective and practical in 1905. Today,
Rotary clubs meet in a wide variety of venues,
including restaurants, hotels, libraries, convention
centers, banks, museums, town halls, bars, boats,
ranches, outdoor theaters, as well as meeting
rooms in local businesses, senior housing
facilities, churches, temples, and mosques.
Wherever you decide to hold your meetings,
be sure to put this information on your club
application so it can be included in our Club
Finder listings. If meeting locations will vary, post
the schedule on the club website and include the
website address on your club application.

MEETING FREQUENCY

Rotary clubs must meet regularly, at least twice a
month. They can meet more frequently if they like.

MEETING FORMAT

Rotary clubs also meet in a variety of ways:
in person, online, or a mix of each — even a mix of
each at the same meeting, if some members attend
in person and others participate using online
communication tools, like video conferencing.
Clubs that meet solely online are especially
suited to busy members who travel frequently or
are unable to attend in-person meetings. Some
clubs meet on their website at a set time. Some
use webinar technology. Others post a meeting
activity, and members go online to participate at a
time that’s convenient for them.

If a club meets primarily online, at least one
member needs to be proficient in the design and
maintenance of the club’s website, which should
include:

- A private section for members only
- A secure online payment system to collect
  member dues, fees, and contributions
- A URL that refers to the name of the club,
  for example, www.rotaryclubchicago.org
- Content and design that follow the
  recommendations in Tell Rotary’s Story:
  Voice and Visual Identity Guidelines

Check the Quick Start Guide for Club Websites
for more information.

In-person meetings can also be held in a variety of
ways; they can be formal or informal, informative
or interactive, businesslike or social. For meeting
ideas, see Lead Your Club: President.
QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

• How many members does the club have? How big do you want it to be?

• What meeting formats will you use (in-person vs. online; featuring speakers, activities, social events, or service projects)?

• How often do members want to meet?

• Where do the members live and work?

• What possible venues are near members’ workplaces and homes?

• Will you have a meal or refreshments with the meeting?

• What would the facility and any food cost?

• What image will the venue convey to the community? What do you want the meeting location to say about your club?

• Can any of the members provide meeting space free of charge?

• Is parking available, and is the venue served by public transportation?

• Will you need access to audio or video equipment at meetings?

• Is meeting online feasible? Who has the expertise to manage the club website, and do you have the capability to accommodate those attending remotely?

• How will the club accommodate members who cannot attend? Will they be allowed to attend the meeting electronically?

• Will club meetings be open to members’ partners and children?

• How will the club keep members informed of the meeting schedule?

• What will be the attendance expectations?

WHERE DO WE START?

1. Decide whether you’ll meet in person, online, or some of each.

2. If you’ll meet in person, decide whether meetings will have a traditional format, including a meal and a speaker, or an alternative format, such as a service or social event.

3. Choose the top two or three locations and invite club members to visit them and vote to choose one, taking the factors above into consideration.

4. If you’ll meet online, decide what software or service you’ll use and the details of how meetings will be held.

5. Decide how frequently you’ll meet.

6. Post the schedule on the club website.

Want more information?

See the Start Guide for Flexible Meetings and Attendance on the Club Flexibility webpage or contact Club and District Support.

See Starting a Rotary Club for the overall process of starting a new club.