

10 EASY STEPS

to plan your event

1. SET YOUR AUDIENCE

Knowing who you are ministering to is key! Are you planning a women's retreat? Or is it a youth winter weekend? Setting your audience first helps you plan out the rest of the retreat details like travel, program and date.

Checklist:

- Establish objective of your event
- Estimate number of guests you plan to have in attendance

2. PICK A DATE

It's important to know your "black out" dates and potential opportunities early on. Popular events and holidays (such as football games or Valentine's Day) may prohibit many guests from attending. However, choosing to book during the Sky Ranch Cave Springs' "low season" could result in cost savings.

Checklist:

- Decide the time of year and potential dates you are interested in
- Evaluate length of stay and number of meals

3. BOOK YOUR RETREAT

Once you have your date and audience set it is time to book your retreat or event. It is best to plan about 6 months in advance to ensure you get the first pick of dates for your retreat or event. When booking, be sure to ask any questions you may have about Sky Ranch Cave Springs and if possible, schedule a time to tour the facilities before the retreat or event date.

Checklist:

- Finalize details with your Retreat Coordinator or sales contact
- Confirm paperwork such as contract, participation agreement forms, and insurance
- Confirm payment schedule
- Return documents and payments by due date

4. SET YOUR BUDGET

Now for the details. This is the time to create and finalize your budget for the event. Consider allocating funds for activities, speaker, travel, insurance, etc. You may want to set up an optional payment plan for students. Make sure you are aware of the payment schedule for each vendor.

Checklist:

- Evaluate the programming needs of the retreat and budget for each need
- Schedule/plan for payments to Sky Ranch Cave Springs and any additional vendors.
- Decide how students are paying for activities (individually or covered by the group)

5. SET YOUR TRAVEL

Now that your retreat is booked, you need to coordinate travel to and from Sky Ranch Cave Springs. Traveling in groups saves gas and reduces the chance of guests getting lost while also allowing for group bonding and community building to start, even before you reach your destination!

Checklist:

- Choose mode of transportation and reserve busses, vans, drivers, etc.
- Set departure meeting time and location
- Create plan for handling late arrivals
- Set departure/travel time

6. CREATE YOUR PROGRAMMING

Your program can be as involved or simple as you choose. Some retreats have a goal of rest, relaxation and time away. Some events bring in bands, speakers and have planned programming. Your audience and your goals will direct your program and help dictate the schedule. Your Retreat Coordinator will be more than happy to help with any questions you may have about programming.

Checklist:

- Establish theme for retreat
- Create schedule (along with help from Retreat Coordinator)
- Book band, speakers, or special guests (if applicable)
- List supplies needed for activities, games, sessions, and skits
- Evaluate and book additional amenities (ie: campfires, coffee bar, snacks, etc)

7. CHOOSE YOUR ACTIVITIES

Activities can draw guests in to sign up for your event and should be carefully considered as you plan. It is also important to ask of any age or physical limitations for activities offered. Some activities may have an additional cost or may only be offered at a specific time of year.

Checklist:

- Evaluate cost, availability, guest interest, and limitations of activities offered
- Choose activities for your event
- Schedule activity times with your Retreat Coordinator

8. PROMOTE YOUR EVENT

In order for your guests to plan for the retreat, it is best to let them know about the dates and cost requirements as soon as possible. Flyers, announcements, and word of mouth are great ways to get your event promoted at group meetings and services. If you need help with the promotion process, your retreat coordinator would be happy to help.

Checklist:

- Choose how to promote your event and begin promoting!
- Answer all guest questions
- Ensure guests can easily sign up and pay for the retreat and optional activities/extras
- Host fundraisers for your retreat if necessary

9. FINALIZE DETAILS

Two to three weeks prior to the event, your Retreat Coordinator will contact you to finalize details. As your event approaches, it is important to keep track of sign-ups and keep them within the contracted minimum/maximum. If you anticipate your numbers being higher than anticipated, contact your Retreat Coordinator to find out if there is any additional bed space available. At this point, Sky Ranch Cave Springs will be ordering food and setting up your meeting space. The Retreat Coordinator's will handle the details of the event or retreat so that you get to enjoy more time with your guests!

Checklist:

- Determine final number of guests
- Communicate meeting room set up needs
- Ensure guest special accommodations, food allergies, and other unique guest needs are communicated to your Retreat Coordinator.
- Return all signed participant agreement forms to Sky Ranch Cave Springs
- Secure emergency contact information for your Retreat Coordinator
- Schedule arrival of lead group

10. EVALUATE AND PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

After the event, be sure to give your group an evaluation to aid in planning future events. To ensure you get the best dates for your next retreat, talk with your Retreat Coordinator before departing to rebook.

Checklist:

- Ask if there is an incentive to rebook early
- Create/implement an evaluation
- Rebook your retreat
- Repeat Process