

# Guide to Social Networks

You need to get your tactics right to make the most out of social media for your club. Just set one goal and go out to make it work.

1. You need to appoint one club member to have responsibility for social media. This could be the media officer or the person who writes your newsletters and match programmes. They should have a good understanding of social media and be comfortable with using internet programmes.

If your club has youth teams, this official should ideally have attended The FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop to be aware of safeguarding issues. Further information on young people and social media is available at [TheFA.com/footballsafe](http://TheFA.com/footballsafe) so do take the time to read this helpful guidance.

2. There are many different Social network options but if this is your first attempt then just decide on one to trial. You need to decide what's going to help your club most – do you need to share photos or action content or do you need to consider a different way of communicating to all your members? Ask the opinion of your committee and team managers, as well as other volunteers. Also consider how this complements your club website and other communications, such as newsletters. Make sure you are familiar with The FA's Best practice guidelines when considering your options.
3. You will need to put in some time up front to develop your 'homepage' or your secure areas for file sharing. You'll need to get a feel of the technology and feel comfortable using the tools to create your presence. You'll also need to get hold of information from within the club, be it film files to upload or pictures and your club crest to illustrate your Facebook page.

Share the finished work with other club officials before you 'launch' it to your members and ask if they're happy with everything and that you have got the appropriate consents for under-18s. Check everything complies with the Best practice guidelines too.

You'll then need to plan how often you will update your presence on the web. Will you update photos to file share after every match or just once or twice a season? If you're using a social networking website, you will need to moderate content on a daily basis to ensure nothing inappropriate or defamatory has been posted.



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4. There's no use doing all this work and then no one sees it. You have to promote your club's presence on the web to all your members – and perhaps beyond into the local community. Make the most out of the existing opportunities you have to talk to your members, for example noticeboards and newsletters. Spread the word among club officials and team coaches to share with players and parents. Once you get some people using it and if it's helpful, word of mouth will help get more people to visit. Ensure all users know who to contact if they have any concerns about the content you are hosting.
5. Finally, monitor and review how well your 'homepage' or files are used. If they are not well used, try to work out the reason – did people know about it? Was the content updated to encourage people to come back? Was it interesting enough? Was it useful? If it's not working, then don't be afraid to stop it and either try again at a later date, or try something different.

If it has been a success, get some feedback from users on how you could improve it or what other services would be helpful.

