




## Organizing a Friends Group: A Basic To-Do List

At any point in this process, please call upon FOTL to conduct a workshop for your group.  
By Martha Moore Gill, former FOTL President and current *newsletter* & *Facebook Page* Editor.

1. Create a steering committee.
  - a. Keep size to no more than eight people.
  - b. Appoint a chair (this is not a permanent position).
  - c. Appoint a secretary (this is not a permanent position).
2. Decide on a name for your group.
3. Apply for a tax-identification number.
4. Establish a ByLaws committee.

(see [Tool Kit for Building a Library Friends Group](#) pp.4-5)

  - a. Appoint a chair.
  - b. Compile ByLaws.
    - i. Look at other groups' examples.
    - ii. Do not be exact about such details as dues, meeting times, and other details.
5. Adopt **The Ethical Dozen for Friends of the Library** (see <http://tinyurl.com/FriendsEthicalDozen>)
6. Appoint a nominating committee.
  - a. Committee will create a slate of officers.
  - b. The slate will be voted on at the membership meeting.
7. Schedule a membership meeting.
  - a. Vote to adopt ByLaws.
  - b. Elect officers.
  - c. Collect dues.
8. New president/board chair begins to preside.
  - a. President/board chair will appoint committee chairs.
  - b. President/board chair will meet with board members.
    - i. Discuss long-range plans.
    - ii. Discuss short-term plans.
9. Board files appropriate applications.
  - a. Develop a **Memorandum of Understanding** to be signed by your library and by your Friends' group. (see [Tool Kit for Building a Library Friends Group](#) p.7)
  - b.  Review **What Every Board Member Should Know: A Guidebook for Tennessee Nonprofits** <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/finance/ocjp/nonprofitguidebook.pdf>
  - c. Double check your preparations: **How to Form a Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation** <http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/forming-nonprofit-corporation-tennessee-36088.html>
  - d. Find an attorney to help your group *pro bono* complete Form 1023 501(c)(3) for **IRS Tax -Exempt Status for Your Organization** <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf>
  - e. **Register your group's charter with the Secretary of State's Division of Business Services** <https://sgssos.tn.gov/Login.aspx>; and file application with the Secretary of State's Division of Charitable Solicitations and Gaming.
  - f. See <http://sos.tn.gov/business-services/non-profit-corporations> for additional guidance.
  - g. Use **A Brief Guide to Government Forms Friends Groups Need to Know** by Dwight Shepherd for review <https://tinyurl.com/BriefGuidetoGovFormsNov2019>.

