



American Nuclear Society
Local Sections Committee

How-to- Guide

Host a Nuclear Trivia Night



How-to-Guide: Host a Trivia Night

Did you know Salvador Dali labelled one period of his painting career 'nuclear mysticism'? Or that Kellogg loaned Percival Keith to the Manhattan Project? Or that Americium 241 is the isotope commonly used as a radiation source in smoke detectors? Thanks to a lifelong love of nuclear trivia, you have facts like this at the ready at a moment's notice.

Take your passion for nuclear knowledge and host a trivia night for your section – where members face off about what they know and compete for prizes. Trivia nights are the latest favorite pastime. It's a perfect way to hang out with friends—it's not loud like a nightclub, so you can actually talk, and it's more focused than just meeting up for happy hours, which diminishes the possibility of long, "What are we supposed to talk about now?" silences.

Trivia night is also fun, and super easy to plan. Here are some tips for hosting a successful trivia event:

Contents

Find a good venue	2
Decide if you want to have a theme	2
Draw a crowd	2
Decide on the rules before you start	2
Create good questions	3
• List of questions and answers - Savannah River Section	3
• PowerPoint presentation – Piedmont Carolinas Section.....	3
Keeping score	3
Select an MC for the evening	3
Make it extra special!	3
Materials list:	4
TRIVIA NIGHT SCORE CARD	5

Find a good venue

Try to pick a spot that has lots of tables and chairs, and where the MC can be seen and heard by everyone. Each team will want a little privacy when they're coming up with their answers so no one steals them, so be sure that there's a little breathing room between teams. Bars and restaurants are often willing to reserve space for large groups. Some will charge you to use their space, but it doesn't hurt to try to negotiate—you might be able to get the space for free in exchange for bringing business in. If you're looking to start a new monthly event, propose it to the venue of your choice. They might be really into the idea, and help you promote it. Community centers, town halls, and other public gathering places are also good spots.

Decide if you want to have a theme

While nuclear-themed trivia is an obvious choice for members, a general - pub quiz may allow non-nukes to participate. Every topic is fair game in general trivia, so it's a nice option if you want to appeal to members' families.

A nuclear-themed night means you'll base an entire trivia night around nuclear. This can also be broken down into nuclear categories such as nuclear history, nuclear medicine, food irradiation, power plants locations, nuclear science 101 or even a photo round.

Draw a crowd

If this is a members-only event, this part is easy—just send out invitations or announce it on Facebook the way you would for any event. If it's a fundraiser, use the community [Patch](#), bulletin boards, or neighborhood Facebook pages.

- Make a Facebook event, create a flyer for your members to post on bulletin boards at work.
- Be sure to include what time the trivia starts, where it is happening, and if the participants need to bring anything (like costumes or their own beer).
- Ask the venue if they will publicize the event in the store and on their website/Twitter.

Decide on the rules before you start

This will save you from potential arguments as the game goes on. Decide in advance how many people you want there to be on a team, how much time will be allowed to provide answers, how many points each answer is worth (if the questions get harder as play progresses, the points per answer could increase too), do player wager points or are they all set points, and who's going to help you keep score. Have each team give themselves a team name to make score-keeping. Announce the rules very clearly before gameplay begins. Sample rules include:

- Quiz master/judge has the final say on any disputed answers.
- One team per table
- No more than 6 players per team
- No outside help allowed (books, CELL PHONES, guests outside the team etc.)
- Don't shout out answers

Create good questions

The most common to use is a question-and-answer format but some people prefer multiple-choice or true/false. Good questions can come from anywhere. Flip through Nuclear News, ANS News, text books, nonfiction novels, facts about your members, or browse outreach materials on NuclearConnect.org—you've got a lot of options! Don't make the questions too obscure, but a good question will make people pause a little before they answer.

It's a good idea to recruit a couple of members with different knowledge sets from yours to help you come up with questions. Just be sure that each question is worded precisely, so there's only ONE correct answer (not a vague range of potential answers), and fact-check those answers thoroughly. If you need more help, look online:

- [List of questions and answers - Savannah River Section](#)
- [PowerPoint presentation – Piedmont Carolinas Section](#)

It may be a good idea to prepare some tie-breaker questions (more on this later).

Keeping score

The easiest way to keep track of everyone's score is to have each team elect one person to write down their answers, which you collect and score at the end of the game or after each question. You can also have teams exchange score sheets and mark each other's points while you read the correct answers out loud. You can tally your scores at the end of each round, or wait until the end of the game.

You can create tiebreaker questions where the first team to shout it out wins additional points or allow teams to wager points on bonus questions. This is a good time to bring out the really hard questions. There are many fun ways you can come up with to establish a winner in the case of a tie between teams. You might even have each team send up a member to rock-paper-scissors for a less serious audience.

Select an MC for the evening

This should be someone charismatic who's comfortable wielding authority and who isn't terrified of public speaking. You might also share the mic among the organizers.

Make it extra special!

Turn the night into an event. Prizes are fun, and they don't have to be elaborate—gift cards, ANS (or section) merchandise, or swag from nuclear organizations. You can find unlikely, inexpensive science or nuclear-themed prizes like banana bread, UV flashlights, and periodic table pens. Establish a number for how many of each item will be needed to distribute among teams. A set of 4 for each prize is probably fair since some team members may not care to take home a prize and teams can be formed with the number of prizes in mind. Be sure to announce the rules for prize-earning in advance of gameplay. Your ultimate goal is to make the night fun for everyone. You're all going to learn new facts, bond with people over similar interests, and bask in the

glory of knowing more about nuclear. Be sure everyone goes home happy and feeling like a genius.

Materials list:

- Pens or pencils (cheap golf pencils will do)
- Score card – see example below
- Projector and screen for questions/answers or project team scores as you play– optional
- Mic and amplifier
- Prizes

TRIVIA NIGHT SCORE CARD

Team Name: _____

How-to-Play:

1. HAVE FUN!!!
2. Write your answers clearly in the space provided.
3. Don't shout out answers!
4. Quiz master has the final say on any disputed answers.
5. One team per table/No more than 6 players per team.
6. No outside help allowed (books, **CELL PHONES**, guests outside the team etc.)

FIRST HALF – give your team 2 points for each correct answer

Round 1 Category: _____		Round 2 Category: _____	
1.		1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	
4.		4.	
5.		5.	
Total Points: _____		Total Points: _____	
Half-time Bonus Question – 5 additional points			
Total points	Answer:		

Additional Space for notes, doodles or beer stains:

SECOND HALF - give your team 3 points for each correct answer

Round 3 Category: _____	Round 4 Category: _____
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
Total Points: _____	Total Points: _____

Final Question - wager 0-15 points	
wager	Answer:
	Total Points Overall Add up all four rounds and subtract wager (1 + 2 + 3 + 4) – wager = _____

Additional Space for notes, doodles or beer stains: