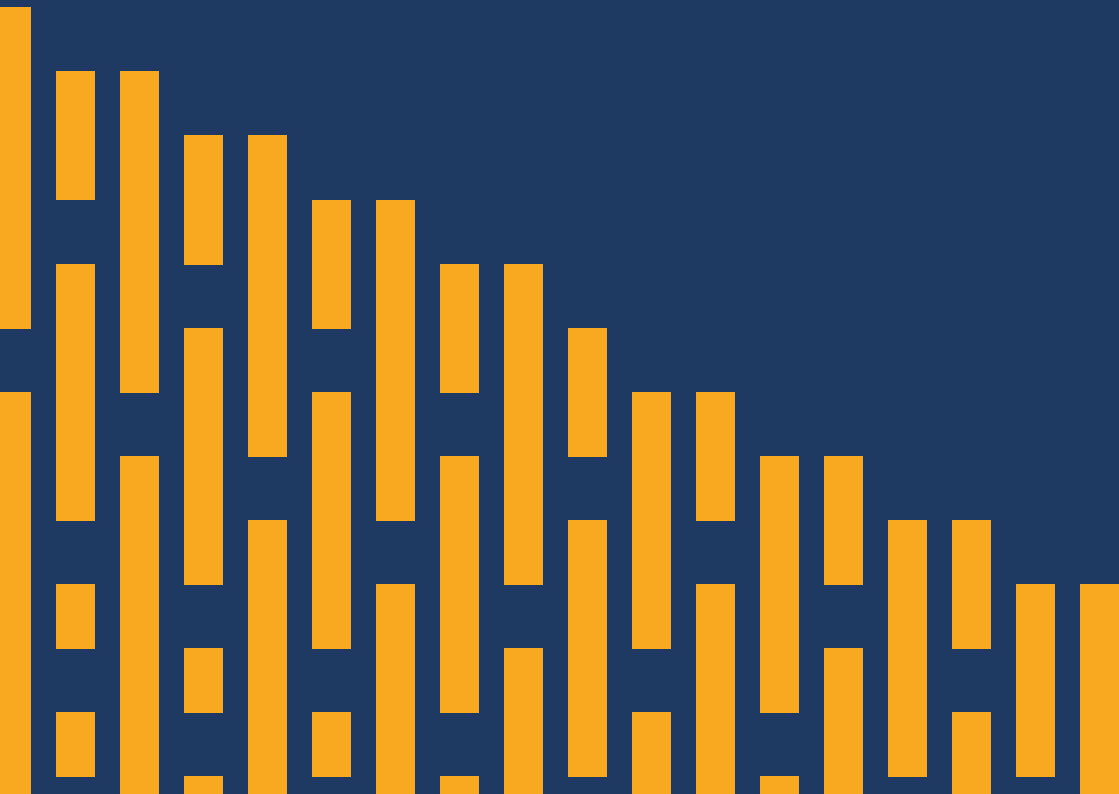


ALPHA STARTER GUIDE



ALPHA IS A SERIES OF INTERACTIVE SESSIONS THAT EXPLORE LIFE, MEANING AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN AN OPEN AND HONEST ENVIRONMENT.

IT TYPICALLY RUNS BETWEEN 8 TO 11 WEEKS, AND EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO RUN ALPHA IS 100% FREE.

ALPHA RUNS

- In-person, online, or a bit of both
- In churches, homes, cafes, pubs, prisons, schools, and online
- In every major denomination in Australia
- For many or few

HOW TO RUN AN ALPHA

Every Alpha has essentially three elements:

1. CONNECT

Connect with your guests through ice breakers (“getting to know you” activities) if online AND over food if in-person

2. WATCH

Watch an Alpha video, in the order suggested, usually around 25 minutes

3. CHAT

Give space for the guests to share their questions and thoughts. We give you suggested questions to get the conversation started

[WATCH THE ALPHA FILM SERIES TRAILER](#)

[WATCH THE ALPHA YOUTH SERIES TRAILER](#)



4 STEPS TO GET STARTED

1. REGISTER YOUR ALPHA & DOWNLOAD THE MATERIAL

- Go to [MyAlpha](#) & create a login
- Create an Alpha

Download or stream the talks and Team Guide for small group hosts (also available in print at Koorong). You will find these under the “Series Materials” tab

2. PREPARE

- SELECT & TRAIN your team

Access the training videos on MyAlpha OR

- Download & watch the Small Groups training with your team, found in Series Materials
 - Go to the Learning Centre and review other helpful training videos
- Register for one of our free online training sessions OR

[Contact](#) our team to book an individual session for your church

3. PROMOTE

Start inviting people to Alpha

- We have a range of promotional materials available to assist you

4. PRAY & KEEP PRAYING

Start by praying for your:

- **Team:** Pray for the right team to gather together to serve
- **Guests:** Pray for the hearts of those that will receive the invitation to try Alpha
- **Inviters:** Pray for a willingness & boldness in your people & for opportunities for them to invite their contacts.

There you go! You're ready to get started on your Alpha journey, and we are here to serve in every step. We would love to connect and pray with you so please don't hesitate to [contact us](#) or submit a prayer request on our [prayer wall](#).

If you are looking for some more information on running Alpha, keep reading!

[CLICK HERE TO GET STARTED](#)



ALPHA SCHEDULE

Alpha is made to work in your context and has freedom and flexibility to work with your schedule. Alpha typically runs for 8-11 weeks.

We recommend doing the first 6 weeks in order, and then, depending on your schedule, you can choose between the last topics for weeks 7-11. Don't double up episodes in an Alpha, leave room for discussion.

ALPHA FILM SERIES

(including Alpha Film Series Australian Edition & Alpha Film Series with Discussion Breaks)

WEEK 1 Is There More to Life Than This? (Launch Party*)

WEEK 2 Who is Jesus?

WEEK 3 Why Did Jesus Die?

WEEK 4 How Can I Have Faith?

WEEK 5 Why and How Do I Pray?

WEEK 6 Why and How Do I Read the Bible?

WEEK 7 How Does God Guide Us?

RETREAT (HOLY SPIRIT) SESSIONS

Who Is the Holy Spirit?

What Does the Holy Spirit Do?

How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit?

How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

WEEK 8 How Can I Resist Evil?

WEEK 9 Why and How Should I Tell Others?

WEEK 10 Does God Heal Today?

WEEK 11 What About the Church?

ALPHA YOUTH SERIES

(including Alpha Youth Series with Aussie Street Talks)

- WEEK 1** Life: Is This It? (Launch Party*)
- WEEK 2** Jesus: Who Is Jesus?
- WEEK 3** Cross: Why Did Jesus Die?
- WEEK 4** Faith: How Can I Have Faith?
- WEEK 5** Prayer: Why and How Do I Pray?
- WEEK 6** Bible: Why and How Do I Read the Bible?

RETREAT (HOLY SPIRIT) SESSIONS

- Spirit - Who Is the Holy Spirit and What Does He Do?
- Fill - How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit?
- New Life - How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

- WEEK 7** Evil: How Can I Resist Evil?
- WEEK 8** Telling Others: Why and How Should I Tell Others?
- WEEK 9** Healing: Does God Heal Today?
- WEEK 10** Church: What About the Church?

*A Launch Party is a fun, pressure-free way to introduce how Alpha will run over the coming weeks. Since Week 1 is a bit different from others, there is less time for discussion. It's more about getting to know each other. In other weeks there will be more time for discussion.

**“GO, THEREFORE, AND
MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL
THE NATIONS, BAPTISING
THEM IN THE NAME OF THE
FATHER AND THE SON AND
THE HOLY SPIRIT”**
MATTHEW 28:19

SAMPLE ALPHA SESSION

IN PERSON

2 HOUR SESSION

1 hr before – Set up

30 min before – Brief team meeting & prayer time

ALPHA BEGINS

10 min – Guests arrive and mingle

30 min – Food

5 min – Ice breaker game

70 min – Alpha talk with discussion**

5 min – Close

ALPHA ENDS

15 min – Debrief with Alpha team

ONLINE

1 HOUR & 20 MINUTES SESSION

20 min before – Alpha Team info chat, prayer & tech check

ALPHA BEGINS

5 min – Meet & greet, welcome

10 min – Online Hospitality

60 min – Alpha talk & discussion**

5 min - close

ALPHA ENDS

10 min – Debrief with Alpha team

**If using the Alpha Film Series, you watch the video for approx 25 minutes then have discussion for the remainder of the time. If using Alpha Film Series Aussie Edition, Alpha Film Series with Discussion Breaks or Alpha Youth Series, the questions are built into the videos. Pause and discuss as you go or use the questions as reminders for people to discuss at the end.

ALPHA RETREAT

(HOLY SPIRIT SESSIONS)

The Alpha Retreat is usually scheduled about halfway through your Alpha or after Week 6 and is run at a different time and place to your usual Alpha sessions.

Ideally, it is run over a weekend, giving guests a chance to get away from the busyness of their lives, take time to relax, think, have fun together, learn more about God and, if they're willing, to experience prayer ministry.

If a weekend doesn't work, you can look at doing it in a day or some churches incorporate it into a special service in their church. Online, it is usually run over a two and a half hour period.

See below for sample Retreat schedules.

The Alpha talks on the Retreat are primarily about the Holy Spirit - who, why, how the Spirit helps us stay focused on Jesus and in relationship with Him. After the last session, there's time for guests to pray and be prayed for by a host or helper. We want to give them an opportunity to experience God's love through the Holy Spirit.

As this is such a vital and transformative part of Alpha for your guests, our team offers specific training on how to facilitate this well.

#1 WEEKEND

SATURDAY

1 hr before – Set up

30 min before - Team meeting & prayer time

ALPHA RETREAT BEGINS

30 min Guests arrive & find where they will be staying

15 min Welcome & ice breaker

10 min Watch “Intro to the Weekend”

10 min Worship

25 min Watch “Who is the Holy Spirit?”

30 min Break

30 min Watch” What does the Holy Spirit do?”

45 min Small Group Discussion

60 min Lunch

Free Time

20 min Worship

30 min Watch “How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?”

30 min Ministry Time

Free Time

60 min Dinner

2 hrs Planned games / activities

SUNDAY

60 min Breakfast

20 min Worship

30 min Watch “How can I make the most of the rest of my life?”

20 min Ministry Time

25 min Group reflection

30 min Share experiences

60 min Lunch

END OF ALPHA RETREAT

30 min Debrief with Alpha Team

#2 DAY

4.5 HOUR SESSION

1 hr before – Set up

30 min before - Team meeting & prayer time

ALPHA RETREAT BEGINS

10 min – Guests arrive and mingle

10 min – Ice breaker

25 min – Watch “Who is the Holy Spirit?”

30 min - Discussion

15 min - Break

5 min - Testimony

25 min - Watch “What Does the Holy Spirit Do?”

30 min - Discussion

45 min - Break

10 min - Worship

30 min - Watch “How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?”

20 min – Prayer Ministry

15 min – Reflections & Close

ALPHA RETREAT ENDS

20 min - Debrief with Alpha Team

#3 ONLINE

2.5 HOUR SESSION

20 min before - Team meeting, tech check & prayer time

ALPHA RETREAT BEGINS

5 min - Welcome guests

10 min - Ice breaker

25 min - Watch "Who is the Holy Spirit?"

20 min - Discussion

15 min - Break

5 min - Watch last 5 min of "What Does the Holy Spirit Do?"

5 min - Worship

5 min - Testimony

30 min - Watch "How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?"

15 min - Prayer Ministry

15 min - Reflections & Close

ALPHA ENDS

15 min - Debrief with Alpha team

HELPFUL INFO



BUILDING A STRONG TEAM

Being part of an Alpha team can be the most rewarding and fun experience for volunteers. People with a common interest get together and can make new friends, develop their skills and learn how to work together. A strong team will also provide a better, more positive experience for your Alpha guests.

LINK TO TEAM GUIDE(S)

In future, you will find many of your team will come from your Alpha. Think and pray about who you could invite from your current guests to be on your team next time and what role they may be able to fill.

HOSTS & HELPERS

Who loves people well and can facilitate open and honest communication?

Hosts facilitate the small group discussion, keep the conversation going and affirm guests as they share their ideas and feelings without correction or judgement.

Helpers are there to help the host and the guests with anything that might make the group experience even better. Helpers mostly stay quiet but they listen and pray silently as the discussion is unfolding.

HOSPITALITY

Who loves hospitality? Who can dream up creative ways to make your meeting space more welcoming and fun?

Hospitality team members create spaces where guests feel seen, known and loved. They set the scene and help prepare and cook meals or snacks. Online, they help find creative ways to connect.

WELCOME TEAM

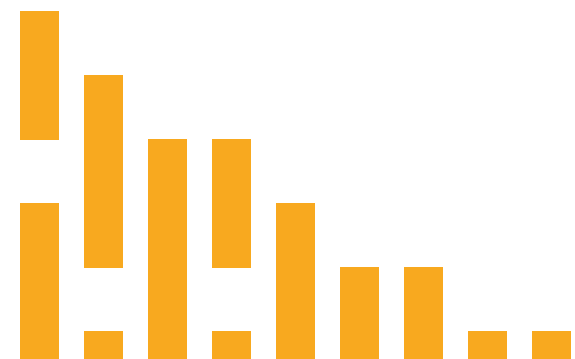
Who breaks easily into a smile and loves connecting with others? Greeters will usually be the first people that guests meet.

TECH SUPPORT

Who can make sure you have the right audio and visual gear so that everything goes smoothly? Who knows how to use tools like Zoom? Tech support love to help out behind the scenes.

ADMINISTRATION

Who is that person that loves organisation, information sharing, numbers and details? Great administration helps guests and team members feel valued and loved.



PRAYER

Who has a heart to pray to see God's kingdom come in and through your Alpha?

This is one of the most important roles on Alpha. They may not attend any of your Alpha sessions, but are praying fervently for them.

INVITATION

You can have the best Alpha planned & prepared, but it's no good if there are no guests.

The number one reason why people come along to church or Alpha is because they have been personally invited. To activate and cultivate a culture of invitation in your people, think about how you can

INSPIRE

- Share stories of people who have invited their contacts. Even if that contact hasn't yet attended Alpha, the invite is the win.
- Preach on evangelism, the Great Commission and the Lord's heart for the lost.

We have stories recorded that you may find useful to share

TRAIN

- Practise a simple invitation with your team.
- Give them a simple sentence they can use to invite either in-person or via text or social media
- What is their response when someone says "no"?
- What is their response when someone says "I'm interested"?

We provide training on how to invite others to Alpha

EQUIP

- Give your people a "Pray for 5 Friends" card, invite them to write down names of five contacts they can be praying for with a view to inviting them to Alpha
- Give your people an invitation card or social media assets they can use to invite

We have a number of examples available

Alpha has a full suite of invitational resources, including social media graphics, promotional videos, trailers, flyers, banners, guides and more. It's all ready for you to download, and invite.

FOOD

An area that is new for many starting Alpha, is how to prepare a delicious meal for any number of guests from week-to-week on a budget.

The main point of the food is connection, not to impress with your culinary delights. Did you know the most common Alpha meals are:

- chicken & chips
- pizza
- pasta
- Keep it simple & doable.

If you are looking for some ideas, other Alphas have shared some of their menus with us.

SCRIPTURES / QUOTES THAT COULD BE USED THROUGHOUT

- Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit
Matthew 28:19
- Making Jesus' last command our first priority
- "It is my judgement, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God" Acts 15:19



ALPHA.ORG.AU