



South African Men's Shed Association

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What is a Men's Shed?

A Men's Shed is a place where a man who has time on his hands can go to make things, use tools, relax and make friends.

Men's Sheds are designed to appeal to men in ways which traditional "community groups" don't. Men generally like to get involved in practical tasks and get to know people by working alongside them, rather than sitting down face to face. Men's Sheds feel familiar and welcoming.

Men's Sheds usually have a social area and workshop area. Ideally, they will also have a kitchen where food preparation and cooking can be learnt.

Men's Sheds are not just for men who like DIY and woodwork. There is usually space to try arts & craft activities as well as board games, computing, cooking and reading.

An important ethos in Men's Sheds is that men pursue their own interests and choose what they want to do. Self-directed activity is more satisfying and fun.

Many older men are keen to use their life-learned skills and experience. They may find retirement boring or find that they miss the banter of the workplace. Men tend to rely heavily on their job for social contact. When this ends, they miss their old friendships, but have few opportunities to make new friends.

Older men have a wealth of experience, stories and knowledge to share. Men's Sheds provide a place for this to happen.

Younger men benefit from the chance to be shown new skills as well as exchanging their own knowledge of more modern technology or culture.

South African Men's Sheds will take place in a variety of settings. These can be wooden huts, industrial units, community centres, shop units and shipping containers.

There is general agreement that having your own dedicated premises is better than sharing a space.

On a deeper level, Men's Sheds provide acceptance, a sense of purpose, increased wellbeing and improved health. These benefits will be explored in more detail in the Health sections of our coming website.