How to Start a Canteen

**Step 1. Organize a Group**
Seek out people who are interested in volunteering to help start a canteen. Get someone to volunteer as coordinator of the canteen.

**Step 2. Find a Location**
Look for a suitable location for your canteen. When choosing a location, consider the amount of space it provides. Is there enough counter space? Are you going to have chairs and tables? Is there enough space for them? Is there enough room for a fridge or a spot for a dishwasher?

**Step 3. Make Decisions**
You will need to decide what kinds of food you want to serve and what equipment you will need. *Hint: Use Canada's Food Guide to help you plan the menu. Make fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and milk products available on the menu! Make a list of all of the equipment you will need to run your canteen (i.e. fridge, microwave, toaster, crock pot, grill, coffee maker, chest freezer, dishwasher). You will likely need cutlery, dishes, serving you utensils, napkins, tables, chairs, and a cast register or float box.***

**Step 4. Determine Cost**
Figure out how much it will cost to secure your location, and buy your equipment and supplies. Do not forget about advertising costs! Will your canteen have a sign? How much will that cost?

**Step 5. Raise Funds**
You will have to raise money to cover the costs of opening your canteen. You may want to plan fund raising events or projects such as yard sales, bake sales, or craft sales. Approach local businesses and ask them to sponsor you. You may also want to investigate possible grants that may be available to you.

**Step 6. Get Qualified**
Your volunteer coordinator, or whoever is in charge, will need to take training to get his/her Food Handler's Certificate. For more information go to: [http://foodhandling.ca/registration.html](http://foodhandling.ca/registration.html)

**Step 7. Purchase Equipment and Supplies**
Once your fundraising is over, you can then purchase your equipment, supplies and food.
Step 8. Recruit Volunteers!
You will need volunteers to help run the canteen (i.e. do the cooking, serving, cleaning, and cash transactions). You will also need someone to be responsible for looking after the money you make.

Step 9. Set up a Schedule
Once you have your volunteers, you will need to assign tasks and jobs. Decide what hours your canteen will be open and assign enough people to cover those hours. You will also need to decide where you will get your food and set up a grocery-shopping schedule.

Step 10. Advertise
When you know the expected date that your canteen will open, you can begin to advertise for customers! Put up posters and signs! Submit an advertisement in your local paper or community newsletter! Tell all of your friends!

Step 11. Open Your Canteen!
Good luck and have fun!