

Veterans For Peace: Protest and March

Organized Locally. Recognized Nationally. Exposing the true costs of war since 1985.

From Martin Luther King to Gandhi, nonviolent demonstrators have proved a powerful form of influence. To protest successfully, research local and state laws, sign on high-profile citizens and entice the press.

How To: Organize a Protest or March

1. Determine if you want to shout your message loud and clear with an in-your-face protest, or stage an equally effective silent vigil.
2. Educate the public about the issue and cultivate public opinion. Write letters to newspaper editors and stage town hall-style meetings. Publicize the meetings in the papers.
3. Pick a popular and highly visible location, such as the town square, a centrally located park or a busy shopping mall parking lot. But be certain that the rally spot also relates to what you are protesting. For example, if your fight is to clean up the ocean, stage your Protest or March at the beach.
4. Choose effective, high-profile speakers such as a city councilor or local celebrity. You and other protesters should also prepare speeches to rally the troops.

Tips & Warnings

- ✓ Check with local law enforcement about permit requirements, setting up roadblocks and safety regulations.
- ✓ Discuss how you'll handle disruptive behavior and destruction during the protest. Share the information from the police with the leaders of the Protest or March prior to the event.
- ✓ Designate crowd leaders to be responsible for keeping the protesters in line.
- ✓ Remember not to get out of hand while protesting; peaceful demonstrations are much more effective at making a point than rowdy or violent ones. Follow all local laws when protesting.
- ✓ Get the media involved: contact media beforehand, prepare and release press releases

How To: Make an Effective Protest Sign

Large crowds gather all across the United States to hold rallies and protests. Protests allow consumers to group together for causes they believe in or feel strongly about. Many protests are political in nature, while others are related to social or environmental causes. Most participants in protests hold signs that allow them to make a statement.

1. Determine an appropriate message for your protest sign. Simple and concise messages work best. Messages too long may not be legible at a distance. Acronyms tend to be an effective means of promoting messages, particularly if you can come up with a creative acronym using the initials of the group/event you are protesting.
2. Purchase the materials needed to construct your protest sign. The recommended method of construction is to use a piece of cardboard sandwiched by two pieces of poster board, on which you will write your message. This is effective for its sturdiness; the cardboard center allows the sign to withstand wind.
3. Write or paint your message on your sign, prior to constructing it. Use a marker to make block letters that will be easy to read from a distance. If you decide to use colors other than black, make sure the colors are not too light. Colors such as pink or yellow will be very difficult to read.
4. Sandwich the cardboard with the two pieces of poster board and staple the top and sides. Do not connect the bottom initially. Add your rod to the bottom center of the board and glue both sides to it. Let the glue set, then staple the parts of the board leading up to the rod.