

The Master Mason's Guide



Building Friendships, Shaping Lives, Supporting Communities, through Timeless Traditions



Integrity



Friendship



Respect



Service

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Welcome

Congratulations on completing your Third Degree. There is one further item necessary to really open up the world of Freemasonry to you: receiving your Grand Lodge certificate.

This will be presented to you in the very near future in open Lodge. Your certificate acts as your passport in Freemasonry and gives proof of your qualification to any Lodge you may wish to visit or other Masonic Order you may wish to join.

As a new Master Mason, it is hoped that you will wish, in a short while, to embark on an exciting ladder of progression within your Lodge, culminating in years to come with your Installation as Worshipful Master.

For more information about the ceremony you have just gone through, please visit:

<https://bit.ly/3o00oQc>



Telling your friends about Freemasonry

Be open about your experience and enjoyment and if they are curious, speak to your lodge Membership Officer and invite them to one of the Lodge or Provincial 'Introduction to Freemasonry' events.

If you haven't already done so, now is a good time to consider which of your friends would enjoy Freemasonry, enhance your Lodge, and enrich their lives.

Visiting other Lodges

One of the real joys of Freemasonry is the tradition of visiting other Lodges. It gives you the chance to see other Masonic Centres, see different versions of our ritual and most importantly, to meet and get to know other Masons.

Ordinarily you will be invited by a Brother who knows you are a Member of the Craft. If you are visiting a Lodge where you are not known, always take your Grand Lodge Certificate with you. Try to visit a Lodge as soon as possible to see someone else being Raised so you gain a greater understanding of what has just happened to you and why.

Make sure of UGLE recognition

Freemasonry exists around the world and again you are welcome to visit Lodges overseas, however you must check that the Lodge is recognised by the United Grand Lodge of England. Your Lodge Secretary will help you find out. There are organised bodies who style themselves Freemasons but do not follow the Book of Constitutions and are therefore not recognised by the UGLE.

Differing ritual or 'workings'

As a visitor it is usual that you sit and watch. You should use the signs you have been taught and not those of other Lodges. There are a number of forms of ritual or 'workings' such as Emulation, Universal, Bristol, West End, Taylors and so on, with slight differences to each. Find out which working your Lodge uses.

The visitors' speech

There is a possibility, that as a Visitor, you may be called upon to respond to the toast to the visitors. As in the differences in ritual, so there are differences at the Festive Board. It is not appropriate to criticise or unfavourably compare another Lodge's working or the manner in which they conduct the Festive Board but rather enjoy the differences as part of your Masonic learning.

Keep the introduction simple and the contents short. It is often sufficient to thank your hosts for their kind and gracious hospitality and express a wish that you might be invited again. Avoid smutty jokes and indeed do not regale your audience with lengthy humorous anecdotes unless you are especially adept and confident that they will go down well with the audience.



Ceremonies

The purpose of our ceremonies is to remind the candidate of certain ethical and moral precepts, awakening in him respect and tolerance for another's ideas and beliefs. It is for this reason that Brethren are required to avoid discussion of religious and political issues when inside the Lodge, as these are topics which easily divide men.

Ritual has been employed by nearly all cultures known to mankind as a process to assist in self-realisation and as such is a rite of passage. The ritual of Freemasonry promotes self-knowledge, tolerance and philanthropy, as echoed in its three grand principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

You may now have been provided with a book of the ritual of the Three Degrees you have taken. Please take the time to read through it, it will provide you with the opportunity to refresh your mind on your Masonic journey so far. It may prompt some questions around the ceremonies, which your Lodge Mentor will be very pleased to help you with.



Tips for learning ritual

For some new Masons learning the ritual may be the first memorising they have done since leaving school. We all find different ways that work for us, but these are some ideas which can help.

- ♦ Understand what you have to say. Have a dictionary to hand whilst learning.
- ♦ Put the book away as soon as you can. The trick is to practise remembering the words not reading them.
- ♦ Transcribe the first letter of each word onto a sheet of paper and use that as an aide-memoire, rather than the ritual book, or questions card.
- ♦ Practise whilst washing up, or performing some other household chore. Remember that in the Lodge you will not be sitting comfortably in a chair, there are things to do and plenty of distractions; get used to that.
- ♦ Recite out loud and use different voices (even funny ones): this will help put expression and meaning into your delivery.
- ♦ Remember that if the delivery is right, and it is said with meaning, others will be far more likely to listen to what you are saying rather than listening for the odd wrong word, or missed line.
- ♦ Speak up clearly when saying the ritual; not only does it keep the Brethren's attention, but also prevents you speaking too quickly.

When learning a paragraph add to it the first two or three words of the next paragraph so you'll always know the link to the next bit.

- ♦ Attend the rehearsals whenever you can, there is no substitute. Apart from benefiting from the guidance of the senior Brethren, rehearsals are essential for practising floor work, timing and saying the ritual out loud in front of your peers in a relaxed forum. During rehearsals, try not to refer to your book, there should be only one prompt.
- ♦ Where dialogue is involved have a working knowledge of that entire section of ritual, not just your part. When you know how the ritual goes, it's much easier to understand where your part fits in, and remember when it's your turn to speak.
- ♦ In your oral practise it helps to include words or sound effects as appropriate prompts/cues for the actions that are performed as part of the ritual, e.g. 'bang- bang-bang' or 'cut-turn-go-to-door'.
- ♦ When learning the ritual, speak each phrase out loud, and then repeat it. That way you'll know how it sounds, and you'll be far less likely to stumble.
- ♦ Even before you accept office, it is good practice to learn ritual, you will get much more out of watching it and it will put you in good stead for when you do take office.

Our national charities

You are now part of a much larger national and international family. As with all good families, welfare is important, and we should strive to help our Brethren and their families who are ill, or in distressed circumstances.

Practise wherever possible, walking to work, taking the dog for a walk, even in the bathroom – after all it's the best tiled room in the house!



Service has always been a core principle of Freemasonry, and over the last 300 years Freemasons have established a number of charities including schools, care homes and a hospital. The legacy of these charities and the principle of service can be seen today through the work of the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) which was established in 2016.

The MCF is one of the largest grant-making charities in the country awarding millions of pounds each year to local and national charities that help vulnerable people, advance medical research and provide opportunities for young people. The MCF also helps to fund vital services such as hospices and regularly contributes to worldwide appeals for disaster relief.

As well as awarding grants to local and national charities, the MCF provides a range of financial and practical support to eligible Freemasons and their families.

This support can assist with daily living costs, health, care and well-being as well as helping children and young people in education.

In addition, the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution Care Company, part of the MCF, operates 18 homes providing quality residential, nursing and dementia care for around 1,000 residents.

The Relief Chest Scheme, operated by the MCF on behalf of Freemasonry, also helps groups such as Lodges, Chapters or Provinces to give more to the charities they support by offering a ready-made and efficient solution for administering donations and fundraising appeals.

In addition, the MCF supports two established and well-respected charities: Lifelites, which gives life-limited and disabled children using hospice services the chance to play, communicate and control something for themselves through the magic of assistive technology; and Teddies for Loving Care, which provides teddy bears to Accident and Emergency departments that medical staff can give to comfort young children in distress.

Masonic Charitable Foundation (Registered Charity No. 1164703; Company No. 09751836)
www.mcf.org.uk

RMBI Care Co. (Registered Charity No. 1163245; Company No. 1293566)
www.rmbi.org.uk

Lifelites (Registered Charity No. Charity No: 1165791)
www.lifelites.org

Teddies for Loving Care
www.teddiesforlovingcare.org.uk





The Royal Arch

You will hear the term 'Chapter' used. This refers to the Royal Arch. An indissoluble link exists between the three degrees of Craft Freemasonry and the Royal Arch. There are numerous other Masonic Orders you will hear about, but a Master Mason's knowledge is not considered complete until he has finished his journey in the four stages of 'Pure Antient Masonry' which also includes the Royal Arch. It is therefore advisable to join the Royal Arch before considering other Masonic Orders.

Most Chapters are linked to one or more Lodges and meet less frequently than Craft Lodges, while the admission fees and annual subscriptions are also much lower.

You are eligible to join four weeks after becoming a Master Mason. The Ceremony of 'Exaltation' into a Royal Arch Chapter is considered one of the most impressive in Freemasonry.

To find out more please ask your proposer, your Lodge secretary, or the Royal Arch Representative in your Lodge. Alternatively, you can approach any brother you see wearing the Royal Arch jewel which indicates membership of the Order.

Other Masonic orders

There are many Orders and Degrees in Freemasonry and now you are a Master Mason a number of them are open to you. Together they offer a fascinating journey into all aspects of Freemasonry. However, your next step should be to complete your core knowledge by joining a Royal Arch Chapter. After that, take your time, don't be rushed; Freemasonry is a life-long journey not a sprint, take time to enjoy every step along the way.



What happens next?

Taking Office

Having become a Master Mason, you may be asked if you would like to take an Office and start working towards the Master's Chair.

To you, as a junior member of the Lodge, the work undertaken by the more senior Brethren may appear daunting. There is no need for this to be so. Each small step in Freemasonry is incremental in building your skills and knowledge. Those who have gone before are no different to you. It is not compulsory and entirely your choice, however involvement equals enjoyment and like all team pursuits taking part is much more enjoyable than spectating.

Do you already know:

- ♦ The name and contact details of your Lodge Mentor?
- ♦ How to get in touch with the Light Blues Club, if there is one in your Province?
- ♦ The dates and times of the meetings for the next 12 months?
- ♦ The relationship between Craft Masonry and the Royal Arch?
- ♦ The names of any Masons from other Lodges who could invite you to their meetings?

If you need help with any of these questions – contact any member of the Lodge and ask!

Solomon

Solomon is a Virtual Learning Environment designed by members for members. It provides a wealth of interesting Masonic material in various modules, to read, print or download. To find out more and to register visit:

<https://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

We hope you enjoy this facility.



Publications

Freemasonry Today (FMT) is a quarterly magazine published on behalf of UGLE featuring Freemasons' news, interviews, and articles. The magazine is posted direct to all Freemasons, free of charge.

It is also free to view online:

<https://www.ugle.org.uk/discover-freemasonry/freemasonry-today-magazine>

First Rising - The official newsletter for members of the United Grand Lodge of England. Issued every three weeks to give you the latest news from UGLE and keep you informed.



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