



The Charnwood U3A

Handbook

and description
of

Interest Groups

August 2018

Introduction

A University of the Third Age is a learning co-operative of older people, which enables members to share many educational, creative and leisure activities.

The Charnwood U3A is a charity (registered number 1076107). It is affiliated to the Third Age Trust, the governing and administrative body of all the U3A Associations in the UK. Charnwood U3A, as a member, is bound by its agreement to abide by the rules of the Third Age Trust.

The Charnwood U3A has its own constitution and is managed by an elected Committee.

Activities

The Activities of Charnwood U3A are organised mainly in small groups that meet regularly, often in each other's homes. Members, through sharing their knowledge, skills and experience, learn from each other.

Each group needs a facilitator/leader, who need not be an expert in the subject, to act as contact and to arrange when and where meetings are held. It is often helpful if two or three members get together to arrange the programme and meetings in consultation with the members of the group.

As a member of a group you will be expected to let the leader know if, for any reason (e.g. holidays, illness), you cannot attend a particular group meeting. Missing three consecutive meetings without notice may result in the loss of your place in the group.

In time, with increasing membership and development of interests, groups may become larger, necessitating finding alternative accommodation and/or the setting up of a parallel group.

Our Groups Co-ordinator will offer advice and guidance to Group Leaders and to those wishing to start a new group.

Organisation and Financial Management of The Charnwood U3A

All U3As are governed by their Constitution. The Constitution of The Charnwood U3A may be found in the members' area of The Charnwood U3A website (www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk). A paper copy is available from the Secretary on request.

Membership is open to all those in the 'third age', generally taken to mean that they have finished full time employment and are retired or semi-retired.

Membership subscriptions, due on October 1st each year, are currently (2018-19) £14.

Further expenses are sometimes incurred by reason of the group's activities, e.g. the Luncheon Clubs pay for their choice of meal, the Theatre Group for theatre tickets. Some groups use a hired venue for their meetings. The cost of this is partially subsidised from general funds with the remainder of the cost being met by the members of that group. Costs are kept as low as possible.

The Third Age Trust (www.u3a.org.uk) levies a capitation fee of £3.50 for each member which is included in the annual subscription. This includes Third Party Insurance, various licenses, Advisors for various subjects and the Resource Centre.

As The Charnwood U3A enjoys charitable status no tax arises. If members are willing to sign a declaration that they have paid sufficient income tax or capital gains tax in a particular tax year, The Charnwood U3A may claim Gift Aid from HMRC on their subscription.

The finances of The Charnwood U3A are controlled by the Trustees (Committee) who are responsible for all money spent or received by The Charnwood U3A. This includes all subscriptions and costs of running the U3A. Committee Members are elected at the AGM in March each year.

The Committee

The Committee comprises at least seven and not more than twelve members elected by the membership at an AGM held in March each year. Two additional members may be co-opted by the Committee.

The Committee comprises three officers, Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer who, together with ordinary committee members are the Trustees of The Charnwood U3A.

Other members of The Charnwood U3A who have some special expertise may be invited to attend meetings in a non- voting capacity.

Non-Committee Roles

Our Programme Secretary finds and books speakers for our Monthly (except June) General Meetings.

We have a New Member Liaison member who is responsible for contacting new members to ensure that they have found groups to join and to welcome them to our twice-yearly members'/new members' Coffee Morning.

Our Update Editor: Publishes the newsletter 'Update' (monthly) and 'Update Extra' (quarterly). Update is not published in June.

Monthly General Meetings

The Charnwood U3A holds a General Meeting for all members on the second Wednesday of each month (excepting June). These are occasions to meet other members and to hear a talk/presentation from an invited speaker or a member of U3A. The dates and topics of these meetings are printed in the membership/programme card sent to all members.

A Members' Coffee morning is held twice per year when new members are especially welcome. Representatives of our Groups are available to give members the opportunity to speak to them about

any groups they might be interested in joining. A Group Leaders' Meeting follows, when group leaders are able to raise matters that affect the running of groups and hear new information.

Details are given in Update and new members will also be invited by the New Member Liaison Officer.

Local Policy Decisions

Within the framework of the governing committee, decisions are taken from time to time which affect some aspect of members' rights, usually to do with finance or legality. Current (2018) Policies are:

Donations to drivers

Where an event takes place away from Charnwood College, it is customary for anyone offered a lift to donate a small amount to the driver of the car (or other vehicle). It is stressed that this is not a charge on the individual member (which would be contrary to insurance regulations) but a gift which is deemed to be fair, having regard to petrol prices and general operating costs. It is suggested that a donation of up to 30p per mile, divided by the number of people (including the driver) in the car, is appropriate.

Visitors to group meetings

Visitors may attend one group meeting. Before attending further meetings they must join The Charnwood U3A. However, members of another U3A may join one of The Charnwood U3A interest groups, providing there is space, without joining The Charnwood U3A, and must pay any group fees. Non-members of U3A may not attend any group meeting on more than one occasion per membership year.

Data Protection

The Charnwood U3A has a Data Protection Policy which is available in the Members' Area of the website: www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Members & Companions/Carers

U3A members must join independently and no agency may join on their behalf. New members should be capable of caring for themselves and taking responsibility for all aspects of their membership.

Where existing members are no longer able to take full responsibility for themselves, they may attend meetings accompanied by a carer or family member who can accept that responsibility for them and at the discretion of the Group Leader.

Safety, Security and Insurance

The Third Age Trust holds third party liability cover for its members participating in any of the various activities or pastimes.

The Charnwood U3A as a corporate body has public liability cover but this does not extend to individual members.

As far as is practical, all public venues used by The Charnwood U3A comply with Fire Safety Regulations.

When meeting at Charnwood College it is a requirement of the College that individuals wear their Membership badge for recognition within the College grounds and buildings.

Accidents

Group Leaders hold copies of Accident Report Forms. In the event of any accident during any U3A activity, the Group Leader will complete the form and return it to the Secretary as soon as possible.

Members are encouraged to carry an 'ICE' (In Case of Emergency) card at all times. These cards are available on request from Group Leaders and at General Meetings and include emergency contact information.

Periodicals and Publications

A monthly news sheet "Update" is emailed to all members shortly before the monthly meeting and sent by post to those members without email. Quarterly, in January, April, July and October, a longer newsletter (Update Extra) is issued, with members encouraged to submit articles for publication.

The Third Age Trust, the National organisation for Universities of the Third Age in the UK, issues a magazine "Third Age Matters", in January, April, June, September and November. This is sent by post to all members of The Charnwood U3A.

The website of Charnwood U3A is: www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk

To log in to the Members' Area, enter the Name and Password which is printed on your membership card.

The website for the Third Age Trust is: www.u3a.org.uk

Charnwood U3A is a member of the Leicestershire & Rutland Network of U3As: <https://u3asites.org.uk/code/u3asite.php?site=764>

Our Interest Groups

Aerobics

The group meets weekly under the supervision of a qualified instructor.

Archaeology

This group meets monthly to learn more about sites one might visit while on holiday, like Petra, Hadrian's Wall, Macchu Picchu or Pompeii, in order to plan visits or enjoy again ones already made. Meetings include illustrated talks by the group leader, outside speakers and members of the group. Visits to English sites and special exhibitions are arranged. The group has also had talks on Leicestershire archaeology and studied wider themes such as prehistory, the beginnings of metal-working, industrial archaeology and so on.

Architecture

This group meets monthly. We are interested in all aspects of British architecture/architects - old and new. We aim to further these interests by inviting speakers to some meetings, watching and discussing DVDs/videos and by arranging visits to associated places of interest.

Art Appreciation

This group aims to discover more about Art in a relaxed, enjoyable fashion. We follow our members' interests through talks by members, discussions and visits to art galleries. You don't need to be an expert to join us. We meet once a month.

Badminton

A lively, friendly and well-attended group meets weekly at Loughborough Leisure Centre. Tuition is available.

Beading

All are welcome from beginners to experts to join in for beading, fun and a chat.

Books 1

Meets monthly at the home of a member. One member chooses a book which all the group read, and leads a discussion on the book at the next meeting. Books are supplied by the library services. Videos and outings relevant to the books may also be included.

Books 2

We read a wide variety of books, including non-fiction and poetry, from Leicestershire Library Service. Members take turns to host the meetings and discussions on our reading are usually lively with strong views being expressed on occasions. Opinions differ widely but it all adds up to some interesting and enjoyable meetings.

Books 3

Why a Book Club? To read a good yarn? ... To expand our horizons? (exploring Turkey, the life of a Geisha, leprosy, lighthouses) are a few

examples), to socialise over a cuppa? All these apply and, although not all books suit everyone, most people persevere and find something to discuss. We meet in each other's homes and choose the books jointly - from a Library Services Catalogue or from our local library.

Bowls - Indoor

The Group meets weekly all year round at Charnwood Indoor Bowls Centre. Tuition is available.

Bowls - Outdoor

The Group meets weekly throughout the summer at the Brush Bowls Club for a fun afternoon of gentle exercise with tuition and guidance provided. No previous experience is necessary and all equipment can be provided.

Bridge

We meet weekly and new members of any standard are welcome. Beginners will be given extra help and will gradually integrate with the existing group. It is a very informal social group.

Calligraphy

The group meets monthly at the leader's home. The emphasis is on encouraging each other whether one is a beginner or an improver. The leader instructs and advises both beginners and more experienced people in the art of calligraphy.

Canasta 1 & 2

If you don't like Bridge, you will love Canasta! The game is played with two packs of cards and can be played in pairs or singles any number of players from 2 to 4. Both groups cater for experienced players, novices and complete beginners who wish to learn from scratch. Group 1 meets weekly in a village hall and Group 2 meets on alternate weeks in a central location. Enjoy this easy-to-learn game in a relaxed and friendly environment and have a chat and a cup or tea or coffee whilst socialising with friends.

Chess

A small group meets fortnightly to play chess together in members' homes in rotation. We enjoy games of chess in a very relaxed atmosphere. Most members of the group have played previously, but not necessarily in recent years.

Classical Civilisation

This group meets monthly and takes a thematic approach, using talks and discussions, looking at issues in Greek and Roman times and then relating their relevance to the modern world. In addition to 'home' meetings, visits are planned to enhance the theoretical perspectives.

Classical Greek

This is small group meets once a month led by an experienced Classics tutor. The group is primarily for those with no previous knowledge who wish to learn Classical Greek. The aim is to progress through the structures of the language to aid comprehension by reading (including aloud).

Word derivations will be noticed, and in due time the aim is to start reading simpler passages of Classical (and Biblical) Greek. A little Civilization material to provide a cultural context will also be shared.

Classical Music Enjoyment

This group meets monthly with an excellent HiFi System. Members are enthusiasts whose interest is in listening to a range of classical music from Baroque to Romantic, with occasional forays into other fields. The presenter adds information about the music, the composer and the history of the times. A small annual subscription is levied to cover the hire of the room.

Conversation Francaise

This is a group for those who already speak French but wish to extend the range of their conversations. We normally split into small informal groups so that members can contribute as much as

they wish. Meetings are on the third Monday morning of each month. After each session many of us stay on in the reception area at Gorse Covert Community Centre and have a coffee and talk in English.

Cribbage 1 & 2

The group meets twice per month in the home of a member to enjoy playing this old traditional card game.

Dancing 1 & 2

This thriving and friendly group meets twice monthly for Line, Folk and Ballroom Dancing. No experience is necessary as tuition is given for all dances. We do not attempt anything too energetic - fun and gentle exercise are the aims.

Days of Interest

A leisurely coach trip out on a Saturday each month to visit a place of interest. We visit towns and cities, historic houses, museums, exhibitions, gardens and so on, usually within a couple of hour's travelling time. (We do not have a trip in December; in January we have a visit to the theatre and in February a meal together.)

Digital Imaging

This group manipulates images and photographs using individual creativity. Members need access to a computer with appropriate software, a digital camera and broadband internet connection. Some basic knowledge of photo-editing and the completion of a digital photography course is an advantage.

English Parish Churches 1 & 2

Two groups meet monthly, indoor meetings with PowerPoint presentations from October to April, with visits to local churches and coach outings further afield from May to September. Topics include architecture, history, religious symbolism, how to "read" and understand our huge heritage of churches.

Family History Discussion

A small group meets in members' homes. Some have been researching family history for many years, for others it's a new interest. We provide a warm and inviting atmosphere where everyone is welcome to share and learn from each other about the different resources available. Individual stories are described, online websites discussed and brick walls tackled.

Film Group

Meets at Phoenix Cinema in Leicester. This group is open to all U3As in Leicestershire and meets on the second Wednesday morning to watch a pre-planned programme of films of various genres. The start time is organised so that bus passes can be used for travel into Leicester, entry fee includes a cup of tea or coffee and there is time for socialising and discussion about the film being

French Conversation

Members meet to practice and improve their spoken French. The bilingual tutor leads discussions about French life, politics, history etc, to widen members' knowledge of this fascinating country.

French Intermediate

If you already have some knowledge of French and wish to practice and improve your skills, this group may be right for you. Every two weeks we meet in a member's home to converse, express our opinions and add to our knowledge of the language. We talk, we read, we write and have even been known to sing! Various materials are used, including a textbook.

Gardening

For everyone interested in gardening and/or gardens, no matter what their level of knowledge and experience. The group can provide "Gardening buddies" for anyone considering themselves a novice. Our annual programmes are varied and include professional specialist speakers, visits to members and National Garden

Scheme gardens, members' meetings - to informally exchange ideas and information.

German - Advanced

The group meets twice a month for tuition by a native German speaker on topics of conversation, translation, videos from German TV, games and so on. German newspapers are available for members.

German 1 & 2

This group meets twice a month in a member's home. This group will suit anyone with some experience of the German language. It is all about freshening up a skill with lively chatting and discussion of a subject or theme. Help is available when needed.

Golf for Beginners

The Group meets weekly at either Shelthorpe Golf Course or Charnwood Driving Range, depending on the weather. Varying levels of skill, but not taken too seriously.

Gym Fitness

We meet weekly at Loughborough College gym, which is very well equipped. If needed, we get help to sort out a programme but you can

do what you feel is most appropriate for you, i.e. just general fitness or, if needed, a programme for stretching. Please contact the co-ordinator as you need an induction at the college before joining.

History 1

A wide variety of historical topics, subjects and ages will be covered. Monthly meetings will be half-day morning visits, with occasional all-day visits to places of historical interest, and some home meetings with an invited speaker.

History 2

Monthly meetings with an invited speaker and occasional outdoor visits.

History 3

A group of enthusiastic and interested members dividing activities between talks and outside visits. Although mindful of costs, arranging speakers and visits to venues has not limited our historical interests, which remain varied.

Italian Conversation (intermediate/advanced)

A very friendly group of “Italophiles” meet once a month to chat in general, then read, translate and discuss a modern prepared text. Enthusiasm is required, plus some (or, preferably, intermediate) knowledge of Italian.

Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange

We exchange jigsaws (for members to complete at home) and views on the merits, or otherwise, of the ones recently completed. Over the years we have handled 682 puzzles that we eventually pass on to charity. Our families and friends know what to give us for Christmas – and they do!

Latin

This is an on going course. Members will need to have a basic knowledge of Latin in order to join. Text books are provided.

Life Story Writing

A small group of eight or so people, aimed at encouraging each other to make a start. The venue has wheelchair access.

Local History

The Local History group meets monthly, usually at Loughborough Library, when we invite a range of speakers, some being members of the group themselves who have a particular interest

to share. We enjoy some time for discussion and refreshments. In the summer months, instead of meeting at the Library, we organise trips to various places of local history.

Luncheon Clubs 1 , 2 & 3

Luncheon Clubs meet once a month at a local restaurant chosen by the members. Lunches may be preceded by drinks at a member's home. Venues include Carveries, Clubs, Restaurants and Hotels. Seating is random to encourage conversation with different people each month. The 3 groups operate quite independently of each other.

Mac Users Forum

The Mac Group is for users of Apple devices: iMac, MacBook and iPad. With simple ideas to make your use more efficient, more effective and more fun. We are privileged that one or our members has a great wealth of knowledge. We meet one a month in one of two members' homes.

Mah Jong 1

We meet weekly at members' houses. At its simplest, like rummy, players combine sets of tiles from a wall composed of four of each of three suits, four winds and three dragons onto racks. Mah Jong literally means "sparrows", which is perhaps an allusion evoked by the chattering sound of the tiles during play. It is great fun, and can become addictive

Mah Jong 2

We meet weekly at members' houses. We are non-competitive and welcome beginners and offer tuition in this fascinating Chinese game.

Making Music

We get together twice a month to make music. If you played an instrument in the past and would like to take it up again, or have kept up with your playing, come and join us. Our aim is to recreate

the pleasure and satisfaction of making music together. Our motto is any instrument, any ability, from beginner to experienced. Making music is fun and making music together is much more fun! We are friendly, welcoming and have a very enjoyable time producing some beautiful sounds

Mini Tennis

Mini Tennis is a truly easy game to learn, played on a badminton sized court with light short strung racquets and foam balls. Rules and scoring are simple and it is fun as well as being competitive and good exercise. Tuition is available.

Needlecraft 1 & 2

If you would like to enjoy needlecraft in a relaxed atmosphere we meet at members' houses where we share our enthusiasm for knitting, crochet, embroidery and tapestry etc. A small donation per person paid on the day for tea/coffee, biscuits.

Painting

The Painting Group meets monthly, working mainly in watercolor but occasionally in other media. The year's programme is chosen by the members who are encouraged to lead the group in a topic of their choice. We engage a professional tutor once or twice a year.

Philosophy

This group meets once a month in members' homes for lively debate. At some meetings we will discuss the works of one of the world's great philosophers – from the ancient Greeks to the modern day. At others we will take a particular philosophical question and consider what that means to each of us today.

Photography

The group meets twice monthly, alternating between an indoor presentation/workshop and a trip out to take photographs. We welcome anyone wishing to improve their photographic skills.

Pilates 1 & 2

This weekly group is supervised by a professional instructor. Pilates was developed in the early 20th century as a physical fitness system, and is an exercise method that uses core muscles to develop strength, flexibility and balance. It combines mind and body awareness, and is good for mental and physical well-being.

Play Reading & Drama

The group meets in members' homes to read plays. Members read consecutively or in character as decided at each meeting. Input from members of the group on choice of plays is welcomed. Occasionally the group performs a sketch or short play.

Poetry Reading and Discussion

The members of this group each take an active part in presenting poetry of their choice on any topic or poet. The monthly meetings generally have two presenters/readers, with opportunity for discussion of the poems by all the members of the group.

Quiz

A friendly group, meeting once a month, we usually have an enlightening afternoon. Members who wish take turns to host the group and prepare questions.

Science and Technology 1

Meetings vary from half to full day, depending upon the nature of the meeting. The programmes are discussed with members and contain a balance of interest and activity. As well as in-house speakers, the group also visits places of industrial, scientific and environmental interest and museums. Members pay a small membership fee to cover administrative costs.

Science and Technology 2

The Group meets monthly in a church hall in Loughborough. Most meetings take the form of general interest talks covering all aspects of science and technology. Some of the members are retired scientists of various sorts, we take special care to recognise the non-specialist members so that everybody gets something out of the talks. The programme for the year is available and prospective members can make one visit as a “taster” but please make yourself known to the leader.

Scrabble 1 - 4

Scrabble groups meet once or twice a month in members’ homes to play Scrabble and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee together.

Singing for Pleasure

The group meets monthly when members practice a variety of music such as songs from shows, part songs, rounds and carols. The ability to read music is not necessary to join. We have occasional small concerts but in the main it is simply Singing for Pleasure.

Snooker

This group meets at a snooker club where there is easy parking. Membership of the club is free to those over 65. There is an hourly charge for the table, which is shared between the players.

Spanish

All members of the group have studied Spanish before, albeit at varying levels. What unites us is the desire to make progress and gain confidence by speaking, reading and writing the language. We use a text book, a variety of materials and we converse a lot. The classes are lively, highly interactive and enjoyable.

Sunday Lunch 1 & 2

These groups meet once a month for Sunday lunch at a local restaurant or golf club. Contact Group Leader for details.

Supper Group 1 & 2

Members meet once a month for an evening meal at a local restaurant, chosen and organised in turn by members who circulate the menu and order the meals in advance. The maximum cost is agreed by the group.

Swimming

The group meets at Charnwood College swimming pool. There is a short session of exercises in the water and it is optional whether you join in or not. A lane is available for swimming lengths. Life guards are always present. The cost of the pool is shared among the members.

Table Tennis 1-7

We have 7 x 1-hour sessions each week, meeting at the Loughborough Leisure Centre. We are very friendly and the main aim is for laughter and friendship, although there is a strong element of competition between us! Anyone interested in joining please contact, in the first instance, the Table Tennis co-ordinator (see Group Activities list).

Tai Chi

This group meets for one hour each week throughout the year under the supervision of a qualified instructor. The movements and postures practiced are not too strenuous, but aim for greater flexibility, improvement in balance and a state of relaxation. A small fee is payable to cover the cost of tuition and room hire.

Textile Art

The focus of this group is to make fabric pictures or quilts for walls or beds using quilting or other forms of textile art which involves the use of sewing machines. We learn or practise how to do free machine work to add interest to the final piece; we add colour using

fabric paints, crayons or oil sticks, using stencils or printing blocks or any ideas suggested by the members. We have some time learning new skills and some time on our own projects.

Theatre Group

Theatre visits are organised at approximately monthly intervals, mostly to theatres in Derby, Leicester and Nottingham. We also visit Stratford, London, Birmingham and Kilworth House Theatre. Members may bring one guest, who must be a U3A member, to a performance and subject to a small supplement. We attend a variety of shows including comedy, drama, musicals and light opera. Members must register with the group and pay a small fee to cover administration and postage etc.

A newsletter is published at 2-monthly intervals, after which tickets can be reserved provisionally. They are available on a first-come first-served basis.

Travel Group

The Travel Group is run by a Working Party, whose purpose is to organise, or facilitate others within the membership to organise, two or three holidays a year in the UK and abroad and based on ideas from the members. Meetings are held in alternate months and include updates on planned or proposed holidays and usually a presentation of past or future holidays. The group is especially beneficial to single members, offering the safety and enjoyment of being within a group of like-minded travellers. All holidays are arranged in compliance with UK law and Package Tour Regulations.

Wine Appreciation

Can you tell the difference between a Chardonnay and a Sauvignon Blanc, a Cabernet Sauvignon or a Merlot, a wine from old World or a wine from the new World? It doesn't matter if you can or can't but it's fun finding out, so do join us on our path to learning about wines, beers, spirits etc.

Walking Groups

All the walking groups welcome new members. Contact the Walking Groups Co-ordinator who will discuss with you the most suitable group for you to join.

Members joining walking groups are responsible for their own safety. They should make sure that they are suitably equipped for the walk as regards clothing and fitness.

Tuesdays:

Moat Road Strollers (3-4) miles	first Tues
Walking 6+ miles	third Tues
Walking 10+ miles	first Tues

(The 10+ group meet at 10.00am and finish at approximately 3.30pm with a pub stop around 1.00pm. Most walks start within a 20-mile radius of Loughborough, but occasionally we go to the Peak district.)

Thursdays:

Litile Xtras 6+ miles	second & fourth Thurs
Sportives - 5 miles	second & fourth Thurs
Happy Wanderers	third Thurs
Parish Walks	third Thurs

Saturday:

Walking 5+ miles	second Sat
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Support Groups

Welcomers

At the monthly meeting three members work on a Rota basis to welcome everyone and to look out for new members and visitors. When new members attend on their own, one of the team takes them to the sign-in desk and offers to sit with them during the meeting. We answer questions about groups and where possible introduce them to relevant group leaders during the tea break. New volunteers for the Rota are always welcome.

Equipment for loan

Projectors and Laptops

Sets are available for group leaders to borrow when required for meetings. See the Group Leaders' Area on the website for details.

All equipment will be called for PAT testing on an annual basis.

Committee

Chairman:	chairman@charnwoodu3a.org.uk
Secretary:	secretary@charnwoodu3a.org.uk
Treasurer:	treasurer@charnwoodu3a.org.uk
Groups	
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Committee Member	
Committee Member	

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To join The Charnwood U3A visit our website www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk

☎ Membership Secretary on 01509 213655

or email memsec@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

The Charnwood U3A

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