Makerspaces: Fiendish Devices for the Masses!
A Makerspace: What is it?

A space to make things

(duh)

(but don’t forget that)
How Big?

Get a room as big as you can get. You’re likely to fill it.

And then some.

What Goes In It?

Depends on what you want people to build and learn
What goes in it **First?**

Tables and chairs (in a preferably lockable space)

A Place to store stuff

A lockable place to store expensive stuff

And lots and lots of electricity. And lots. And also lots. Did I mention electricity?
... and After that, smartguy?

Depends! Do you want to concentrate on something in particular? Some possibilities

3D printing/modeling/art

Gaming (do NOT sell gaming short)

3D coolstuff? (e.g. oculus rift?)

Robots! Wood!

Electronics Drones!

Networking Music
Your space’s relationship to the curriculum

What is your role in the education of the students? Is your space
The location of a specific class (the equivalent of ‘machine shop’
kind of specialty classes?)

Or is your space used by other classes for part of their teaching?
(making the makespace a sort of laboratory space)

In my opinion, try for the first of these two – firstly, you get the
students for longer; secondly, you have a specific voice in funding.
At a minimum, I suggest

3D printer (~$2000) – trendy, everybody’s interested, you look serious about future-coolness

Computing – if only to run the above. You don’t need the latest and the coolest. Castoffs are a possibility. Be ready for your ‘makers’ to know more about computing than you do. This is a good thing, it turns out.

Pick ONE other concentration – electronics (Arduinos, Pis, wires)
  --- or robotics
  --- or modeling
  --- or... something. Something cool.

TARGET for the agegroup, but don’t be surprised if they know more than you think they do. Or more than you do.
What’s Your Role?

You’ll have to decide that for yourself, but I suggest

... you’re a facilitator, not a necessarily a teacher.

You point people at manuals, you answer questions, but the students are the makers, not you.

Some may need more hand-holding than others, but the sooner they figure out that it’s up to them, they will have more fun and learn more.

Be prepared for students to give up on something. Just have something else for them to try.

“... I did what I always do when I can’t figure it out. I give up, and try something else”

- Paul McCartney
Projects!

Have something for your denizens to try out with the stuff. (for the 3d printer, thingiverse.com)

For instance, “Sparkfun Inventors Kits” and the like come with a ton of useful things to do.

Contests are a possibility (a ‘hackathon’ doesn’t have to be just for computers.)

Scower the Internet! It’s not theft, it’s an homage.
Advice

1) Don’t spend all your money at once. Newer and cooler things appear all the time. If you can buy samples, your denizens get to see ‘em, and you do too.

2) LISTEN TO YOUR DENIZENS

They’ll tell you what’s new and interesting. If you have listened to #1, you can support their interests.

3) Document everything.

4) **YOU** are the “corporate memory.” Learn all you can, so you can make the place better.