



Tips for Handling Multiple Patrons

Be prepared

- Have your browser open to the staff portal (askaway.org/staff), with the following pages open in tabs:
 - Library policy pages
 - Guest logins
 - Campfire chat
- Set-up your browser(s) in a way that works efficiently for you
- Practice using scripts, or create some of your own

Strategies

- Use the Librarians tab to see how many questions your colleagues have
- Communicate with colleagues in Campfire for advice or transfers
- Read new questions as they come in - take duplicate or similar questions
- Ask the patrons lots of questions - it takes time for them to respond
- Watch the patron indicators to see when your patrons have responded
- Use scripts when appropriate to save time typing
- Push pages and send links rather than typing info into chat
- Take them to databases you know well
- Be honest - you're handling several other questions at the same time
- Refer local knowledge questions to the patron's institution. Provide contact info, e.g. phone number, for ref desk or circ staff

Stalling

- Use "reference interview" questions
- "I'll see what resources are available for you - just a minute please"
- Show the patron the appropriate subject guide from their institution
- Once you have a list of results, let the patron look it over while you help someone else

Beginning of shift

- In Campfire, offer to take transfers from busy colleagues
- If your colleagues don't respond, take any new calls that come in