

# Connecting with Others: How to Build a Strong Network of Friends

Building and maintaining a network of friends as an adult isn't always easy. If you don't already have a friend group, it can be difficult to know where to start looking. But developing and cultivating meaningful connections is possible with the right approach.

Read on for practical strategies that can help you expand your social circle and foster lasting friendships.



## Reconnect with Old Friends<sup>1,2</sup>

Sometimes, reestablishing communication with people you already know can be a good place to start. Consider reaching out to old classmates, colleagues, coworkers, relatives, or acquaintances with a simple greeting—or perhaps even with an invitation to do something casual together like getting coffee. Thanks to social media platforms, this method can be easy and convenient.

As a bonus, reconnecting with others from your past may lead you to meeting additional people within their social network, thus increasing the likelihood of being introduced to someone you may end up friends with.

## Embrace Online Platforms<sup>1</sup>

In today's age, the internet can be a powerful tool for making friends. Certain apps, websites, and social platforms cater specifically to people looking to build their social network. Engaging in online communities related to your hobbies or interests can also lead to in-person meetups.

Some groups even have dedicated online chatrooms so you can get a feel for the people involved before committing to something in-person. But as with any online interaction that might lead to meeting up in the real world, make sure you're following best practices to keep yourself safe from any potential malicious actors.

## Volunteer Your Time<sup>1,3</sup>

Volunteering can be a productive way to meet people who have similar values—especially since working alongside others for a shared cause can quickly create a sense of camaraderie. Consider looking into the needs of local food banks, animal shelters, nursing homes, community centers, or other non-profit organizations to see what sort of opportunities they have on offer.

## Participate in Community Activities<sup>1,2,3</sup>

Local events, workshops, and recreational activities are ideal for meeting people with similar interests who live nearby. Check your community center, city website, or library to see what's available. This might include activities like fitness classes, book clubs, community gardening, or tabletop gaming sessions.

It can also help to find an activity that's recurring, as regularly attending something is more likely to lead to familiarity and organic connections than going to a one-off event.

Similarly, frequenting the same places—like a local café, gym, or park—can help you become a familiar face in the community. Regular interactions with others in these settings can lead to new connections.

## Patience and Consistency are Key<sup>2,3</sup>

Building friendships takes time and consistent effort. Don't get discouraged if connections don't form instantly. Stay open, keep trying, and remember that patience and consistency are key in building relationships. Over time, these small efforts can turn acquaintances into close friends.

Making friends as an adult may require stepping out of your comfort zone, but the chance to develop meaningful new relationships is well worth the effort.

<sup>1</sup>Miles, Madeline. "How to make friends as an adult and why it is so hard." *BetterUp*, 2024.

<sup>2</sup>Regan, Sarah. "20 Simple Ways To Make Friends As An Adult, Recommended By Experts." *mindbodygreen*, 2023.

<sup>3</sup>Gordon, Sherri. "How to Make Friends as an Adult." *Verywell Mind*, 2023.