

Making friends as an adult

Easy · 10 min to read; a few months of showing up · Free to cheap

Adult friendships don't just happen like they did in school; you have to build them on purpose. Join one recurring thing (a class, team, club, volunteer shift or faith group) so you see the same people repeatedly. Reach out to people you already know a little: old classmates, coworkers, neighbors. Be the one who invites, say yes when invited, and expect to suggest plans a few times before you can tell if someone's interested. Then keep it going: show up, listen, follow through, check in between meetups.

YOU'LL NEED

- ☐ One interest you'd enjoy doing with other people
- ☐ Your phone's contact list
- ☐ Your calendar

WHAT TO KNOW

- 1 **Start with people you already know a little: people you've worked with or taken classes with, old friends, people you enjoyed at a party, neighbors and family.**
- 2 **Join something that meets regularly around an interest: a club, a community class, a gym class, a volunteer shift or a faith community's newcomer events.** Shared interests make strong links.
- 3 **Use more than one way to meet people.** The more you try, the easier it gets and the more likely you are to succeed.
- 4 **Make the first move.** Invite someone you'd like to know better for coffee or lunch. Ask a mutual friend to connect you if that's easier.
- 5 **Say yes to invitations, then return the invite.**
- 6 **Keep at it.** Reach out instead of waiting, and expect to suggest plans a few times before you can tell whether someone wants to hang out.
- 7 **Turn acquaintances into friends with time.** See new friends often and check in between meetups. It feels awkward at first and gets easier.

Watch out Online groups can help you feel less lonely, but research suggests social media doesn't always lead to closer offline friendships. Be careful what you share, and take care meeting someone you met online. Don't let screen time crowd out time with people in person.

DAD NOTE *Be the one who sends the text. Most people are waiting for someone else to.*

Full lesson: aptkeys.com/people/making-and-keeping-friends/making-friends-as-an-adult/

Checked October 2, 2026. Sources: Mayo Clinic; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.