



It only takes a small act of neighborliness to make a big difference in the life of a neighbor. Acts of kindness among neighbors have become rare enough these days that being neighborly stands out as a special event for most people, and it can open the door to further connections and neighborhood involvement. But where should you start?

Reaching your neighbors does not mean you host a block party with inflatables first thing. It is better to start small by reaching out to your eight closest neighbors with an act of kindness. As you get to know your neighbors and they get to know you, the next step could be a food event. Just make sure your focus is always on building connections, not just entertaining.

This list of neighboring ideas was first developed in the spring of 2021 for a project between University of Missouri Extension and the Springfield-Greene County Library District. It was further refined in the fall of 2021 with Springfield television station KY3 as a way to celebrate National Good Neighbor Day. This list was further refined in 2022 as part of a partnership between MU Extension and The Hopeful Neighborhood Project.

While there may be little you can do to change Washington, D.C. or in your state capital, there is something you can do every day that will improve the community where you live, being neighborly. Why not start with some ideas on this list? Happy neighboring.

ACTS OF NEIGHBORLINESS

1. Invite neighbor children over with their parents for a game night.
2. Organize a simple parade in your neighborhood. Any theme can work.
3. Host a soup potluck for neighbors in your driveway.
4. Set up an outdoor picture-taking event for kids.
5. Grill hamburgers and/or hot dogs in the front yard to give away to neighbors (provide water as well).
6. Put out chairs in the front yard, so neighbors can sit down, rest, and drink something.
7. Bring out a fire pit in your front yard to roast marshmallows or make s'mores.
8. Offering a helping hand to rake a neighbor's lawn or cleaning rain or street gutters are great ways to show your neighbors you care.
9. Send a text, an email, or a card to your neighbors thanking them for being such great neighbors or checking in on them. They will be surprised that you took the time to connect.
10. Host neighbors for evening coffee and dessert.
11. In cooler weather, invite neighbors over to watch a football or soccer game. Set up a TV in the garage or in your house, provide some snacks, cheer on your favorite team, and connect with your neighbors.
12. Give thank you cards to those in your neighborhood who contribute in big and small ways.
13. Invite your neighbors over for an open house.
14. How about a potluck with a theme for neighbors on the driveway? Invite them to bring a favorite dish, or a traditional family or cultural dish.
15. Plan a fish fry, BBQ smoke-off, or hot wings cooking contest where the neighbors are the judges.
16. Mail or leave a surprise affirmation note on your neighbor's door.
17. Use the element of surprise with a gift or act of service that would bless your neighbors.
18. Get all the neighbors involved in a free car wash at your house or a neighbor's house.
19. Organize a neighborhood ping pong or croquet tournament.
20. Outdoor movie night: Project a movie onto a garage or outdoor screen.
21. Offer to bring in the mail or newspaper when a neighbor is on vacation.
22. If new neighbors have moved in, throw a welcome party. Ask everyone to bring an appetizer or a dessert. (Sunday from 4 - 6 pm is a good time.)
23. Help with unkempt lawns for the elderly or single moms in the neighborhood.
24. Take walks or bike rides with neighbors.
25. Host a *Pancakes on the Porch* breakfast.

26. Plan a neighborhood scavenger hunt. You can do it all together, or use a social media group to post the list and have people send in pictures as they meet people and discover gifts in their neighborhood.
27. Find out who has served in the Armed Forces in your neighborhood and think of something you could do for them that would show you appreciate their service.
28. "Sunday Sundaes." Neighbors gather for sundaes on Sunday.
29. Donuts on the driveway (with coffee or cider, of course).
30. Offer to walk your neighbor's dog(s). They might welcome the break and you might have a chance to meet more neighbors.
31. Bring cut flowers to a shut-in in your neighborhood.
32. Start a neighborhood garden and bring the produce to your neighbors. You might want to put it in the front yard, so the neighbors watch the vegetables and flowers grow.*
33. Start a neighborhood lending library. You can build a book box on a pole for the neighborhood or in a public place in your apartment building.
34. Look for needs in the neighborhood and ask if you can lend a hand.
35. Put on a neighborhood progressive dinner.
36. Invite your neighbors over for a barbecue. Arrange activities for the kids so they are included, like a bounce house, croquet, slip 'n slide, etc.
37. Host a neighborhood book club. You can host in your house, garage, or a local space like the library, community center, or a church basement.
38. Go for a walk and bring a small trash bag to pick up trash along the sidewalk.
39. Use sidewalk chalk to write an inspiring message on the sidewalk in front of your home.
40. Ask an elderly neighbor or parent with young children if you can pick up items for them while you're at the store.
41. If you play a musical instrument, give invitations to your neighbors to attend an outdoor concert on the curb at a given time (and meet more neighbors just by playing on your front porch).
42. Introduce yourself to a neighbor and write down their name.
43. Compliment a neighbor on a feature of their home or garden.
44. Make yourself available by spending more time in the front yard.
45. Host a garage sale with special discounts for your neighbors.
46. Make a double batch of the cookies you're baking and bring some to a neighbor.
47. Know parents who could use a night out? Offer to babysit a neighbor's child for free.
48. Organize a blitz neighborhood cleanup.
49. Make dinner for a neighbor who has just had a baby or surgery.

50. Buy a plant. Put it in a terracotta pot. Write positive words that describe your neighbor on the pot and give it to them!
51. Say hello or wave each time you see your neighbors.
52. Bring in your neighbors' garbage can or offer to wash their car.
53. Leave a bottle of bubbles, flowers, or a coloring book on the neighbor's doorstep.
54. Ask a neighbor if there's a chore you can help them do.
55. Set up a reverse lemonade stand with free drinks for neighbors.
56. Host a weekly or monthly coffee bar in your garage for the neighborhood to gather people and get acquainted.
57. Create a front yard water park for the neighbors with a sprinkler, slip-and-slide, and even water guns or water balloons.
58. Read a good book about neighbor-ing to get you inspired. Try Dave Runyon's book, "The Art of Neighbor-ing."
59. Read Melody Warnick's book, "This Is Where You Belong" and try out one of her ideas for learning to love where you live.
60. Learn your neighbors' names and get their contact information to create a neighborhood directory, either for yourself or to share with your neighbors.
61. Host a corn hole tournament on your driveway for neighbors.
62. Ask a neighbor for help or to borrow something.
63. Make a phone call to a neighbor to chat, perhaps ask for advice.
64. Form a "secret men's club" that meets monthly to help a needy neighbor.
65. Do a favor for a neighbor or make a special delivery.
66. Create and distribute a neighborhood newsletter. If you have time, include a profile on a neighbor as a way to introduce them to others.
67. Start walking through your neighborhood intentionally. Say hello to everyone you see and make a note of something new each time.
68. Wait to close the garage door until after you have unloaded your vehicle. If you see a neighbor outside or a car driving past, raise a hand to say hello.
69. Keep your head up when you check your mail. Acknowledge anyone you see outside.
70. Bring playtime or snack-time outside to the front yard if you have children. Invite neighbor kids to join if the opportunity arises.
71. Introduce yourself to a neighbor you have not met before.
72. Tell a neighbor what you love about their children.

73. Organize a Halloween costume parade and contest in your neighborhood.
74. Organize a night out for neighbors at a bowling alley or golf driving range.
75. Take treats to elderly neighbors who would appreciate the attention.
76. Invite your neighbors to help the less fortunate in our community by collecting food for a food pantry for Thanksgiving or when you know they are running low on food.
77. Put together a goodie bag for the neighbors and go from house to house, giving them out singing holiday songs.
78. Start a toy drive in the neighborhood for less fortunate children.
79. Give mini-Poinsettias with notes to particular neighbors.
80. Offer free holiday gift wrapping for the neighborhood with coffee and cookies.
81. Plan an activity for Missouri Good Neighbor Week and report about it at <http://missourigoodneighborweek.com>
82. Organize monthly "block talk" gatherings or "driveway chats." Keep the food simple and let different homes host.
83. Host an Easter sunrise service on your driveway or neighborhood walk. End the service with an Easter Egg hunt in the neighborhood.
84. Organize a neighborhood basketball or whiffle ball game. Get the dads involved!
85. For kids: Leave May Day (May 1st) flower baskets, ring the bell, and run away.
86. Quarterly gatherings with guests (like city officials) to share with neighbors.
87. Take the Engaged Neighbor Pledge at <http://nomoregoodneighbors.com>.
88. Create or host a neighborhood tool library in your garage or elsewhere so neighbors can check out needed but lesser-used tools for projects.
89. Create a contact on your phone with your name, phone number, address, and title "neighbor". When you meet someone new you can easily share your contact with them.
90. Save any neighbor contacts on your phone with the title "neighbor", then you can easily text or contact the group with a simple search for neighbor in your contact list.
91. Write a welcome note for a new neighbor with a list of your favorite neighborhood things, include hidden gems not easily searchable on google.
92. Create games and activities on your neighborhood sidewalks with sidewalk chalk to encourage people to go on a walk and do something fun (things like hop-scotch, curving lines to balance on, riddles, or challenges, like 5 push-ups or 3 cartwheels).

93. Make name tags for your next neighborhood event for each neighbor. Keep them in a book so when they come back, they know they belong (and when they don't come, they are missed). Include name, address, how long they have lived in the neighborhood, hometown, and/or hobbies to give people ways to connect.
94. Write a note of thanks to first responders in your neighborhood.
95. Visit your local library to do some research about your neighborhood. Share with neighbors what you learned and ask them what they know.
96. Cheer on a local youth sports team, if you any of your neighborhood kids play a sport, get the schedule from them and let them know you are supporting them.
97. Invite a neighbor to a local event, like a craft fair or concert in the park.
98. Go to a library event featuring a local author or speaker. Invite a neighbor to go with you.
99. Join your local HOA or neighborhood association. Or, if you can't lead, find ways to support and thank them for their efforts.
100. Host a neighborhood story time in your front yard for neighborhood kids. Read a story and offer popsicles or fruit to help slow the "summer slide."
101. Offer to teach a skill you have to local neighbors. Skills like baking, writing, public speaking, budgeting, sewing, water color, and fixing a lawn mower are just a few ideas of skills many people (including young people) would love to learn.

** Individual counties, municipalities, Home Owners Associations, etc. may have their own set of community rules and regulations that prohibit some of these activities. Please check your local rules before planning an event or planting/placing anything permanent.*

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