



Grow Your Relationships With Your Neighbors This Holiday Season

Whether you're new to the neighborhood or you've lived there for years, the holidays provide a great opportunity to meet your neighbors. What better way to get to know the people on your block or in your building than to bring them a small, thoughtful gift to break the ice? The size of the gift doesn't matter; what matters is building relationships with your neighbors.

Hot cocoa or apple cider mix in mugs will keep your neighbors toasty on a cold winter's day. Pick up a few sets at discount and department stores around the holidays.

Cookie mixes in mason jars are sure to express the holiday spirit. Fill the jar with mixes for holiday favorites like gingerbread or sugar cookies.

Baked goods are a timeless gift. While you're baking cookies for the holidays, bake a few dozen extra to give to your neighbors. Other yummy options include popcorn balls, bread or pies.

Poinsettias are a symbol of the holiday season. Give one to your neighbor, or choose another winter flowering plant such as kalanchoe, amaryllis or paperwhite narcissus.

A bottle of wine or another favorite beverage is a nice surprise your neighbors are sure to appreciate.

Better Neighbor Tip: To get ideas for neighbors' gifts, check out Pinterest. The image-driven social media site has photo boards full of great ideas that your neighbors are sure to love.





3 Benefits of Knowing Your Neighbors

1. Safety. Neighborhoods where people know one another tend to be safer than those where people are strangers. Friendly neighbors might feel more comfortable notifying authorities if they see suspicious activity.

Consider:

- Starting a neighborhood watch program.
- Keeping an eye on your neighbor's house while they're out of town.

2. Sharing. Tight-knit neighbors are more likely to share resources, whether it's a hammer or extra goodies from the garden.

Consider:

- Helping your elderly neighbors with yard work, snow removal or tasks around the house.
- Taking dinner to a neighbor who is under the weather or who just had a baby.

3. Social support. People with strong social ties are not only happier, they also tend to live longer.

Consider:

- Organizing a block party or potluck dinner to get to know your neighbors.
- Smiling and waving at your neighbors when they pass by your house.

65% of Americans do favors for their neighbors.

43% of Americans speak to their neighbors at least a few times a week.

Source: Good Magazine Infographic: Do You Know Your Neighbor?

3 Ways to Be a Better Neighbor

1. Be friendly. A little small talk goes a long way. Say "hello" to your neighbors, and try to get to know them.

2. Be considerate. If you share walls with your neighbors, be aware of the noise that your appliances, gadgets and animals make, especially if your neighbor has a different work schedule from you. And, be sure to keep it down after 9 or 10 pm.

3. Keep your place tidy. Whether you live in an apartment, a subdivision or in a rural area, it's important to keep your property in good shape. Sweep your doorway, pick up litter and mow your lawn.

