

How to make friends

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One way to be happier is to increase the quality of our friendships. Whether you are a sociable person or a loner, friendships are important. One of the easiest ways to remain engaged and interested at school, at work or in life is to enjoy the company of the people that we are with.

Let's talk about how to build friendships (without turning into some sort of gushy, over the top, Ned Flanders type character).

Look people in the eye

Gaining brief eye contact with people communicates interest and trust. One simple way to do this is to mentally remind yourself to notice the colour of other people's eyes as you say hello to them.

Smile and say hello

While the minimalist "hi" accompanied by a shrug may seem cool, it can also come across as disinterested and uncaring. Smile genuinely when you meet people and let them know you are glad to see them.

Call people by their name - a lot

Most people feel liked and reassured when someone calls them by their name. Try to use their name at least twice in a conversation, once when you meet them and once when you say goodbye.

Be where you are

One of the easy ways to stand out as a good friend is to be with people when you are with them. This means rather than checking messages, or scrolling through social media or sending texts you actually stop, talk, look at and listen to the people you are with.

Feel lucky to know them

One of the really simple ways to be a good friend to someone is to decide that you are lucky to know them.

Ask people what they think

One way of getting past the awkward stage in conversations is to not just ask people what they have been doing but also what they think about something. Seeking their ideas shows that you value them.

Get to know a lot of people

Not everyone you meet will be a close friend. The more people you get to know even a little bit, the more likely you will be able to find friends. It can also be good in life to know some people as good acquaintances as well as having close friends.

Get to know people who are different

One of the ways to live an interesting life is to talk to people who are different than you. Getting to know people from different countries and backgrounds will enrich your life and stretch your ideas.

What young people want in a friend.

I asked over 1,000 young people last year what looked for in a friend. They said:

humour	honesty
kindness and caring	trustworthy
non-judgemental	happiness

Say hello to people you don't know

All of your friends were strangers once. Maybe it is time to start saying hello to some people you would like to be friends with but don't know yet.

The best way to lose an enemy is to make them into a friend- Abraham Lincoln.