

Friendship

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What makes a friend?

- **Qualities to look for in a friend**

A friend is someone you can trust, who stays by your side during the good times and the bad. They are someone who isn't afraid to tell you the truth and who you feel safe and comfortable around, whether you're laughing your heads off or having a huge breakdown. There are many qualities you can find in friends but the most important one would be kindness. Kindness is a quality found in all good people in general and so true friends are also kind.

- **How you can be a good friend**

There are lots of things you can do to be a good friend but most importantly love yourself, your friends and the time you spend with them. You can also be supportive and make each other feel good. Spend time together and be a good listener. Make sure to be honest with your friends and respect them and their boundaries. Don't forget that being a good friend doesn't mean that you should always say yes to them. When necessary, remember that you can say no to them as it may benefit both you and them in the long run.

Tips to making friends

- **Take the initiative to talk to new people**

When trying to make friends, you will have a hard time unless you reach out and take the initiative to talk to new people. You might feel nervous or uncomfortable when talking to a new person but you also may make new connections if you try to make conversation. If you feel too nervous you can just approach one or two people to talk with instead of a large group.

- **What to do if you are an introvert**

Firstly, introversion simply refers to the way you get your energy; it doesn't necessarily mean you're shy or dislike people.

For introverts, you should aim for quality over quantity. Finding one good friend is often easier than having a crowd of distant friends you don't have the time or energy to really get to know.

You don't always need to look to new interests to find new friends but branching out can have benefits, too.

Most importantly, try to change your behaviour not your identity. Don't try to seem more extroverted, just be yourself.

- **Don't let 'friends' force you to do things you don't want to**

You are allowed to say no. Make sure you make it clear to your friends that you are your own person and you can be and do what you want. Don't allow your friends to make you feel insecure or meaningless. If you do feel that way, make sure to speak out and get help from someone you trust.

- **Ask open-ended questions**

Open-ended questions are questions that can't be answered with a "yes" or "no." These questions invite the other person to respond and share more information about themselves and their experiences. This helps to open the conversation and often helps people feel more at ease. It also allows you to build trust and connect with the other person, as it demonstrates your interest.

- **Listen and respond accordingly**

When making new friends, listen to them so they know that you are interested. Listening shows you care about them and you understand what they are saying to you. Respond in a way that makes them want to keep on talking. Asking an occasional question or making a comment really shows you care and are making an effort to be friends. If the person feels down or seems really excited, ask them how they are feeling, which encourages them to talk and it builds up their trust for you.

Hanging out with friends

- **Planning hanging out with friends**

If you're planning to hang out with friends, the best thing to start off with is checking if they're ok to hang out with you anytime soon. If they're not, don't worry! They might be a little busy at the moment or not feel ready to hang out with you yet. If they are ok with hanging out, then great! You can start deciding with them as to when you're hanging out.

- **Things to do with friends**

There are so many things to do with your friends. Nowadays, we have loads of opportunities, but sometimes it can be tricky to find something to do that's perfect for you and your friends. Firstly, you should try to find something that you all enjoy. This could be hard - some friends have tons in common and others have almost no similar interests - but there has to be something that you all like to do. Usually, it doesn't actually matter where you are, or what you're doing as long as you're having fun - that's what really counts. However here are some examples of things you can do when hanging out with friends:

- Have a movie marathon
- Play games
- Bake something together
- Go outside and do something (you could go to the park or a museum)



How to know when it's time to end a friendship

- **ONLY USE AS A LAST RESORT**

Ending a friendship should be your last option. You and your friends may have had an argument and been upset with one another but that is no reason to end your friendship. Fallouts are normal in friendships so don't think that you cannot be friends with the person. You should only end the friendship once you and your friends agree that you guys don't want to be friends anymore or when you know that friendship is harming you or others.

- **How to end a friendship**

By respectful but honest and firm at the same time. Explain clearly why you are ending things and be mature and kind because they may be hurt or confused. Always consider their feelings by telling them that you appreciated the time you spent with them. Accept how you feel: it's not easy leaving people you cared for

- **Red flags in friends**

- They intentionally say things to hurt your feelings - they might insult you but play it off as a joke
- They try to one-up you - they try to make their achievements more impressive
- They say condescending things - they try to belittle you or make you feel childish
- They leave you out of things - they may not invite you to events and ignore you for other people
- They share your secrets with others - they may betray you or gossip behind your back
- They rarely apologise - They don't admit when they are wrong and won't say sorry
- They're jealous of your other friends - they sometimes make you feel guilty for hanging out with others
- You feel constantly judged by them - you feel like you can't be yourself around them

Who to speak to about friendship-related issues

- **Wellbeing ambassadors, teachers, parents, counsellors, friends etc.**
If you need to talk to someone about friendship-related issues there will always be someone there for you to talk to. Depending on the situation, you may choose a different person to talk to. If you feel like you want to talk to someone who you know relatively well you could talk to a family member or a friend. You shouldn't be afraid to reach out if you feel like you need someone to talk to.

