

# THE GET-TOGETHER GUIDE



## Introduction

This guide was designed to help you plan and host a Get-Together with a few neighbors. The goal of this gathering is to do something simple and meaningful with a few neighbors who live close to you.

This guide will give you four steps, that will help you connect with neighbors, invite them to your gathering, and follow up with them once you are done. Here is an outline of what to expect.

## Outline

**Step 1 - Find an Ally:** Ask a neighbor you already know if they might be willing to co-host with you!

**Step 2 - Complete a Block Map:** Complete the 8 Front Doors Block Map, and determine whom you will invite.

**Step 3 - Invite Your Neighbors:** Hand deliver invitations to your neighbors.

**Step 4 - Host Your Party:** Host your Get-Together and encourage a neighborly vibe.

As you prepare for your Get-Together, remember that we value simplicity and sustainability over a huge blowout party! A small and short gathering with 3-5 neighbors is a HUGE success. We also encourage you to be **Free to Fail!** It is OK if it doesn't turn out exactly as you've imagined. No matter what happens, you will gain new information about your neighborhood that will help you move forward.



## STEP 1: FIND AN ALLY

For this step, you have two goals:

1. **Find an ally who might be willing to co-host the Get-Together with you.**
2. **Begin imagining how you will gather.**

**Find an Ally:** We have learned that neighboring happens more consistently when we do it with a partner. Finding an ally will help you widen your connections and create natural accountability for yourself.

If you already know someone on your block, ask them if they will be a co-host. Remind them that the goal is to do something small, short, and simple. If you get someone who says "yes", then include them in the rest of the steps in this guide. If you can't find anyone, remember you are **Free to Fail!** It may take you initiating this first Get-Together before you find your ally!

**Imagine how you will gather:** A great conversation to have with a potential ally is about what kind of gathering you will host. In Step 4, we will offer a brief agenda for your event, but picking a theme upfront can help neighbors know what to expect.

On the next page, there is a list of ideas for simple neighborhood Get-Togethers. You can pick one of these or do something unique to you or your neighborhood. We recommend picking something that feels authentic and achievable. Review this list with your ally and determine what kind of event you will host.



## STEP 1: FIND AN ALLY

**Get-Together Ideas:** We recommend sticking with an outdoor gathering to start. Neighbors are more likely to come if they don't have to come inside your home.

- Front-Yard Hangout! Bring your lawn chairs for an informal front-yard hangout. Bring your own beverage or snack to share.
- Bubble Party! We will have bubbles on our front porch next Thursday at 6pm. Come by and say hello!
- Grill Gathering! I'll be grilling in the front yard next Sunday evening. I'll have hotdogs; you can bring your own meat or veggies to add to the grill.
- Fire-Pit Friends! Join me on Saturday at dusk for a neighbor hangout around the fire. We'll gather in the apartment community space.
- Garage Gathering! Friday night, I am hosting a garage happy hour for neighbors. I'll provide a case of beer, or you can BYOB!
- Yard-Game Fun! I am pulling some yard games out for a neighborhood gathering!
- Go-nuts for Donuts! Saturday morning, I'll make a fresh pot of coffee and have donuts to share with neighbors!
- Crafting on the Corner! I'm inviting neighbors to join me for a crafting night. I'll have the supplies; you bring the creativity!
- Holiday Gathering! Pick ANY holiday and use it as an excuse to gather.



## STEP 2: DO A BLOCK MAP

For Step 2 you will determine whom to invite by completing the Block Map on the last page of this guide. Follow the instructions below to help you determine whom to invite to your gathering. If you have found an ally do this together!

1. Take your block map to your front door, and while standing outside your door, consider the 8 doors closest to your own. Don't get too hung up on picking the literal 8 closest doors, but instead pick 8 homes of neighbors you feel comfortable inviting to your gathering.
2. Write down everything you know about each home. Names, interests, approximate ages, etc.
3. Determine what kind of relationship you have with each neighbor. Are they strangers, acquaintances, or connections? Next to each block write "S", "A" or "C" based on these definitions.
  - a. Stranger: neighbors whose names you don't know.
  - b. Acquaintances: neighbors whose names and contact information you know.
  - c. Connection: neighbors whom you know by name, you have their contact info, and you know some of their interests, hobbies, skills, and other relevant information.
4. Invite a good mix to your party! If you prefer a smaller party, 8 homes might be a perfect size. For some blocks, apartments, or neighborhoods, it may feel more natural to invite everyone in a given living area. Determine what feels comfortable to you, and stick with it!
5. Attach the Block Map to your refrigerator, and add new info as you discover it!

**\*\*Never feel obligated to invite a neighbor with whom you feel unsafe. Start with the folks you naturally feel a connection with, and work out from there!**



## STEP 3: INVITE YOUR NEIGHBORS!

It's time to actually invite your neighbors. Below are tips for letting people know about your Get-Together:

1. Don't try and be a graphic designer! Informal invitations actually help your neighbors know that this is a simple and small gathering. You can design and print something if that is easier for you, or you can simply write the information on a postcard!
2. Share your information! Be sure to share your name, address, and phone number on the invitation. One goal of the party will be to share information, so take the first step and lead the way!
3. Hand-deliver the invitations by knocking on each door. This may feel intimidating, but the best way to get neighbors to engage is by making sure they see you face-to-face as you deliver your invitations. Going as a team with your ally and co-hosts is highly recommended!
4. Ask for RSVPs. Ask neighbors to text you with an RSVP, which will both let you know if they are attending and give you an excuse to get their phone number!
5. Tell people how long the party will go. This keeps you from having to host longer than you want. It really is fine to keep things to an hour!



## STEP 4: HOST YOUR PARTY!

Setting an agenda for the gathering may seem rigid, but it is good to avoid being an overly "chill host". Without structure, people may not connect in a way that promotes neighborliness. Here is a brief agenda you can adapt for your party:

**Gathering Activity - 10 Minutes:** On a large piece of paper, draw a neighborhood map and ask people to write their names and phone numbers next to their homes as they arrive. Let them know that participation is optional and that you will share the contact info with anyone who participates.

**Introduce Yourself - 5 Minutes:** Introduce yourself, and share why this is important to you. Here is an example of how it might sound: "I recently learned that neighborly relationships can help us be safer, healthier, and more connected. I am using some resources from a group called The Neighboring Movement and have some questions and activities that will help us get to know each other a little bit."

**Opening Conversation - 15 Minutes:** Ask neighbors to introduce themselves to the group by using one or both of the questions below:

- What is one interesting or unique thing about your home that other neighbors might not know?
- Why did you move into this neighborhood, and how long have you lived here?

**Discover Abundance - 30 Minutes:** Use the questions below to discover new things about your neighbors:

- What is something you know so well you could teach it to someone?
- What is something you can create with your hands?
- What is something that you love to do in your free time?



## STEP 4: HOST YOUR PARTY!

If your group is larger, do each question in pairs and then invite folks to "brag" about the skills they discover in their neighbors. As folks share, write their answers on a whiteboard, using sticky notes, or on a large piece of paper.

Once you have everyone's gifts visible, ask your neighbors if they see any connections or themes. If there are any obvious connections, invite neighbors to take action on what they see!

**Chill Time - 10-30 Minutes:** Invite neighbors to casually mingle for a bit, so they can connect and/or take part in any other activities you have planned.

**Closing- 5 Minutes:** At the appointed time, let neighbors know the party is over and tell them you will follow up in the following ways:

- You will send them the contact information list.
- Ask if anyone might be interested in helping host the next gathering.
- Ask for other

### Supply List

- Name tags
- A drawn neighborhood map with a square representing each house you invited
- Pens or markers for people to write with
- Written introduction and statement about why this matters to you
- Something to display the neighborhood gifts (Whiteboard, chalkboard, sticky notes, large piece of paper)
- Anything else you need for specific activities you have planned

A nice gesture after the party is to send a thank-you note to each participant. Let them know that you appreciate them for coming, and that by participating, they are helping create a safer and happier neighborhood!

**Happy Neighboring!**

# KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR



**IN EACH BOX WRITE THE NAME AND  
PHONE NUMBER OF YOUR NEIGHBORS WHO  
LIVE IN THE 8 HOMES CLOSEST TO YOU**



**FIND US AT: [NEIGHBORINGMOVEMENT.ORG](http://NEIGHBORINGMOVEMENT.ORG)**