

# 140 Things You Can Do To Build Community & Create Social Capital

*Adapted and reprinted by the City of Half Moon Bay from BetterTogether.org - an initiative of the Saguaro Seminar on Civic Engagement in America at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government*



1. Organize a social gathering to welcome a new neighbor
2. Attend town meetings
3. Register to vote – and then vote
4. Support local merchants
5. Volunteer your special skills to an organization
6. Donate blood (with a friend!)
7. Start a community garden
8. Mentor someone of a different ethnic or religious group
9. Surprise a new neighbor by making a favorite dinner– and include the recipe
10. Tape record your parents' earliest recollections and share them with your children
11. Plan a vacation with friends or family
12. Avoid gossip
13. Help fix someone's flat tire
14. Organize or participate in a sports league
15. Join a gardening club
16. Attend home parties when invited
17. Become a blood donor or an organ donor
18. Attend your children's athletic contests, plays and recitals
19. Get to know your children's teachers
20. Join the local Elks, Kiwanis, or other service club
21. Get involved with Brownies or Cub/Boy/Girl Scouts
22. Start a monthly tea group
23. Speak at or host a monthly brown bag lunch series at your local library
24. Sing in a choir
25. Get to know the clerks and salespeople at your local stores
26. Attend PTA meetings
27. Audition for community theater or volunteer to usher
28. Give your park a weatherproof chess/checkers board
29. Play cards with friends or neighbors
30. Give to your local food bank
31. Walk or bike to support a cause and meet others
32. Employers: encourage volunteer/community groups to hold meetings on your site
33. Volunteer in your child's classroom or chaperone a field trip
34. Join or start a babysitting cooperative
35. Attend school plays
36. Answer surveys when asked
37. Businesses: invite local government officials to speak at your workplace
38. Attend events on Memorial Day, Veterans Day, or other opportunities to express appreciation for others
39. Form a local outdoor activity group
40. Participate in political campaigns
41. Attend a local budget committee meeting
42. Form a computer group for local senior citizens
43. Help coach Little League or other youth sports – even if you don't have a kid playing
44. Help run the snack bar at the Little League field
45. Form a tool lending library with neighbors and share ladders, mowers, etc.
46. Start a lunch gathering or a discussion group with co-workers
47. Offer to rake a neighbor's yard or shovel his/her walk
48. Start or join a carpool
49. Employers: give employees time to work on civic projects
50. Plan a "Walking Tour" of a local historic area
51. Eat breakfast at a local gathering spot on Saturdays
52. Have family dinners and read to your children
53. Run for public office
54. Stop and make sure the person on the side of the highway is OK
55. Host a block party or a holiday open house
56. Start a fix-it group of friends willing to help each other clean, paint, garden, etc.
57. Offer to serve on a town committee
58. Join the volunteer fire department
59. Go to church, temple, or other house of worship
60. Walk outside with your children – talk to them about why environmental protection is important
61. If you grow tomatoes or other veggies, plant extra for an elder neighbor – better yet, ask him/her to teach you and others how to can the extras
62. Ask a single diner to share your table for lunch
63. Stand at a major intersection holding a sign for your favorite candidate
64. Persuade a local restaurant to have a designated "meet people" table
65. Host a potluck supper before your Town Meeting
66. Take dance lessons with a friend
67. Say "thanks" to public servants – police, firefighters, town clerk...
68. Join a nonprofit board of directors
69. Gather a group to clean up a local park or cemetery
70. When somebody says "government stinks," suggest they help fix it
71. Turn off the TV and talk with friends or family

72. Hold a neighborhood barbecue
73. Bake cookies for new neighbors or work colleagues
74. Volunteer at the library
75. Form or join a bowling team or other regular group event
76. Return a lost wallet or appointment book
77. Use public transportation and start talking with those you regularly see
78. Ask neighbors for help and reciprocate
79. Go to a local folk or crafts festival
80. Call an old friend
81. Sign up for a class and meet your classmates
82. Accept or extend an invitation
83. Talk to your kids or parents about their day
84. Say hello to strangers
85. Log off and go to the park
86. Ask a new person to join a group for a dinner or an evening
87. Host a pot luck meal or participate in them
88. Volunteer to drive someone
89. Say hello when you spot an acquaintance in a store
90. Host a movie night
91. Exercise together or take walks with friends or family
92. Assist with or create a neighborhood newsletter
93. Organize a neighborhood clean-up – with lawn games afterwards
94. Collect oral histories from older town residents
95. Join a book club discussion or get the group to discuss local issues
96. Volunteer to deliver Meals-on-Wheels in your neighborhood
97. Volunteer to read a children's story at your local library
98. Be real, be humble, acknowledge others' self-worth
99. Tell friends and family about social capital and why it matters
100. Greet people
101. Cut back on television
102. Join in to help carry something heavy
103. Plan a reunion of family, friends, or those with whom you had a special connection
104. Take in the programs at your local library and local recreation program provider
105. Read the local news faithfully
106. Buy a grill and invite others over for a meal
107. Fix it even if you didn't break it
108. Pick it up even if you didn't drop it
109. Attend a public meeting
110. Go with friends or colleagues to a ball game (and root, root, root for the home team!)
111. Start a community fruit & vegetable club
112. Hire young people for odd jobs
113. Start a tradition
114. Become a Big Brother or Big Sister
115. Help jump-start someone's car
116. Join a project that includes people from all walks of life
117. Sit on your front porch
118. Be nice when you drive
119. Make gifts of time
120. Buy a big hot tub – and invite people over
121. Volunteer at your neighborhood school
122. Offer to help out at your local recycling center
123. Send a "thank you" letter to the editor about a person or event that helped build community
124. Raise funds for a new town clock or new town library
125. When inspired, write personal notes to friends and neighbors
126. Attend gallery openings
127. Organize a town-wide yard sale
128. Invite friends or colleagues to help with a home renovation or home building project
129. Join or start a local walking group and have coffee together afterwards
130. Build a neighborhood playground
131. Become a story-reader or baby-rocker at a local childcare center or neighborhood pre-school
132. Help kids on your street build a lemonade stand
133. Say hi to those in elevators
134. Invite friends to go hiking, biking, or birdwatching
135. Offer to watch your neighbor's home or apartment while they are away
136. Organize a fitness/health group with your friends or co-workers
137. Take a pottery class with your children or parent(s)
138. See if your neighbor needs anything when you run to the store
139. Ask to see a friend's family photos
140. Join groups (arts, sports, religion...) likely to lead to making new friends of different race or ethnicity, different social class or bridging across other dimensions