

How to Be a Good Neighbor: Tips on Community Living



Moving to a new country can be exciting and overwhelming. One of the best ways to feel at home in your new community is by building positive relationships with your neighbors. This guide offers practical tips to help you become a good neighbor and enjoy a peaceful, supportive community living environment.

Why Being a Good Neighbor Matters

- **Feel Safer and More Connected:** Knowing your neighbors can help you feel more secure and welcome. Your neighbors may be the people who see you the most outside or your family and work colleagues — good neighbor relationships can contribute to improved feelings of belonging. In fact, according to [this NPR article](#), “Getting to know your neighbors and taking care of your community are valuable ways to feel safer in your neighborhood.” Feel free to read the entire article for additional insight on the value of knowing your neighbor and the impact it brings to the community.
- **Build Community Support:** Good relationships can lead to shared responsibilities and mutual help. Sharing responsibilities with neighbors and supporting one another can mitigate stress in other areas of your life, allowing you to maintain more stability at home.
- **Improve Housing Stability:** Positive neighbor interactions can also improve your relationship with landlords or property managers. It can also mitigate escalation when disagreements arise, leading neighbors to come to you first and discuss issues that arise instead of immediately calling the police or landlord.

Respect Shared Spaces



Keep Noise Levels Down

- Be mindful of music, TV, and gatherings — especially at night.
- If you are having a special gathering and you know you may have a louder night, then try to inform your neighbors in advance
- Let neighbors know they can talk to you if noise is ever an issue.



Share Cleaning Responsibilities

- Keep hallways, stairwells, and parking areas clean.
- Pick up your mail and packages promptly.
- Use only your assigned parking space.



Handle Trash and Recycling Properly

- Know the schedule for trash and recycling pick-up.
 - Ask your landlord or neighbor which day this happens and put a reminder on your phone or fridge.
- Bring in trash and recycling bins quickly after collection.
- Unsure what goes where? Ask a neighbor!
 - Your local government should also post this on the local government website. Visit your city or town’s website online to find out what kinds of things you can recycle.

Build Positive Relationships

Introduce Yourself

- A simple “hello” can go a long way in starting a friendly relationship.
- Volunteer information about yourself: teach them something about your culture or your language.
- Community support: engage with neighbors to help each other in little and big ways. For example, if you and your neighbor both have children, consider talking with your neighbor about alternating pick-up or drop-off at the bus stop or school to help accommodate each other’s work schedules.

Communicate Clearly and Kindly

- Be respectful and open when talking with neighbors.
- Listen actively and be considerate of cultural differences.
- Don’t make assumptions — just ask!
- While introducing yourself to neighbors is a first step, being a good neighbor goes deeper and is tied to maintaining your home, neighborhood, and being respectful of your neighbors

Resolve Conflicts Peacefully

- **Talk First:** If a problem arises, try to speak directly and calmly with your neighbor.
- **Listen Actively:** Give your neighbor your full attention to hear their concerns and do not interrupt.
- **Be Proactive:** Address issues early before they grow, and also be willing to compromise a little (you can also ask this of your neighbor). Focus on solutions and how you can work together to solve the issue.
- **Seek Help if Needed:** If you can’t resolve a problem, consider involving your landlord or a neutral mediator. If there is a language barrier, then find an interpreter.

Get Involved in the Community

- **Join local events or neighborhood groups:** Find your neighborhood’s Facebook or NextDoor group to get updates and post about things going on in your neighborhood.
- **Share meals together:** Food transcends language and is a great way to get to know your neighbors.
- **Volunteer or offer help to neighbors in need.**
 - Did your neighbor have a baby or hurt their leg? Consider bringing in their trash cans or making them a meal.
 - Is your neighbor elderly? Consider cutting their grass or bringing their trash cans in and out every week.
- **Support small businesses and local initiatives.**
 - Join neighborhood events like block parties or help plan fun events for the children over the summer.

Know the Rules

- **Review your community’s guidelines** (e.g., pet policies, parking rules, quiet hours).
- **Understand your rights and responsibilities as a tenant:** familiarize yourself with your lease.
- **Follow local laws and respect shared living expectations.**

Final Thoughts

Being a good neighbor is about kindness, respect, and community spirit. By taking small steps to connect and care for your surroundings, you'll help create a welcoming environment for yourself and others.



Helpful Resources

- [NPR: How to Be a Good Neighbor](#)
- [Starling Community Services: Building Positive Relationships with Your Landlord and Neighbors](#)
- [Philadelphia Good Neighbor Guide](#)
- [Silverleaf Management Tips: What Do We Really Mean By "Be a Good Neighbor"?](#)
- [17 Ways to Resolve Conflicts with Your Neighbors](#)
- [Conflict Resolution with Your Neighbor: What to Do](#)
- [Refugee Housing Solutions' Tenant Toolkit](#)
- [Understanding Your Lease Agreement](#)
- [Leasing 101: How to Understand Your Lease](#)



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