

# How To Make Friends: A Guide For Grownups

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I know what you're thinking: "*I know how to make friends. I've made friends my whole life.*"

After we leave college, we all have trouble making friends because our lives settle into grooves of work and family, and we no longer have that giant pool of potential pals waiting outside our dorm room door. If you're feeling lonely, here are nine ways I've made some incredible friends since turning 50.

**1. Follow your intuition.** Two years ago I attended a women's yoga conference. I spotted Carolyn when I arrived and I was instantly drawn to her. I saw her throughout the morning, and a little voice kept telling me I needed to meet her. But how? My grown-up voice told me I was being weird, and gave me ten other reasons not to do anything about it. But I've worked hard on cultivating my intuition, so I finagled myself into her lunch group, sat next to her, and found a soul mate.

**2. Engage in your passion.** Two years ago I attended my first TEDxSanDiego event, where I met Denise. Through Denise I joined an incredible volunteer team that puts on this phenomenal event. Through this I honed a new job skill-- speaker coaching --and have met a whole series of cool people, including an Oscar winner, an Auschwitz survivor, and a poetic marine biologist.

**3. Buy a puppy.** We joke that we wouldn't have any friends if it weren't for our first dog, and the truth is that we met most of our close friends through her. When you get a new puppy, you discover that all your dog friends have dogs too old to play with your puppy. And that's how I met Tori and Jeff; it was a puppy playdate fix-up. They are about 15 years younger than us and have two young daughters, so on the surface we might not be friends. But their dog is one week older than Daisy. So we see them *every single day*.

**4. Start a hobby, and meet other hobbyists.** I had no idea when I started a food blog that it would change my life in such meaningful and profound ways. I did it to serve, sharing my love of healthy food to help others. It never occurred to me that I would make a whole new set of food blogger friends. I have gone on blind dates with other bloggers when I am in their cities, and have made some rich and lasting friendships that happen both on and offline.

**5. Widen your age-range view.** Our view of who is friend material tends to be pretty narrow. Once you open yourself up to befriending people decades older and younger than you, all kinds of fun people fall into your path.

**6. Build a community garden.** There is something about digging in the dirt that bonds you to people in a way that other activities don't. My favorite couple from the community garden are Amy and Mike, 20 years younger than me and wildly tattooed.

**7).Do the work with long-term friends.** I've known Caroline since 1984, and I used to spend every Christmas with her and her family when I lived in Chicago. That was 15 years ago, and we still make time to connect via email and Skype and see each other when we can.

**8. Reconnect with people from your past.** Sometimes you lose touch, and then Facebook connects you again. Jennifer was my intern a million years ago... she's now the CEO of the organization where we worked, a crafter, and a lover of fashion and *Downton Abbey*.

**9. Use the Internet.** I sold some stuff on eBay last year. Jessica bought a camera from me, we connected and found mutual interests through the process, and now we are Facebook friends. I have no doubt that if/when I get to her city, we will meet in real life and really like each other. Just like friends.