

You Have to Have Friends

How do you choose your friends? What qualities do you look for in a friend?

People use the word "friend" in a variety of ways. A friend can mean anything from a casual acquaintance to someone you've known your whole life. Whoever they are, friends are an important part of life at every stage. They provide companionship and emotional support. Of all our relationships, friendships are the most voluntary. We choose our friends.

Making new friends

It's easy to stay in a circle of friends you're comfortable with. But as you get older, friendships may be lost – people move away or you just lose track of them. Building friendships is a lifelong, but worthwhile, job. New friendships can bring opportunities to experience new things.

A few pointers for making new friends:

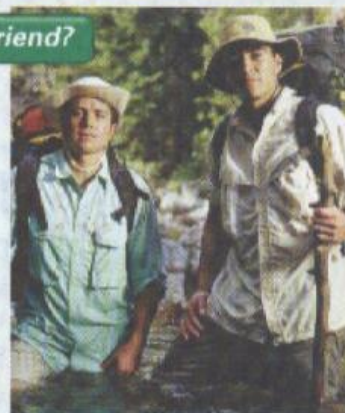
- Reach out to others. Try to be open to new experiences and relationships.
- Participate in classes, clubs, or volunteer organizations. These activities will bring you into contact with people who share similar interests.
- Stick with it – even if you feel uncomfortable. It takes time to build friendships.

Keeping friends

Whether friendships are old or new, you can't neglect them if you want them to last. Even though it's sometimes hard to spend time together, it's important to keep in touch. Two other keys are flexibility and respect. Be understanding when plans change. If you find yourselves fighting, try to look at things from the other person's point of view.

Some tips for keeping friends:

- Be a good listener. Don't be judgmental and don't offer advice unless you're asked.
- Respect the other person's opinion, even when you don't agree.
- Never break a confidence. Your friends need to know they can trust you.
- Be supportive of your friends. It's important to love them despite their faults!



A Read the article. Then for each statement, check (✓) True, False, or Not given.

	True	False	Not given
1. You have to know someone a long time to be a friend.	☐	☐	☐
2. Friends are more important than family.	☐	☐	☐
3. New friendships allow you to learn new things.	☒	☐	☐
4. When you make new friends, old friends will be jealous.	☐	☐	☒
5. It's important to give your friends respect and support.	☒	☐	☐
6. You should always offer advice to your friends.	☐	☒	☐

B Find the phrases in *italics* in the text. Then choose the meaning for each phrase.

- When you *lose track of* someone, you **can't locate** / **can't follow** him or her.
- When you *reach out to* people, you try to **physically touch** / **connect with** them.
- If you *stick with* something, you **give up on** / **continue to do it**.
- When you *keep in touch*, you **communicate with** / **stay near to** someone.
- If you *break a confidence*, you **tell a secret** / **depend on** someone.

C Pair work What other ways can you think of to make new friends? to keep friends?

That's what friends are for! • 7