

A great neighborhood starts with you!

A guide to being **neighborly**



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City of Holland newsletter:

Visit <https://www.cityofholland.com/872/Sign-Up-for-the-City-E-News-Letter> to sign up to receive Holland's monthly newsletter, which frequently contains updates about neighborhoods.

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This guide was adapted with permission from the City of Waterloo, Canada.

What does it mean to be “neighborly”?

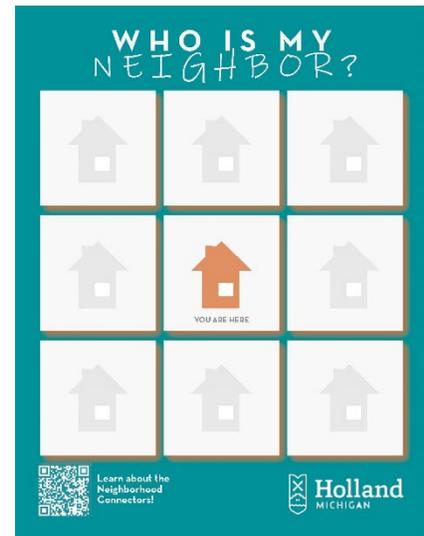
Being neighborly is mostly about little things, like being sure to say hello to neighbors you don’t know well (yet). It can be about sharing resources and tools with neighbors, or reaching out to those that are in need.

This guide encourages all of us to be neighborly and suggests many ways to be a good neighbor.

When you are friendly and help your neighbor, you are being neighborly.

Persons who are neighborly are:

- Caring
- Considerate
- Kind,
- Helpful,
- Inclusive, and
- Respectful.



The importance of being neighborly

There are long-term benefits of being friendly and helpful to your neighbors. Being neighborly:

- Encourages stronger social connections,
- Promotes positive relationships and thereby reduces the likelihood of conflict,
- Encourages more fun events and celebrations to occur,
- Boosts everyone’s physical and mental health,
- Enhances overall neighborhood safety,
- Encourages the sharing of skills, knowledge, and resources,
- Helps a neighborhood establish a sense of identity,
- Supports the safety and development of children and youth, and,

- Increases overall happiness by reducing isolation and promotes a sense of belonging.



Ideas for inspiring neighborliness

There are countless small acts of kindness that will help to develop positive relationships among your neighbors. Perhaps you will find some inspiration from the following list of examples:

- 1) Every relationship starts with a “**hello!**” Greet your neighbors and strike up a conversation when out for a walk. Smiles, waves, friendly greetings encourage positive relationships. Such displays of kindness also make new neighbors feel welcome.
- 2) Check on neighbors in need! Reach out and assist those who may be isolated or unable to cope, especially older neighbors.
- 3) If you live in an area with an existing Neighborhood Connection or similar type of group, consider getting connected with their work. There are lots of different ways to become involved. Check [here](#) to see if you live in a Neighborhood Connections neighborhood and how to reach them.

- 4) Collaborate with neighbors to plan neighborhood events and projects. Host a block party or a front porch concert with a local band, or plan a neighborhood contest, scavenger hunt, or other activity!



- 5) Connect virtually! Join or start a community or neighborhood page on social media or an email group. Use these tools to share helpful information, provide details on neighborhood events and community updates, or simply wish neighbors a happy birthday.
- 6) Keep an eye out for neighbors that may need extra help caring for their property and offer to help! Some neighbors may need help shoveling their driveways, walkways, and sidewalks in the winter, or need help with yard care during the spring-summer-fall.
- 7) If you live near an intersection, adopt one or more of the corners and keep plowed snow from blocking the sidewalk where it meets the street. This is a tremendous help to neighbors pushing strollers or using wheelchairs.
- 8) Drop off a meal if your neighbor has been unwell or is having a tough time. (Make sure to consider dietary restrictions and allergies.)
- 9) Share a sense of local pride and keep your street or neighborhood looking welcoming. Consider organizing a neighborhood clean-up, establishing a community garden, or planning a placemaking project.

- 10) Welcome a new neighbor! Write a personalized letter to greet new neighbors. Include your contact information (if you're comfortable) and some helpful information about their new neighborhood (awesome local restaurants, the best walking trails, details about a local Facebook group, etc.) Perhaps take over a small housewarming gift, like flowers, some baked goods, or a potted plant – anything inexpensive and cheerful is a nice thing to do.
- 11) Share your passions! Let neighbors know if you love to cook, paint, garden, fix cars, bird watch, play video games, or enjoy other hobbies at home. Sharing your interests can provide opportunities to learn from fellow neighbors and connect with others who enjoy similar activities. This could lead to a neighborhood book club, recipe sharing, community garden, or other forms of community connection.



- 12) Promote neighborliness at all ages. Encourage your children to be great neighbors!
- 13) Be inclusive! If you are hosting a neighborhood event or planning a project, include all neighbors. Get creative with invites: use flyers, knock on doors, post event details on a local message board, reach out through Facebook and other forms of social media, create posters, etc.

- 14) Consider spending time in your front yard, driveway, or common area. This opens up new opportunities to greet and chat with neighbors.
- 15) Be considerate and adhere to neighborhood etiquette. Communicating with neighbors and maintaining your property are good places to start. When developing relationships, prioritize honest and open communication. For example, if you are planning a construction project (that may be noisy), notify neighbors that may be affected. Maintaining your property is also important! Raking leaves, regularly cutting the lawn, removing snow from walkways and sidewalks, and beautifying your garden, are easy ways to be a good neighbor.
- 16) Perhaps most simply, be the kind of neighbor you would like to have as a neighbor!

Thanks for reading this guide and for thinking about how you might play a part in creating a strong neighborhood and a more neighborly city!