



BE CREATIVE IN MAKING FRIENDS

by the student editors of ***NAVIGATING YOUR FRESHMAN YEAR***,
a Students Helping Students™ book

"In the beginning of the year everyone is in the same boat, knowing no one, so go out of your way and introduce yourself to a variety of people—it will make your year more enjoyable."

**Sophomore,
Fairfield University**

We might sound like a broken record, but the best way to make friends is to be yourself. You want to find people who you like to hang out with and who like the real you. If you felt pressured to put up a front in high school, college is the time to be honest with yourself and find a community you enjoy. There's a niche for everyone—find yours and don't be afraid to be open about it.

Making friends is not an overnight process and introductions after introductions can make you feel overwhelmed. Be friendly, strike up a conversation, and ask questions—people love to talk about themselves. Don't feel sheepish if you need to ask for someone's name again. It's understandable, and you're better off doing it now than three months later. Even if you're generally shy, try to be slightly social for the first couple weeks so that you don't isolate yourself.

Here are a few fun ideas for meeting people:

- Embarrass yourself—no one will be intimidated by you and some people may be intrigued.
- Invite a few people to eat an informal lunch or dinner in the cafeteria. It's free, it fosters conversation, and everybody has to eat.
- Introduce people you've met to other people and ask to meet your friends' friends. The more people you meet, the greater your chances of finding the few that will become your closest friends.
- Free food, games, or alcohol draw college students like flies to that sticky paper stuff. No one can resist a homemade cookie or a good party, so give both.
- Keep your room door open when you're in and don't mind being disturbed—you'll be welcoming conversation and your hall mates will be glad to stop by.
- Make an effort to get to know people outside of your dorm by not hanging out there all the time. Stay back after class and talk to your classmates, share a table at the cafeteria, and strike up a conversation near your mailbox.
- Go to open mike nights, help sessions, and organizational club meetings. You might not enjoy the actual activity, but it's a great way to meet people.

This whole process can be intimidating, but don't worry—everyone is in the same boat and will appreciate your efforts to be nice. Don't put pressure on yourself to form lasting friendships right away; those take time. Just find people with whom you have fun and are comfortable, and the rest will come.

"The first few days of school were orientation, and everyone was with his or her family. My family couldn't be there, so I was twice as alone! I started to feel like I had made a mistake about going away from my friends and family to school. But then I saw a girl who was sitting by herself and also didn't seem to have her family there. I went up to her and explained my situation, and I'm not sure who was more grateful to find a friend, she or I. So we stuck to each other like glue for the next few weeks, slowly meeting other people with whom we had interests in common, and then introducing them to one another. By the end of the first month we had a great group of friends."

**Senior,
New York University**

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For more helpful tips and proven strategies from students and recent grads on getting ready for college, making peace with roommates, finding great friends, surviving college academics, navigating the social scene, avoiding the freshman 15, and much more, visit www.StudentsHelpingStudents.com and buy the Students Helping Students™ guide titled ***NAVIGATING YOUR FRESHMAN YEAR***, available at bookstores and online stores, such as Amazon.com.