



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Americans gave nearly \$593 million to charity in 2024, up more than 6% from the year before.



Help your neighbors

You can brighten spirits this time of year with simple yet meaningful actions.

The holiday season is an ideal time to spread joy among the people who live near you. Making a festive card for a neighbor, volunteering to help them with a chore, or simply spreading kindness can lift their spirits and make your own holiday season feel more meaningful too. Here are some simple and thoughtful ways to help your neighbors.

Start small

Little acts of kindness, especially during the holidays, can have a larger impact than you might expect. Gestures like taking the time to say hello to a neighbor, carrying grocery bags or packages for an older person, or stopping to talk with a younger neighbor who looks up to you can leave a positive impression on someone's day.

Share a homemade gift

Many people like to show their appreciation for their neighbors at the holidays by sharing a small gift. For example, with an adult's help, you can make cookies or muffins, put a few in a festive tin or a gift bag, and give them to your neighbor with a note like, "We hope these treats bring holiday smiles!" Another idea is to give them a mug with hot cocoa packets inside



Bake a sweet surprise.

along with a note that says "Warm wishes!" You could also draw a picture for them or deliver a homemade holiday greeting card to them.

Offer to help

Your neighbors, especially an older person or a parent with a baby to take care of, might appreciate your offer to assist with chores. Stop by with an adult and ask if you can help shovel their walk, refill their bird feeder, or bring in their recycling bins.

You could also make a gift envelope of homemade coupons they can redeem for tasks such as "water your plants" or "clear the snow off your car."

Check in

Many people have family to spend the holidays with, but some neighbors who live alone might be feeling a little lonely at this time of year. With a parent, stop by their home to offer season's greetings. While you're there, you can ask them if they need anything. Another idea to discuss with your family is inviting a few neighbors to a holiday "open house" where you can share treats, a warm drink, and conversation. For more ways you can help others during this holiday season, see the suggestions in the box at right.

3 worthy causes



These charities are among many that offer ways to give back.

Toys for Tots Run by the Marine Corps Reserve, this organization collects more than 24 million new toys and games each year for kids in need. Find where to drop off toys at toysfortots.org.

Meals on Wheels This organization delivers meals, including special options for the holidays, to people in need. See how you can take part at mealsonwheelsamerica.org.

One Simple Wish You can help make a wish come true, whether it's for a new winter coat or a special toy, for a child in foster care. Learn how at onesimplewish.org.