



# Block Parties

Tips for Time with Neighbours:  
a block party how-to



# Let's have fun!

- Block Parties can be a fun way for busy neighbours to maintain connections or get to know one another.
- Your community can share a few laughs, make memories, or deal with pressing issues in a stress free environment.
- These parties provide an opportunity to create a sense of camaraderie, which will benefit the entire neighbourhood.

## Top Ten Reasons to Have a Block Party

1 To have fun-no reasons needed to celebrate!

To know who lives in your neighbourhood.

2 When you know who lives in your neighbourhood, you are more likely to identify strangers or anyone suspicious.

3 To increase the sense of belonging in your community.

4 To strengthen spirit and encourage residents to look after the neighbourhood.

To make additional connections within the community. When you know people you can exchange skills or resources, organize a

5 book club, baby sitting co-op, share walking to school duties, or find new friends for your children.

6 To meet long time residents and learn the neighbourhood's history.

7 To establish new friendships.

8 To learn a little about one another and establish who might need a little help from time to time.

9 To have a neighbourhood clean-up day, play some good music, barbeque or snowshoe.

10 To start a neighbourhood tradition of getting together.



# Planning a block party can be a FUN way to ensure community connections exist in your neighbourhood. Here are some useful tips for how to plan:



## 1 week before:

	Make a guest list and send invitations (or just call).
	Plan the menu and shopping list.
	Ask around to see if other neighbours would like to help out.
	Ask certain individuals to bring some of the food.
	Decide which games or activities you would like to do with your neighbours.
	If you need to borrow equipment, make arrangements.

## 2-3 days before:

	Time to get groceries (make sure to get compostable paper plates, utensils and paper towels).
	Start preparing the food that can be made ahead of time.
	Check in with fellow planners to make sure everyone is prepared.
	Send a reminder to neighbours.

## The day of:

	Set out plates, utensils and others tools or equipment (remember to have a trash container for recyclables and compost).
	Set up a drinks table and let guests help themselves. Fill a large plastic tub with ice and bottled drinks.
	Start with an icebreaker if the guests don't know each other. Have nametags as a way to get to know each other.



## Role of the Organizer:

- Be a greeter. Introduce everyone including children and pets. Include helpful details about people such as their house number and any hobbies or special skills they might have.
- Ask people to bring their own chairs and games they enjoy.
- Make sure any seniors or isolated individuals are included in the festivities.
- Older youth can organize the activities for younger children.

**If you want your street blocked off you must obtain a permit.**

contact:

Strathcona County

Transportation and Agriculture Services

780-417-7100

[www.strathcona.ca/blockparty](http://www.strathcona.ca/blockparty)



## Suggested Activities

### Spring/Summer

- bike or pet parade
- garden pageant or tours
- driveway theatre
- limbo competition
- scavenger hunt
- face paints
- water balloons

### Fall/Winter

Many people think block parties can only happen in the summer but here are some activities you can do as a community during the colder months.

- canning party
- hot chocolate station at Halloween
- skating party
- carolling
- book or craft clubs
- build a snowman or snow fort
- ice sculpture competition
- rent a karaoke machine





## Cultural Connections

- Have everyone bring a traditional family dish
- Use a world map to indicate where everyone originally came from
- Record the story of how everyone came to live in the neighbourhood and what they like most.
- Give a copy to the Strathcona County Museum to add to the Community Heritage Legacy Project.  
[www.strathconacountymuseum.ca](http://www.strathconacountymuseum.ca)

## Neighbourhood Action

Discuss what issues or concerns neighbours may have and explore how to resolve them (keep this part of the party brief as a block party should be for fun!). Plan a clean up day, build a bench, plant a garden or paint street numbers as part of the Block Party activities.

**For more information on how to connect with others in your neighbourhood visit [www.strathcona.ca/stayconnected](http://www.strathcona.ca/stayconnected)**

## Neighbourhood Connection...

Why is it important? What's in it for you?

People are talking with their neighbours less frequently. In 2012, approximately half (48.3%) of Strathcona residents reported talking to their neighbours at least once or more per week, as compared to 58.2% in 2007 and 72.3% in 2002. (Health & Lifestyle Checkup for Strathcona County 2012)

## Why does this matter?

High levels of community connection lead to:

- Fewer injuries in young children
- Community members feeling more supported
- Lower incidences of violence and bullying
- Fewer neighbourhood disputes

