

# Make Someone's Day Today with a Random Act of Kindness

Not only does a single kind action brighten the day of the person who receives it, kindness benefits the giver as well. Studies show that humans are naturally inclined to be generous and compassionate toward one another.<sup>1</sup>



## The life-changing benefits of altruism

Altruism may improve your mental and physical health, boost your self-esteem, create meaning and purpose in your life and foster a connection to your community.<sup>2</sup>

- **Doing good will make you feel good.** When you do something nice for someone else, your brain releases two powerful mood boosters: dopamine and endogenous opioids.<sup>3</sup> Experts call this “helpers’ high,” and it’s also found to reduce stress and lower anxiety and depression.<sup>3</sup>
- **It’ll boost your health.** Helping someone face-to-face triggers your body to release oxytocin, a bonding hormone that’s also responsible for lowering blood pressure and protecting your cardiovascular system.<sup>1</sup> Kindness also activates the vagus nerve, which controls inflammation in the body.<sup>1</sup>
- **You’ll live longer.** People who volunteer tend to live longer than those who don’t.<sup>3</sup>

*“You can’t live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.”*

– John Wooden

## 10 free random acts of kindness

It only takes a second to be kind and courteous to someone. Try one of these suggestions today.

- 1 **Hug your loved ones**, and always take the opportunity to tell them you love them.
- 2 **Hold the door open** for the person walking behind you.
- 3 **Offer your seat** to someone on the bus or train.
- 4 **Write a note of praise** to the manager of someone who has helped you (e.g., your waiter/waitress, a helpful flight attendant, the customer service representative who solved your problem, etc.).
- 5 **Write something funny, kind or inspiring on a sticky note**, and leave it somewhere unexpected, such as the inside of a library book or on the mirror of a public restroom.
- 6 **Rake or mow** your neighbor’s lawn.
- 7 **Clear the snow off** the car next to yours in the parking lot.
- 8 **Visit the local senior center** or nursing home.
- 9 **Pat the shoulder of someone who looks upset**, and offer encouragement.
- 10 **Smile at strangers**, and say “hello.”

**Give blood.** Visit the **American Red Cross** website at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) to see if you’re eligible to donate and to find the nearest donation location.

Sources: 1. Scientific American  
2. Dartmouth College, Dartmouth Undergraduate Journal of Science  
3. Psychology Today



# 10 random acts of kindness that cost less than \$10

These random acts may cost a few dollars, but their impacts are priceless.

1. **Put change** in someone else's parking meter.
2. **Pay for the coffee** of the person behind you in line at the coffee shop.
3. **Buy a few extra groceries**, and drop them off at the nearest food bank.
4. **Pay the toll** of the car behind you.
5. **Give a homeless person a large plastic storage bag** containing a bottle of water, a couple of granola bars, tissues, a comb, a toothbrush and toothpaste.
6. **Send a handwritten note and small memento** to a friend, family member, neighbor or someone you haven't spoken with in a while. It's sure to make their day.
7. **Offer your change** when the person in front of you at the register is short of cash.
8. **Buy an inspirational book** for a friend who needs encouragement.
9. **Buy a dozen daisies or sunflowers** to give to the women at your office or to strangers on the street.
10. **Surprise a friend, loved one or coworker** with their favorite beverage or snack.

*"Remember there's no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end."*

– Scott Adams

## Americans spend 7.85 billion hours volunteering<sup>1</sup>

It's no surprise that Americans are ranked as the most generous in the world.<sup>2</sup>

Not only did we give over 7 billion hours of our time volunteering with non-profit organizations in our communities in 2011, we also gave **\$298.42 billion** to charity that year.<sup>3</sup>

Some other facts about American generosity:

- **26.8%** of Americans volunteer. Popular volunteer activities include fundraising, food collection or distribution, general labor or transportation, and tutoring or teaching.<sup>3</sup>
- **65%** of households give to charities, including **religious organizations, education, human services** and **grant making foundations**.<sup>3</sup>
- **65.1%** of Americans do favors for their neighbors.<sup>1</sup>
- **73%** of Americans have helped a stranger.<sup>2</sup>



Sources: 1. The Federal Agency for Service and Volunteering  
2. International Business Times  
3. National Philanthropic Trust