



City of Emeryville
CALIFORNIA



GUIDE BOOK



National Night Out-Americans' Night Out Against Crime!

National Night Out (NNO) is a unique event sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch and is held the first Tuesday in August. The National Night Out campaign has involved citizens, law enforcement agencies, civic groups, businesses, neighborhood organizations and local officials from over 15,000 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities and military bases worldwide. Over 37 Million people have participated in NNO worldwide.

Reasons to Have a Block Party

- To have fun – no excuse or reason is needed to celebrate!
- To meet your neighbors. The more you know who belongs to the neighborhood, the more likely you are to identify strangers or suspicious people.
- To increase the sense of belonging in your neighborhood.
- To organize a city-sponsored group such as Neighborhood Crime Watch or Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).
- To make connections within the community. When you know people, you can exchange skills or resources and perhaps organize a book club, baby-sitting co-op, share walking to school duties, or find new friends for your children.
- To plan a campaign for traffic slowdown, get better lighting, or address other interests.
- To “use” the street for one day, for example to roller blade, play hockey or set up a kids jump house.
- To meet some of the old time residents in the neighborhood and learn about its history.
- To start a yearly neighborhood tradition of getting together at least once a year!

Types of Block Parties

Which type of block party will work best in your neighborhood? Try not to go overboard, it can make people feel the event is too much work...Keep it Simple!

- Barbecues - organizers purchase all that is needed and neighbors provide the money
 - Everyone brings his or her own meat.
- Picnics - everyone brings their own meal
- Pot luck - everyone brings one dish
- Catered --everyone shares the cost and the food is purchased.

How Big to Make It

- Start off with a smaller event rather than a large one. It can always grow, but it is hard to shrink it.
- In selecting who to invite, use natural neighborhood boundaries where possible (i.e. end of the block). If you are planning a street or cul-de-sac party, you need to invite everyone from that area.
- Decide early and make it clear in your flyer if this will be a block party restricted to those on the street/block or whether people can invite friends/relatives (if yes how many).

Good Ideas

- Make sure you have a record of everyone who attends and everyone you contacted; after all, the idea of a block party is to connect neighbors.
- Identify special talents your neighbors might have – you may be living next to a magician, singer, dancer, artist, radio host or prize winning cook.
- Plan lots of activities for the children to do.
- Have an environmentally friendly party. Ask everyone to bring their own reusable plates, cups and cutlery to limit paper garbage and litter.
- Include activities that encourage people to meet each other. Use nametags and include children by asking them to create the tags.
- Make sure that people with disabilities can participate in the activities and include their attendants (those with Seeing Eye dogs or in wheelchairs).
- Institute a bathroom policy “everyone to use their own” so that home security is maintained.
- Inspire clean up after the party by rewarding children with a prize for packing up garbage
- Have a block/street clean up as part of the party. Also, neighbors may want to contribute towards the cost of a truckload to the dump and use this to clean out gardens, garages and alleys.
- Distribute an evaluation form to participants (to get a good response, number the forms and have door prizes for returned entries).

Reminders

- Alcohol is only permitted on private property, not on city streets or in parks.
- Residents should observe security precautions, for example lock back doors to houses, and keep equipment in sight.
- Food cannot be sold on city streets unless the proper permits have been obtained.
- Loud amplification of music is prohibited.
- Remember, when you set up tables and chairs on the street, that emergency vehicles may need to have access to the area, so leave room.
- Post signs the day before reminding everyone to remove cars and that the street will be closed.

Suggestions on How to Start Organizing

- Gather a few neighbors and divide up the tasks. Decide on a possible theme, activities etc. Decide what to do about food.
- Start knocking on doors to find out if there is enough interest and, if so, which day would be the best for the most people.
 - Go door to door.
 - Hand out an invitation (use the one included in this guide or create your own).
 - Recruit volunteers.
- Decide if this will be a block party restricted to those on the street/block or will people be able to invite friends/relatives (if yes, how many). Make this clear in your flyer/invitation.

Make your party eco-friendly!

- Don't waste money (or the environment) on bottled water (which can cost up to 1900 times more than tap and may not be any cleaner). Instead, have out pitchers of filtered tap water. We suggest PAPER cups, which are always compostable, or buy #1 or #2 or #5 plastic cups and recycle them.
- Don't use disposable utensils, but if you must, use wooden knives/forks/spoons, since compostable plastic doesn't compost and regular plastic isn't recycled.
- Don't waste money (or the environment) on anything individually wrapped, similar to the water, and opt for bulk supplies or large service trays
- Encourage families to bring local, seasonal or homegrown foods.
- Seems obvious, but be sure to clean up well after the event. Give kids a prize for each unit of trash they pick up, or have a band play some fun music while everyone cleans up together. Even the smallest wrappers should be picked up so they don't go down storm drains and into our local waters.
- In the invite/announcement, invite neighbors to have empty food containers with them so leftover food can be divided up and taken home so that it doesn't have to be tossed.
- Be sure to set up clearly marked bins for landfill (trash), recycle and compost.

Fun Family Activities for Block Parties

Use nametags. It eliminates the anxiety of party guests forgetting each other's names

- Invite a Clown, Balloon Artist, or Magician
- Water Balloon or Egg Toss
- Rent a "Jump House"
- Hide and Seek
- Face Painting Remember to use non-toxic paint
- Organize a Kids Talent Show or Parade
- Sidewalk Chalk Make it a game for the kids and give out prizes
- Pictionary or Charades
 - "Name that Baby" Have everyone bring a childhood photo and see who can guess who's who
- Play Musical Chairs
- Rent a Popcorn or Snow Cone Machine
- Ask longtime residents to tell stories about the neighborhood.
- Water balloon toss
- Sack races or 3-legged races
- Scavenger hunt
- Croquet or bocce ball
- Bean bag toss (corn hole)
- Free raffle with door prizes
- Arts and crafts table
- Bubbles