

DIY VOLUNTEER IDEAS

VOLUNTEERING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE COMPLICATED TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT.

You can volunteer in a way that's simple, easy, and quick while still make a big impact in your own community. Here are 20 of our favorite ideas to get you started making a difference today.

- 1. Grocery shop for a cause.** Pick up some non-perishable items on your next run to the store and donate them to your local food bank. Check their website for advice on what to get.
- 2. Shovel snow for an elderly neighbor.** In the summer and fall, offer to cut grass or rake leaves. Ask them first and then head over to their yard after you finish yours.
- 3. Help a younger student with their homework.** This is a great way to set a positive example and is appreciated by teachers and parents.
- 4. Make hygiene kits for the homeless.** Collect soaps, shampoos, toothpaste tubes, and other personal hygiene supplies and assemble them into kits. Once complete, donate them to a homeless shelter in your community. Some shelters even keep donation wish lists on their websites.
- 5. Ask your local library if they're in need of volunteers.** They're often looking for people to help with reshelving books, reading to kids, or other activities.
- 6. Instead of birthday gifts ask friends and family to donate to one of your favorite charities.** Use your birthday as an opportunity to benefit others and talk about issues you're passionate about.
- 7. Rock the vote!** Volunteer at your local polling station and help register people to vote. If you have kids take them with you and explain to them how elections work.
- 8. Visit a nursing home with your family or friends.** Better yet, organize a weekly or monthly board game night with residents in the facility.
- 9. Stuff new, warm socks with water bottles and granola bars** and leave them in public places (parks, benches, bus stops) or keep them with you to give them directly to people experiencing homelessness.
- 10. Organize a free library or a free food pantry for your street.** Neighbors can give and take food if they need to, and everyone can share books.
- 11. Think fresh!** In the summer, donate extra produce from your garden to your local food bank.
- 12. Spread caring words.** Write greeting or get-well cards (or Valentines!) for patients in hospitals or nursing homes.
- 13. Help neighbors in need paint or repair their homes.** No need to travel far to volunteer, often there is a lot to do in your own neighborhood.



- 14. Volunteer for your local park.** Parks organizations often need volunteers to spruce-up spaces in the spring and prep for the summer.
- 15. Host a bake sale or lemonade stand and donate the profits.** Add hot chocolate to your stand for a fall or winter treat.
- 16. Host a neighborhood clothing swap and donate the extra clothes.** Gains some new styles and give clothes to those in need at the same time.
- 17. Collect unused make-up, perfume, and other cosmetics for domestic violence shelters.** Often when leaving bad situations people can't take everything they need, so donating these items can be a big help. Check the shelter's website for donation ideas.
- 18. Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty!** Put on gloves and pick up litter at your local park. Boost community moral and keep kids and pets safe.
- 19. Do errands, cook for, or otherwise help someone dealing with an illness.** Sometimes people who are sick feel lonely, so keeping them company is a very kind thing to do.
- 20. Donate blood or volunteer at a blood drive.** Even just one donation can save a life. So, roll up your sleeves and ask your school or local community center about organizing a blood drive.



United Way of
Southwestern Pennsylvania