



Volunteering can open the door to a number of opportunities and experiences – meeting the people in your neighborhood, developing personal and business relationships, utilizing your skills, and shaping your community.

Not only are there many benefits to volunteering your time to the neighborhood around you, but there are rewarding moments and feelings of fulfillment. If you aren't already, it's time to get involved and enjoy the rewarding effects. Read these eight easy ways to get involved in your community today:

1. **Find Your Passion.** Everyone has a passion for something. Some love sports and outside activities, while others enjoy working with the young or elderly, and some care about our preserving our environment. No matter what you are interested in, there is a way use your passion for good.
2. **Join a Group or Non-Profit that Matches Your Passion.** Hopefully you thought of what you're passionate about right away - if not give it a few minutes. Now it's time to find a group or an organization that shares the same interests as you. Say you love working with kids, seek out your cities YMCA or DAR Boys & Girls Club.
3. **Shop Local.** Buying from your hometown stores improves your overall local economy as well as helping your community build character. Independent businesses give your neighborhood personality that attract more entrepreneurs to settle in and create their own, one-of-a-kind business.
4. **Too Busy? Donate.** Sometimes it's hard to find the time to volunteer when you have school, job, kids or any combination of things. There is no need to fret. Donating helps support your community as well. Try cleaning out your closet, cupboard, attic, or any room in your house that needs some TLC. Anything that is gently used can benefit less fortunate families in more ways than one.
5. **Have Fun!** Most importantly, enjoy yourself. If you aren't having a good time, then you most likely will not stick with it. If you are having a tough time choosing how you want to get involved, consult with a friend or organize your own event. Get yourself out there, and build a better community.