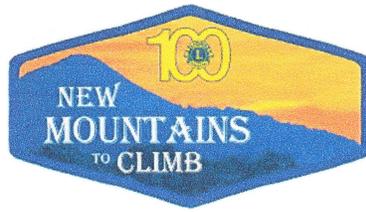


129 Great Examples of Community Service Projects



Are you interested in performing community service? Do you want examples of service projects you can do? Community service is a great way to help others and improve your community, and it can also help you gain skills and experience to include on your resume and college applications.

Read on for dozens of community service ideas to help you get started volunteering.

What is Community Service?

Community service is work done by a person or group of people that benefits others. It is often done near the area where you live, so your own community reaps the benefits of your work. You do not get paid to perform community service, but volunteer your time. Community service can help many different groups of people: children, senior citizens, people with disabilities, even animals and the environment. Community service is often organized through a local group, such as a place of worship, school, or non-profit organization, or you can start your own community service projects.

Many people participate in community service because they enjoy helping others and improving their community. Some students are required to do community service in order to graduate high school or to receive certain honors. Some adults are also ordered by a judge to complete a certain number of community service hours.

Why Should You Participate in Community Service?

There are numerous benefits to participating in community service, both for yourself and others. Below are some of the most important benefits of volunteering:

- Gives you a way to help others
- Helps improve your community
- Can help strengthen your resume and college applications
- Can be a way to meet new friends
- Often results in personal growth
- Gives you a way to gain work experience and learn more about certain jobs

How Should You Use This List?

This list of over one hundred community service examples is organized by category, so if you're particularly interested in working with, say, children or animals, you can easily find community service activities more related to your interests.

In order to use this list most effectively, read through it and make note of any community service ideas that match your interests and that you may want to participate in. Some considerations to keep in mind are:

- Who would you like to help?
 - Is there a specific group of people or cause you are passionate about? Look for projects that relate to your passion and interests. You may also just want to perform particular community service activities that allow you to do hobbies you enjoy, like baking or acting, and that's fine too.
- Do you want a community service activity that is reoccurring or a one-time event?
 - Perhaps you don't have enough time to regularly devote to community service. In that case, it may be better to look for opportunities that only occur once or sporadically, such as planning special events or helping build a house.
- What kind of impact do you want to have?
 - Some people prefer to participate in community service activities that have a quantifiable impact, for example, activities where you know the specific number of kids you tutored, dollars you raised, or cans of food you collected. This is in contrast to activities that don't have such clear numbers, such as creating a garden or serving as a volunteer lifeguard. Some people prefer quantifiable activities because they feel they look stronger on college applications, or because they simply enjoy knowing their exact impact on the community.
- What skills would you like to gain?
 - Many community service activities can help you gain skills. These skills can range from teaching to medicine to construction and more. If there is a particular skill you'd like to learn for future classes, jobs, or just out of personal interest, you may want to see if there is a community service activity that helps you learn that skill.

List of Community Service Examples

General Ideas:

- Donate or raise money for your local Red Cross
- Organize a community blood drive
- Send cards to soldiers serving overseas
- For your next birthday, ask for charitable donations instead of gifts
- Hold a bake sale for your favorite charity
- Read books or letters to a person who is visually impaired
- Organize a wheelchair basketball team
- Participate in a charity race
- Organize an event or parade for Memorial Day
- Volunteer to help at a charity auction
- Participate in National Youth Service Day in April
- Contact a tree farm about donating Christmas trees to nursing homes, hospitals, or to families who can't afford to buy their own
- Collect unused makeup and perfume to donate to a center for abused women
- Help register people to vote
- Organize a car wash and donate the profits to charity
- Help deliver meals and gifts to patients at a local hospital

Helping Children and Schools:

- Tutor children during or after school
- Donate stuffed animals to children in hospitals
- Organize games and activities for children in hospitals or who are visiting hospitalized relatives
- Knit or crochet baby blankets to be donated to hospitals or homeless shelters

- Collect baby clothes and supplies to donate to new parents
- Organize a Special Olympics event for children and teenagers
- Sponsor a bike-a-thon and give away bike safety gear, like helmets and knee pads, as prizes
- Collect used sports equipment to donate to families and after-school programs
- Volunteer at a summer camp for children who have lost a parent
- Sponsor a child living in a foreign country, either on your own or as part of a group
- Coach a youth sports team
- Put on performances for children in hospitals
- Give free music lessons to schoolchildren
- Become a volunteer teen crisis counselor
- Organize a summer reading program to encourage kids to read
- Organize an Easter egg hunt for neighborhood children
- Create a new game for children to play
- Organize events to help new students make friends
- Babysit children during a PTA meeting
- Organize a reading hour for children at a local school or library
- Donate used children's books to a school library
- Work with the local health department to set up an immunization day or clinic to immunize children against childhood diseases
- Volunteer to help with Vacation Bible School or other religious camps

Helping Senior Citizens:

- Read to residents at a nursing home
- Deliver groceries and meals to elderly neighbors
- Teach computer skills to the elderly

- Drive seniors to doctor appointments
- Mow an elderly neighbor's lawn
- Host a bingo night for nursing home residents
- Host a holiday meal for senior citizens
- Make birthday cards for the elderly
- Donate and decorate a Christmas tree at a nursing home
- Organize a family day for residents of a retirement home and relatives to play games together
- Ask residents of a retirement home to tell you about their lives
- Pick up medicine for an elderly neighbor
- Perform a concert or play at a senior center
- Help elderly neighbors clean their homes and organize their belongings
- Rake leaves, shovel snow, or wash windows for a senior citizen
- Deliver cookies to a homebound senior citizen

Helping Animals and the Environment:

- Take care of cats and dogs at an animal shelter
- Clean up a local park
- Raise money to provide a bulletproof vest for a police dog
- Plant a tree for Arbor Day
- Place a bird feeder and bird fountain in your backyard
- Start a butterfly garden in your community
- Sponsor a recycling contest
- Grow flowers in your backyard then give bouquets to hospital patients or people who are housebound
- Help create a new walking trail at a nature center or park

- Update the signs along a nature trail
- Adopt an acre of rainforest
- Help train service dogs
- Participate in the cleanup of a local river, pond, or lake
- Foster animals that shelters don't have space for
- Organize a spay and neuter your pet program
- Care for a neighbor's pet while they are away
- Sponsor an animal at your local zoo
- Train your pet to be a therapy animal and bring it to hospitals or nursing homes
- Build and set up a bird house
- Organize a carpool to reduce car emissions
- Campaign for more bike lanes in your town
- Volunteer at a nature camp and teach kids about the environment
- Test the water quality of a lake or river near you
- Plant native flowers or plants along highways

Helping the Hungry and/or Homeless:

- Build a house with Habitat for Humanity
- Donate your old clothes
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen
- Donate old eyeglasses to an organization that collects that and distributes them to people in need
- Donate non-perishable food to a food bank
- Donate blankets to a homeless shelter
- Host a Thanksgiving dinner for people who may not be able to afford their own
- Offer to babysit or nanny for a family in need

- Make “care kits” with shampoo, toothbrushes, combs, etc. to donate to homeless shelters
- Prepare a home-cooked meal for the residents of a nearby homeless shelter
- Collect grocery coupons to give to a local food bank
- Help repair or paint a local homeless shelter
- Donate art supplies to kids in a homeless shelter
- Help organize and sort donations at a homeless shelter
- Babysit children while their parents look for jobs
- Become a Big Buddy for children at a homeless shelter
- Take homeless children on outings
- Bake a batch of cookies or loaf of bread and deliver it to a soup kitchen
- Build flower boxes for Habitat for Humanity houses
- Organize a winter clothes drive to collect coats, hats, scarves, and gloves to be donated
- Make first aid kits for homeless shelters

Reducing Crime and Promoting Safety:

- Volunteer at a police station or firehouse
- Become a certified lifeguard and volunteer at a local pool or beach
- Paint over graffiti in your neighborhood
- Organize a self-defense workshop
- Organize a drug-free campaign
- Sponsor a drug-free post-prom event
- Start or join a neighborhood watch program
- Create and distribute a list of hotlines for people who might need help
- Teach a home-alone safety class for children
- Create a TV or radio public service announcement against drug and alcohol use

- Become CPR certified
- Volunteer as a crossing guard for an elementary school

Promoting Community Enhancement:

- Paint park benches
- Donate used books to your local library
- Become a tour guide at your local museum
- Repaint community fences
- Plant flowers in bare public areas
- Organize a campaign to raise money to buy and install new playground equipment for a park
- Participate in or help organize a community parade
- Clean up vacant lot
- Produce a neighborhood newspaper
- Campaign for more lighting along poorly lit streets
- Create a newcomers group in your neighborhood to help welcome new families
- Petition your town leaders to build more drinking fountains and public restrooms
- Volunteer to clean up trash at a community event
- Adopt a local highway or road and clean up trash along it
- Help fix or raise funds to repair a run-down playground
- Clean up after a natural disaster

Next Steps

Now that you know what your options are for community service, you can take the following steps to start getting involved:

1. Look over your interests: Which activities seemed most appealing to you? Were they mostly in one particular category, like children or the environment? If so, that's a good starting place for choosing specific organizations to contact.
2. Figure out how much time you can devote to community service: Are you available for two hours every week? Are you not free on a regular basis but can volunteer for an entire weekend now and then? Think about transportation as well and how you'll be able to get to different locations. Knowing this information will help you choose which community service projects to pursue, and it's helpful information for volunteer coordinators to know.
3. Do some research to see what projects you can do in your community: Check at your school, place of worship, or town hall for more information on volunteering. You can also contact the place where you'd like to perform your community service, such as a particular animal shelter or nursing home, and ask if they take volunteers.
4. **Start volunteering! This list ranges from small projects that you can complete on your own in a few hours, to much larger projects that will take more time and people. If you find a project you can start on your own, do it! If you want to do a project where you'll need more resources or people, check around your community to see if a similar program already exists that you can join. If not, don't be afraid to start your own! Many organizations welcome new volunteers and community service projects.**