

52 Random Acts of Kindness

TO PERFORM TODAY

Each year, we ask our readers what random acts of kindness they like to perform. We hope their responses to this annual question inspire you to go spread a little kindness of your own.



1. Letting people go ahead of me in line at Starbucks. I am only one person and usually not in a rush, so if there's a family or elderly individual behind me I like to let them go ahead and place their order. It's generally not expected, and everyone is always grateful!

— Heather Taylor

2. Text someone I haven't spoken to in a while and tell them something special I remember them doing that had an impact on me or someone else, then asking how they are doing. Everyone likes to feel remembered.

— [instagram.com/mimrpic](https://www.instagram.com/mimrpic)

3. When I'm in a drive-thru and there's a police officer behind me I always pay for their meal. There's no face-to-face interaction so it's about as unobtrusive as it gets. I love that they can just sit alone in their car, and know the lady up ahead appreciates the work they do for her family.

— [instagram.com/shelli.elle](https://www.instagram.com/shelli.elle)

4. I think kindness can be as simple as smiling at people and genuinely and intentionally saying hello, asking the cashier how his/her day has been rather than waiting for them to ask and address you.

— [instagram.com/teapotsandrobots](https://www.instagram.com/teapotsandrobots)

5. Sending birthday cards. I keep calendar reminders for everyone I know so I can send a card a few days before their birthday. People are delighted to get a real card in the mail! I'm glad I can make their day brighter.

— Emily Lewis

6. When I'm on Instagram or Facebook and like something about a friend's picture, I always make a point of leaving a comment to encourage them instead of just keeping the positive feelings to myself. And if I'm feeling at all envious of a friend for some reason (just keeping it real), leaving an encouraging comment makes me feel like I'm having a victory over the envy.

— [instagram.com/susannarosenet](https://www.instagram.com/susannarosenet)

7. I love to write anonymous positive letters of encouragement and leave them on random shelves at the local bookstore. You never know who could use a little bit of magic!

— Brooke Safferman

8. I am an emergency room nurse and oftentimes patients' families get put on the back burner because (obviously) the patient is our priority. A lot of times the family gets so caught up helping their family members that they don't care for themselves. I simply make sure their needs are met as well: a warm cup of tea, a sandwich, even a warm blanket as they are sitting there being supportive to their loved one.

— [instagram.com/_brooklyndragonfi_](https://www.instagram.com/_brooklyndragonfi_)

9. Sending snail mail to unsuspecting receivers makes me giddy. The crisp parchment, the perfect pen, and the glossy wax seal. I still believe people get a tad excited when they see a letter amongst the bills and junk. I crave to be the deliverer of that excitement. Kindness resonates when someone knows you've set aside time for them. Letter writing slows the perpetual speediness of our culture.

— [instagram.com/rachael.viv](https://www.instagram.com/rachael.viv)

10. I love buying lottery scratchers and leaving them in random public places. The thought of people finding them and possibly winning makes me positively giddy!

— Kelly Kardos

11. Dropping off bags of necessities to the homeless, donating produce from our orchard to our local community food services, sending letters to the younger generation to encourage the great characteristic I see in them, buying hot cocoa to those in the parks during winter months ... and just smiling.

— [instagram.com/thevintagebucket](https://www.instagram.com/thevintagebucket)

12. This summer I made flower bouquets from my garden and left them on my front porch with a little sign telling neighbors and those passing by to take one. It was such a fun way to bless my neighborhood.

— [instagram.com/ecenockson](https://www.instagram.com/ecenockson)

13. Simply smiling at a stranger in a way that is warm and genuine can be an act of kindness. It can brighten someone's day in a way that you may not even imagine, especially in a world where everything is so fast paced that it is easy to go about your own business without regard for the people around you.

— Sydney Russo

14. I make hand-stamped cards and a few years ago I started randomly choosing people in my life to send a card to. Inside is a heartfelt message on what I appreciate about them. Although this is intended as a surprise and something positive for them, it ends up being a real blessing for me. I become more aware and grateful for the people in my life. I started with family and friends, but I have begun dropping them off for different people I see in the community too. The positive ripple effect is incredible.

— Emiko Westerfield

15. When I have items to pick up at the tailors, I anonymously pay for any military customers who have items to be picked up.

— Lisa Forgas

16. When my husband is out and sees a WWII veteran, he will usually pay for their meal and always makes a point of stopping to shake their hand and thank them for their service. I love how thoughtful he is about it, and it makes their day too.

— Kimberly Holback

17. When I experience good customer service, I enjoy asking for the manager to give a compliment. They always appear guarded, thinking I'm going to complain and then visibly relax and their facial expression shifts as I share specific reasons why I was delighted with the customer service I received. I've worked in customer service and when I receive compliments it makes my whole day so it's fun passing that energy forward.

— Joy Holland

18. I like to leave notes or a hand-lettered card with a contact number to help someone that needs food, shelter, childcare, etc.

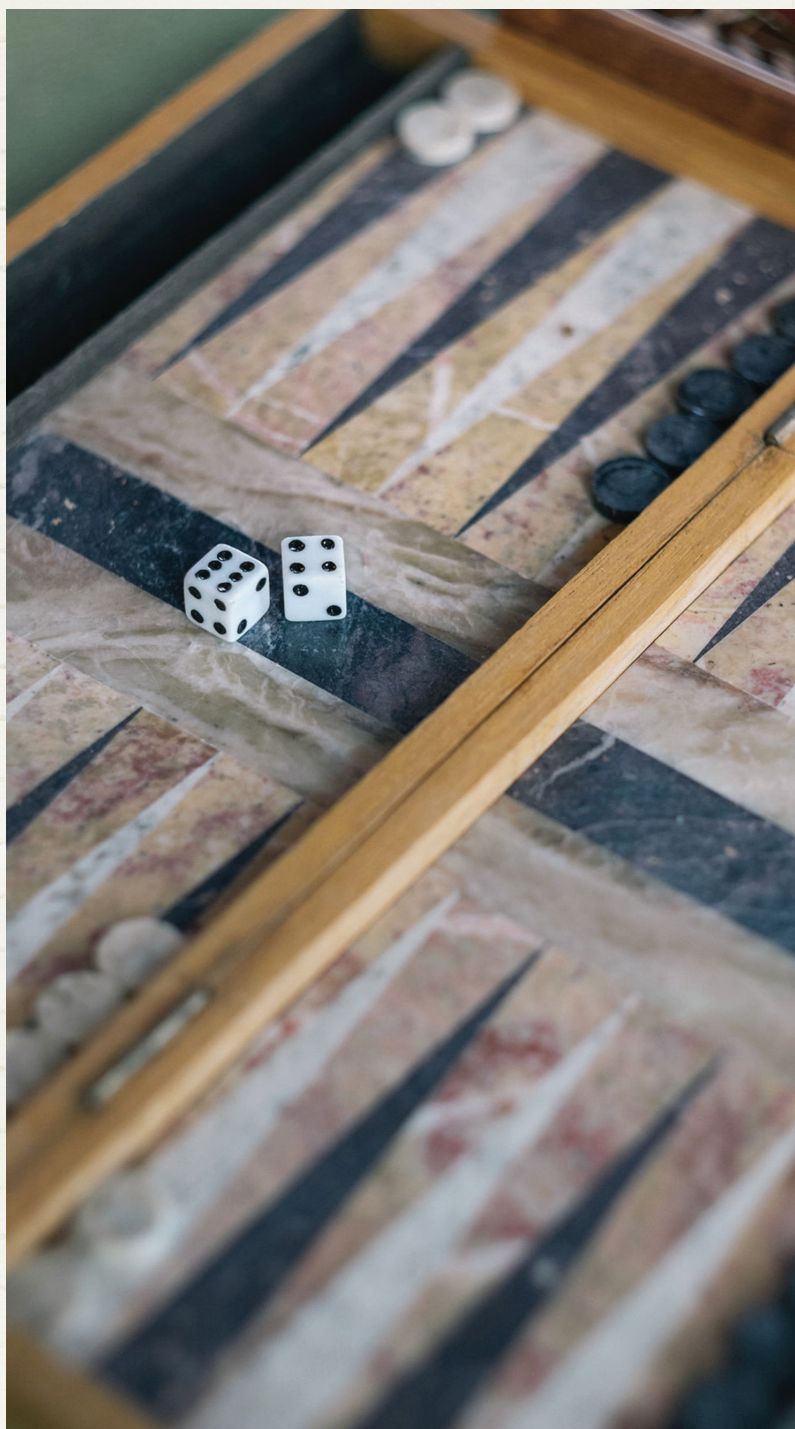
— Vj Trapp

19. I enjoy periodically (and anonymously) picking up the tab for a random table of strangers at a restaurant.

— Gayle Stingley

20. *I like to take the time to play a board game with my 93-year-old grandmother.*

— Jacki Morse





Rowena Naylor



Alexey Kuzman

21. I like to clean bathroom sinks before I leave. I pick up the paper towels from the floor and push the trash down. It takes 10 seconds and I hope it makes someone's job easier.

— Jubille Meyer

22. *I work in a high school office. Every Friday we order coffee, and each week I order an extra and find a student that I know has had tough week or could just use a little encouragement and have it anonymously delivered to them.*

— [instagram.com/mascoob](https://www.instagram.com/mascoob)

23. When I am not in a hurry, or if their child is fussy, I let mothers and fathers ahead of me in the checkout line. I try to share words of kindness everywhere I go. I think of words being like seeds that can plant hope and inspire others and maybe create a wave of kindness. I try to talk to everyone in the checkout line, even though I am introverted I have extroverted moments.

— Ella Wilson

24. I love giving compliments to random strangers. You never know what someone is going through, and if telling them "I love your outfit" makes them smile, it was worth it.

— Valerie Briggs

25. Spring is still winter in parts of the Midwest. I try to clean the snow off the cars parked around me. It's one less thing for someone to do before going home.

— Kay Lee

26. I love to drop off my artwork and poetry at my local coffee shop. It's important to share your gift, no matter how small.

— Judy Wood

27. I like to write an encouraging message on my receipt to my waiter or waitress. I always end it with a smiley face.

— Danielle Uy

28. I give my sons' teachers a gift card to a coffee shop with a note that says, "Thanks a latte!" I give it to them during conferences or just out of the blue to show our gratitude.

— Shannon Ross Johnson

29. I really enjoy sending cards out with a small gift card to Starbucks tucked inside. The more unique the card the better. I try to include a quote that I think captures the person I'm sending it to. They can read it and enjoy a drink without the guilt of spending money on themselves for a small treat.

— Shelby Mckinlay

30. I don't have kids (or pets currently), but I keep a few inexpensive coloring books and crayons in my car as well as dog treats. I have been a few places where new young moms have had kids with meltdowns and they have come in handy. The dog treats actually helped get a dog that got loose from an elderly man.

— Lori Markovich Rose

31. *I love going into public places, like supermarkets and libraries, and leaving hand-written, decorated notes in places where people will see them. I put notes of encouragement in library books and leave some positivity in the pasta aisle. You never know when someone is going to need a pick-me-up.*

— Jenn Pipe



Duet Postscriptum



Studio Firma

32. I like making kits for the homeless that contain socks, a toothbrush, toothpaste, lip balm, some snacks, and a little positive thought to hand out randomly from my car. Looking folks in the eye as you give them the kit is so meaningful and lets them know they are seen in the world.

— Jessica Bobbitt

33. I love leaving books on benches for others to find.

— Rachel Folden

34. I buy \$1 scratch-off lottery tickets and leave them as “tips” for people who don’t usually receive them. I have given them to people at coffee shops, dry cleaners, hostesses, oil-change places, and other places that don’t take tips. It’s an easy way to help people who just need a boost in their day.

— Lisa Markovich Rose

35. *I like to gather boxes full of fresh vegetables and flower bouquets, all grown with love, and give them with love to neighbors, new mommies, etc. When I hear of tears from one who says the smell of a fresh tomato brought her immeasurable joy I’m reminded that it is truly the simple things that make a heart swell.*

— [instagram.com/alice_marie](https://www.instagram.com/alice_marie)

36. Even if it’s ultra busy, I love to take the time to talk to someone’s boss when that employee has gone above and beyond. People have done it for me, and it is a real boost. I love to pass this on!

— Kare Concierge

37. I love to sew and create small items, especially cute little zipper bags, and then give them away with tea, cocoa, or a gift card inside.

— Donna Fellows

38. I keep a little notepad in my purse and always write a note of appreciation to leave along with my tip in a restaurant or cafe. I keep it simple with just a little "Thank you."

— Julie Hutt

39. I leave notes on public bathroom mirrors that say: "You're beautiful just the way you are." (I got the idea from Operation Beautiful.)

— Wendy Wolf

40. I enjoy asking my granddaughter if they'd like to treat someone to a meal when we are in the drive-thru. They always love to pay for the meal of the person behind us. It's great to see they are excited about sharing and being generous.

— Lisa Ayers

41. An anonymous neighbor left a cellophane bag at my door that contained a small orange pumpkin-shaped loaf of bread complete with a green stem on top of a container of delicious pumpkin soup.

— Jean Marshall

42. I love just randomly giving people little organza bags filled with various treats, including jewelry I've made, chocolate, cookies, and decorative pens.

— Adrienne Modelski Urbanski

43. I enjoy randomly taking things to my senior neighbors, like a dinner, donut, cookie, or anything I can share to make them smile. I appreciate our seniors.

— Gretchen Kirk Garbett

44. Every Christmas I purchase some poinsettias at the store, and before I leave the store I give them away.

— Nora Feeney

45. I am a nurse working in an operating room, and I love to hold my patients' hands before they go to sleep or during the local anesthesia cases.

— Kasia Wrzesniewska

46. I love to give an original watercolor painting to a friend who has admired one.

— Janet O'Connor



Colin Anderson

47. As a first-time mom who just quit her job to stay home with her son, I was a wreck and we were struggling to adjust to a one-income household. Someone told me to try shopping at Aldi to save on our grocery bill. I went in so green the first time, I was sleep- and caffeine-deprived and got there and realized I needed a quarter for the shopping cart. I remember holding my 3-month-old on my hip as he's screaming and trying to keep my naturally curly hair out of my eyes so I could see as I dug around the bottom of my purse to find a quarter because I'm a millennial and I only ever use my debit card. My digging efforts were useless because I didn't have a quarter on me. As I looked around in frustration, a little elderly lady came walking back from her car and handed off her shopping cart to me and gave me the biggest smile and then winked at me. To this day, I shop at Aldi every other week and every single time I'm there, I leave my quarter in the slot on the cart when I'm finished just for all the new moms out there.

— Katie Griffin

48. I am a night nurse. I like to sing to my patients. I sing to help them sleep and sing to them in the morning to help them start their day with a smile.

— Kathy Boggs Woodington

49. I love surprising my girlfriends with bouquets of flowers. Most women I know love a cheery bouquet but don't splurge on themselves. It's a little love token to let them know how much they mean to me.

— Johanna Rosolen

50. My children and I regularly perform random acts of kindness in memory of my mom. A few of our favorites: leaving baby wipes and diapers on public changing tables, painting kindness rocks, and offering to return shopping carts to folks with their hands full in parking lots.

— Christie Pham

51. I enjoy adding extra money to a parking meter so the next person has some free parking time or paying the toll for the car behind me just to be nice.

— Renee Howard Cassese

52. *I teach a free yoga community class every week so that yoga can be accessible to everyone. About 95 percent of the people who come are those who couldn't pay ordinarily, including the elderly, recovering addicts, and the unemployed. It's beautiful how they all come together for the class and gain strength, support, and friendship from one another.*

— Yogi Trish



A MONTH OF *Kindness*

It's easy to go through your days focusing on what you need to get done. However, it takes practically no effort to be kind. The more you make a conscious effort to do it, the more it will naturally happen. They say it takes 21 days to create a habit, but we'll give you 31. For the next month, commit one random act of kindness each day, and then record what you did.

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