

Helping Out



Helping Hands, Giving Back



Sometimes, the best way to make yourself at home in your new country is to **get involved** by **helping out** in the community. Actually, **volunteerism** is a very important value to Americans. We are aware that we have many advantages, and we value showing appreciation for this by sharing with others who may have less. **Giving back** doesn't only mean giving *things*.

It also means giving time, or sharing **talent**. The number of ways to help others is almost **limitless**. You might think, "I'm new here. What can I do?" Actually, newcomers have plenty to offer. In fact, the talents of people new to the United States have always been huge **assets** to the country. Your community needs you!

Where do you start? Well, what do you like to do? Do you sing in the shower? How about going to a **nursing home** and singing for the residents? They'll love it (well, we hope they'll love it), and if you sing in your native language, they may think you're a world famous **star**! Can you **knit**? Do

you enjoy **carpentry**? Do you know a lot about plants and **landscaping**? Libraries and large stores are always looking for people to **demonstrate** special **skills** for small groups of people. This is a great way to practice your English! Do you have special job experience? Sometimes it's difficult to get the same kind of job in a new country that you had in your home country. A good way to **stay connected** is to volunteer in your **field**. Maybe you were in the health-care field. Hospitals and **care centers** would love to have you. Even if you just spend time talking to patients, you can **boost their morale**.

Don't forget that your language is a talent, too! Lots of times people come to a hospital or town office with no English language skills at all. Maybe you could volunteer to be a **go-between** and help them explain what they need. There are plenty of families that want their children to learn another language. If you offer to **tutor** a child, you may find that your English skills get better, too.

Do you know where everything is in your community? Can you find your way around? A great way to discover new places, roads, and neighborhoods is to volunteer to drive seniors or patients to appointments and treatment centers. **Homebound shut-ins** often need help with grocery shopping or meals. **Organizations** need people to help with **Meals-on-Wheels** and other food assistance programs.

You may have more talents than you realize!

DIALOGUE 1: TRACK 40

LIA: Alan! Where are you **rushing off** to?

ALAN: Yikes! It's almost lunch time! I'm **running behind**!

LIA: Haha. You must really be hungry. I don't remember you ever **running around** like a crazy person just to go to lunch! Are you meeting some friends?

ALAN: Well, see, that's the thing. I'm not *eating* lunch. I'm *servicing* lunch this afternoon.

LIA: Alan! I didn't know you got a job as a waiter! What restaurant are you working at? I'm going tonight, just to watch you **balancing trays**!

ALAN: No, no, no! I'm not working as a waiter, Lia. I'm serving lunch at the **soup kitchen** this afternoon, and later I'm working at the **food pantry**. I decided I wanted to do something to help people in the community, and a friend told me the Gilmore Street Food Pantry needed some help. I help out there **twice** a week.

LIA: Alan, what is the Gilmore Street Food Pantry?

ALAN: It's a great organization. They run a soup kitchen at the **homeless**

... and twice
... in need. I feel like
... to help people who
... And talking to the
... who are doing the gr

If you're not ar
don't worry. Ve
exactly what to

Sometimes a v
Volunteering he
workers to help
do, you may be

VOCABULARY

- assets: advantages
- balancing: holding some
- boost one's morale: mal
- care center: a place whe
- carpentry: making beauti
- demonstrate: show
- field: the industry or caree
- food pantry: a place that
- groceries but can't pay for
- get involved: become a p
- getting back on one's fee
- help
- going back: helping someo
- go-between: someone who
- help and work together
- good deed: something kind
- helping out: doing some
- homebound shut-in
- times

shelter, and twice a week the food pantry is open on Gilmore Street for families in need. I feel lucky that my family has enough food to eat, so it's an **honor** to help people who need some help while they're **getting back on their feet**. And talking to them helps me with my English. Maybe *they're* the ones who are doing the **good deed**.

TIP 1



If you're not an expert in something, but you'd still like to help, don't worry. Volunteer organizations will train you so you'll know exactly what to do.

TIP 2

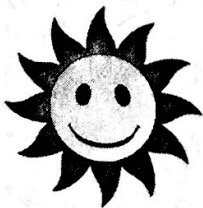


Sometimes a volunteer job can lead to a real (paying!) job. Volunteering helps others, but organizations also need paid workers to help run everything. If you're really good at what you do, you may be offered a job in the organization.

VOCABULARY

- **assets**: advantages
- **balancing**: holding something steady, so it won't fall
- **boost one's morale**: make someone feel better about things
- **care center**: a place where people's needs (usually health) are met
- **carpentry**: making beautiful things out of wood (or fixing them)
- **demonstrate**: show
- **field**: the industry or career you work in
- **food pantry**: a place that keeps food items on hand for families that need groceries but can't pay for them
- **get involved**: become a part of something
- ① **getting back on one's feet**: trying to take care of one's own needs without help
- ① **giving back**: helping someone else, because you're thankful for what you have
- ① **go-between**: someone who works to help two groups understand each other and work together
- **good deed**: something kind that you do for someone
- ① **helping out**: doing something to make things easier for someone
- **homebound shut-ins**: people who are sick and not able to leave their homes

- **homeless shelter:** a place where people with no homes can sleep
- **honor:** a privilege
- **knit:** make something by weaving yarn or thread (sweaters and scarves are knit)
- **landscaping:** arranging plants outside
- **limitless:** no end
- **Meals-on-Wheels:** a program that helps deliver food to people who need it
- **nursing home:** a place for older people who need extra care and help
- **organization:** a group that has a special purpose
- ① **running around:** busy doing many things in a short time
- ① **running behind:** late
- ① **rushing off:** hurrying away
- **skill:** ability to do something well
- **soup kitchen:** a place that serves free meals to needy people
- **star:** a famous leader in an industry
- ① **stay connected:** keep learning about your interest
- **talent:** a special ability
- **tray:** large flat board or plate for holding things (like plates and glasses in a restaurant)
- **tutor:** a special teacher for one person or a small group
- **twice:** two times
- **volunteerism:** the act of helping someone without expecting any pay or benefit



Fun Fact!

We're not sure this is true, but some volunteers we've spoken to say they've lost ten pounds since starting their volunteer jobs. If that's true, sign us up!

GRAMMAR REMINDER: Even More Present Continuous Tense

The present continuous tense (form of *to be* + *-ing* form of the verb) works very hard! Many people use the present continuous tense to talk about something that will happen in the near future.

Take a look at these examples from the dialogue (see if you can find any more).

Are you meeting
I'm not eating lunch.
I'm serving lunch this aft
I'm working at the food p

Good Citizen? Go

...is what U.S. citizenship i
Perhaps the most sacred do
institution. This is the statem
every person is entitled to. It sa
the speech. But being a goc
process and in the service of h
on important issues, but
those opinions are differer
part of living in this cou
as citizens to help all of t
its laws; being part of t
for the country that
our rights as citizens is
Because they were ha
be honored to have the
Although we may be fir
neighbors to keep their beli
should do all that the
process helps keep it strong.
they are free to have. I
And while everyone like
so many of our progr
is an important way to t
privileges are part of wh
responsibility is

Are you **meeting** some friends?
I'm **not eating** lunch.
I'm **servicing** lunch this afternoon.
I'm **working** at the food pantry.

Good Citizen? Good Neighbor!



Helping out in the community is a great way to show respect for the people you live with, and volunteering is a wonderful way to be a good citizen. Of course, becoming an actual citizen of the country is a **legal process**. However, you don't have to be an actual citizen to be a good citizen. Being a good neighbor, friend, co-worker (you get the

idea) is what U.S. citizenship is all about.

Perhaps the most **sacred document** to all U.S. citizens is the **U.S. Constitution**. This is the statement of all the rights and basic freedoms that every person is **entitled to**. It says, for example, that people have the right to **free speech**. But being a good American means using this right for good purposes and in the service of helping others. A good citizen will express his opinion on important issues, but he will also respect the opinions of others—even if those opinions are different from his. In fact, this may be the most important part of living in this country: using the rights and **privileges** that are ours as citizens to help all of the society we live in. Loving the country; respecting its laws; being part of the family, neighborhood, town—all of these show respect for the country that protects these rights for us.

Enjoying our rights as citizens is something that people should never **take for granted**. Because they were **hard-won**, and because there are so many who would be honored to have these rights, it's important that people **pay their dues**. Although we may be **firm** in what we believe, it's a citizen's duty to allow neighbors to keep their beliefs as well. Respecting people, respecting laws, and **acknowledging** responsibility and duty all **come with the territory**.

U.S. citizens should do all that their country asks of them. Becoming part of the process helps keep it strong. Citizens should vote, to express those opinions that they are free to have. We need to do our part to protect the environment. And while everyone likes to complain about them, paying taxes is what makes so many of our programs work. Even something as simple as **jury duty** is an important way to be a good member of the community. Rights and privileges are part of what makes this such a great country; people taking responsibility is what helps keep it strong.

DIALOGUE 2: TRACK 41

LIA: Oh, no, I can't believe this. I just got a **notice** that I'm being called for jury duty.

ALAN: Wait a minute! Why "oh, no"? Don't you like the American jury system?

LIA: Oh, of course, I like the jury system. It's just such a **pain in the neck**. Now I have to take time off from work, I have to figure out how to get there, and I have to wait around until they call me in. Then if I **get picked** for a jury, who knows how long I'll have to spend in court? I don't have time for this! Why can't they just ask someone who has nothing better to do?

ALAN: Okay, it does take a commitment of time. But, Lia, what if someone you care about was **on trial**? Wouldn't you want them to have the best people possible **servng on the jury**?

LIA: I know, I know. You're right. I guess the best part about the court system is that someone can have her case heard by a jury of her **peers**. It just seems like there's never enough time to do everything.

ALAN: I know. Everyone wants to have the privileges and advantages of something, as long as he doesn't have to make any effort. If everyone **stepped up to the plate** and did his part, it would be a much fairer system for everyone. Even the people with "important" jobs need to make a **contribution** to society and be good citizens.

LIA: You're right. If I want to **take advantage of** all the good things that I have in this country, I should at least take my turn at sharing some of the responsibility. That's it. I'm calling them this afternoon and I'm telling them I'll be happy to do my jury duty.

ALAN: Great! Now let's go get lunch.

TIP 3



One very important right enjoyed by a citizen in our democracy is the right to have a jury decide his guilt or innocence. Sometimes a person may ask to have the judge make the final decision instead; then there will be no jury at the **trial**.

VOCABULARY

- **acknowledging**: recognizing
- **burst**: pop, break
- ① **comes with the territory**: is expected
- **contribution**: do something helpful to make a difference
- **document**: an official paper
- **entitled to**: have the right to something
- **firm**: strong
- **free speech**: the right of people to say whatever they want
- ① **get picked**: be selected for something
- ① **get the hang of**: be able to do something easily; understand something
- **hard-won**: achieved after much sacrifice by oneself or others
- **jury**: the group of people who hear all the arguments in a court case; they make the decision about who is right and wrong
- **jury duty**: serving in the court system as a member of the jury
- **legal process**: steps to make something happen as required by law
- **notice**: an official letter informing you of something
- **on trial**: in court to decide whether something is right or wrong
- ① **pain in the neck**: an annoyance; an inconvenience
- ① **pay one's dues**: work hard to deserve something
- **peers**: people just like you
- **privileges**: a special benefit
- **sacred**: very important and deserving respect
- **serving on a jury**: being part of the court system as a jury member
- ① **stepped up to the plate**: accepted responsibility for something and act
- **take advantage of**: use and enjoy
- **take for granted**: accept something as what you deserve without valuing it
- **trial**: a court proceeding to decide if someone is guilty or innocent of a crime
- **U.S. Constitution**: the highest law of the United States and the basis of the entire government



PRONUNCIATION POINTER

For speakers of some languages, the letters *B* and *V* can be very difficult to **get the hang of**. The letter *B* requires that the lips touch. For the letter *V*, the top front teeth should touch the bottom lip. Try these tongue twisters for practice. Good luck!

V and B Tongue Twisters

Betty bought a biscuit, but the baby bit it.

On her vacation, Vera drove a van to visit Uncle Vanya in his village.

Bobby bought a big balloon in Baltimore, but it **burst**.

Vinny volunteered to vacuum for Violet while she voted.

MORE FUN WITH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS: Run/Running

- **running behind:** late

*Her alarm clock didn't wake her on time, so she was **running behind**.*

- **running the show:** being in charge

*He spent so much time working at the food pantry that he was soon **running the show** when the leader became sick.*

- **running scared:** being worried that you'll lose at something

*After they lost two games to the Colorado Rockies, the Philadelphia Phillies were **running scared** in the baseball series.*

- **run it by me again:** repeat something

*I didn't hear what the speaker said about my car. Can you **run it by me again**?*

- **running around in circles:** seeming to be doing a lot of activity, but not getting anything accomplished

*Instead of concentrating on one job at a time, she tried to do everything at once and was just **running around in circles**.*

VOCABULARY

...the missing letter.

...I don't need a new
...breaks down.

...Hey, Toby, I've got
...getting married to E
...NO! I thought she h

...Hey, Chris, I'm sper
...Bungee jumping?
...No! Stamp collecting

...Haack! I drove too fa
...a flat tire.

...My dog just had a _ _

...My husband is a really
...is he a professional?
...No, he's just an a _ _ t

...The worst thing about
..._ _ _ _ z_ trying to
...able to be outside in t

...Be careful with that gla
...do you like my sweater
...self.