

One of the best ways to give back is to volunteer in your community. Not only does volunteering produce positive outcomes for the overall community, it may also improve your life satisfaction as well. Here are a few tips to help you express your gratitude and make your community a better place.



# 5 Ways to Show Gratitude through Community Service

## 1 Go where your talents are needed the most.

Many local community groups and organizations need the skills of professionals and tradespeople, especially when big events arise. If you're great with fundraising, power tools, computers, marketing, etc., an organization in your area may be able to use your talents.

**2 Volunteer with your city.** Many municipalities have a volunteer coordinator on staff who can match you to great opportunities in your community. Volunteer for a few hours to help at a race event or family fun day, or on a monthly basis to keep walking trails in top shape. Volunteer coordinators can match you to projects that meet your time availability and interests.

## 3 Raise funds for a cause close to your heart.

Non-profit organizations are always in need of funds in order to keep their programs going. Help them accomplish their mission by hosting a fundraiser for them.

- **Host a garage sale.** Have friends and neighbors donate items to sell, and donate all of the proceeds to charity.
- **Host a pot luck or seasonal party** and have guests bring a toy or non-perishable food to give to charity

**4 Attend a charity event.** Community organizations in the area often have fundraising events several times a year. Go to one and bring your friends. Be sure to donate a little extra money as well.

**5 Donate money to charity.** For many people, donating money is more convenient than donating time. Whether it's putting money in the Salvation Army bucket or giving to a national organization, the holiday season is a great time to contribute funds to charitable organizations.

- Before you donate, research the organization to ensure that it's a legitimate charity. Go to the American Institute of Philanthropy ([www.charitywatch.org](http://www.charitywatch.org)) or Charity Navigator ([www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org)) to learn more.
- Keep your receipt; your contribution may be tax-deductable.



Visit **Volunteer Match** ([volunteermatch.org](http://volunteermatch.org)), **Idealist.org** or **Catchafire.org** to find volunteer opportunities near you.