One of the hardest parts about moving is starting over. Starting over means that you have to leave all of your old friends behind, become the new kid again, and try to make new friends, all at the same time! This can feel like a lot to deal with, but that doesn't mean that it's impossible. In fact, sometimes starting over can be a really good thing. Take a look at the pages in this section. They will give you some good ideas about how to make new friends and get involved in your new community and school in no time.

"Every time I leave my friends, it gets harder to say good-bye and open myself up to getting to know other friends. But I love getting to know other people and I know it'll be good once I get used to it here."

Lauren, age 14
It can be overwhelming when you try to make friends with everyone. Sometimes you get caught up in other people's arguments and make poor choices. Remember, it doesn't matter how many friends you have. What matters most is being a good friend to the people you care about.

**Listen.** Don't be a one-sided friend. Listen to what your friends are saying, and make sure you don't just talk about yourself all the time. They want to be heard too! Be sure to give them equal time in each conversation.

**Stay positive.** Even when you've had a terrible day, don't take it out on your friends. Your friends are there to help lift you up, but they don't want to be treated badly just because you don't feel good about things in your life.

**Make a list.** Think about all the things that are important to you in a good friend. Compare that list to how you treat your friends and ask yourself: Am I doing what it takes to be a good friend?

**Avoid gossip and rumors.** If you start talking about people behind their backs, you can bet that eventually people will start talking about you too. Gossip and rumors cause a lot of hurt, and good friends don't do that to each other.

**Ask your friends.** If you want to know how your friends feel about your relationship, ask them! They can tell you what they love about you, and they can also tell you what you can do to be a better friend.

**Accept your friends for who they are.** A good friend doesn't constantly criticize friends and doesn't try to change who they are. It's not your place to try to change the way a friend dresses or point out flaws all the time. To be a good friend, you have to accept your friends for who they are.

**Helpful Tips**

Being a good friend is about giving time and respect to the other person and getting time and respect back.

Just because you're the new kid and want to make friends doesn't mean you should accept someone who treats you badly or is always telling you what to do. If you're being a good friend to someone who isn't a good friend to you, get rid of them.
Fitting In

Sometimes when you move to a new place, it can be scary at first because no one knows you. You might be worried that you won't be liked or accepted at your new school. It's really easy to think if you act a certain way or talk a certain way that you will be more popular and make more friends. But in the end, most kids can see through the act. Check out the info below to see the best ways to fit in.

Be yourself. The best way to fit in is to be yourself. Think about all the important things about you. Maybe you love writing stories. Maybe you love the outdoors. If you feel like you have to hide any of these things just to fit in, try to find some new friends!

Don't give in to peer pressure. Peer pressure is when people your age try to get you to do things you don't want to do. If you are being asked to do something that you feel is wrong, don't give in just to fit in. It's not worth it.

Don't change yourself for others. If all the kids at your new school are into something that you don't like, make sure you don't change who you are just to fit in for that moment in time. Stick to what feels right to you.

Start small. Don't try to make friends with too many people at once or change yourself to try to become the most popular kid in school. Get to know the kids at your new school first. Be positive and honest, and those kids who are worth being your friends will want to get to know the real you.

Get involved. Find something you're interested in at school or on the installation. Once you've joined an activity, it's easier to feel like you belong because you're around people with similar interests!

Helpful Tips

Remember, good friendships take time. It takes time to get to know another person and figure out whether he or she is good friend material.

Sometimes it might feel like the kids who are willing to change themselves and act or dress in a certain way are the ones with all the friends. But people eventually will see through an act. The best thing you can do is to stay true to yourself.
Everyone worries about making new friends. Maybe you feel like no one can compare to the friends you have now. Maybe you think you are too shy to meet anybody new. Maybe you just don't know how to go about it. The good news is that there are plenty of things you can do to make this a lot easier.

**Get involved.** Look for ways to get to know other kids. Go to the youth center and sign up for a group activity or sign up for an afterschool club. Once you are surrounded by kids with the same interests as you, you'll find it easier to make friends.

**Take the first step.** Don't wait for people to talk to you; just smile, say hi, and get the ball rolling! Other kids are probably just as shy or scared as you are, so think about things you can say to start a conversation. Ask about school, music, fashion, sports, or something you know you're both interested in.

**Take your time.** You don't have to have a whole new set of friends on the first day of school. Remember, you can be friendly with a lot of people, and friends with the kids you really get to know and have a lot in common with. It's ok to sit back and observe everyone at first to see where you think you fit best.

**Be yourself.** You are a great person, and to make new friends, you have to let others see who you really are. Don't try to act like someone you aren't. Sooner or later people will see that you are just acting! Be yourself and you'll make new friends in no time.

**Check out the Youth Sponsorship section of this website.** Getting a youth sponsor before you move can mean having a new friend before you even get to your new location. Your sponsor can give you all the info you need to make you feel comfortable in your new community or school.

**Helpful Hints**

Don't make comparisons. It's easy to compare your last home, school, or friends to where you are now and think "things were so much better there." Instead, make the best of where you are and be positive! Other kids like being around positive people!

Make a list of the things that you are looking for in a friend. Are you looking for someone who is kind? Someone who will always stand up for you? Someone you can trust? Once you know what you're looking for in a friend, start trying to find the person who best fits that description.
Starting Fresh

No matter how many times you move as a military kid, being the new kid can be hard. It's easy to worry about getting lost at school, not having any friends, and being lonely. But being the new kid doesn't have to be that way.

**Make a list.** Write down all of the things you don't know about your new place and begin to find the answers however you can. This might mean using the phone, talking to others, asking your parents for help, or using the Internet. The more you know before you head to school for the first time, the better you'll feel about being the new kid.

**Visit your school.** As soon as you can, go see your new school. Even if it's summer vacation, go with a parent to check out the building and get the basics down. Find out where the lockers are, the cafeteria, and so on. If it isn't possible to visit your school before you go, try to get on the school's website with your parent or another adult and learn as much as you can that way.

**Explore the area.** Once you're all moved in, ask your parents or another adult to walk around with you. Check out the local hang out spots for kids your age and visit your youth and teen centers and introduce yourself to any kids you see. Making friends before school starts can make that first day a lot easier.

**Smile.** Did you know that when you smile you have a better chance of making friends? This simple action can make you seem more approachable to other kids.

**Keep in touch with your old friends.** Call, text, or email when you can. They'll be able to take your mind off things, cheer you up, and remind you that you'll be able to make new friends in no time.

**Check out the Youth Sponsorship section of this website.** A sponsor can help you through being the new kid by answering your questions, taking you around school, and introducing you to some new people!

**Find someone to go to lunch with.** Maybe you've met someone whose locker is near yours or who shares a class with you. A little bit of planning will make your lunch time less lonely!

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**Helpful Tips**

Kids are kids no matter where you live. Even if you moved across the country, you'll find ways to connect to these kids too, just like you did in your old school.

Think of being the new kid as a positive thing. You get a chance to start again and forget anything you weren't proud of in your past. If you got labeled as someone who couldn't keep a secret in your old school, now's your chance to change that!
Youth Sponsorship

Wouldn't it be great if you could talk to someone who lives in your new town and goes to your school so you could ask them the million and one questions you have? That's what your Youth Sponsorship Program is designed to do! The program helps you connect with another kid who is already in your new location and knows what's going on at school and on your installation, and who can answer any questions you might have.

**Meet a new friend.** You'll have a familiar face and someone you know before you even get to your new location. This can make meeting other people much easier too.

**Learn about your new school and installation before you get there.** Before you move, you'll get paired up with another kid your age (your "sponsor") who lives where you'll be living and goes to the school you'll attend. Your new friend can tell you what the other kids are wearing, what the teachers are like, and what fun things are going on!

**Ask a lot of questions.** You must have a lot of questions about your new location and your new school, and your sponsor can help you answer them. Ask them things about your school, your youth center, the other kids, and anything else that's on your mind.

**Get a tour.** Your sponsor knows best. Ask him or her to take you around the installation or around school to get an idea about what things are like. Then, he or she can introduce you to some new friends as well!

**Get started.** The first step to a successful youth sponsorship is getting connected with your new sponsor. Ask your parents to contact your new installation. Once the new installation is aware that you're coming, they'll pair you with your sponsor and provide his or her contact information. Even before you arrive, you'll have a chance to get to know your new friend and get acquainted with the new installation. Exchange emails, talk on the phone, or chat online. It's that simple! Remember, your sponsor was once the new kid too, and he or she will be excited to introduce you to your new home.

**Meet up.** Once you've actually arrived at the installation, make plans to meet up with your sponsor. He or she can then show you around and introduce you to his or her friends. It's a great way to build a social circle - and most of the work is already done for you!

**Helpful Tips**

If you aren't moving for awhile or you've already moved and feel comfortable in your new location, you can be a sponsor for another kid who's moving to your school or installation. Just think how cool it was to know one person when you got to your new place. You can be that person for the new kid!
Teens Youth Sponsorship
One of the hardest parts about moving is starting over. Starting over means that you have to leave all of your old friends behind, become the new kid again, and try to make new friends all at the same time. This can feel like a lot to deal with, especially on top of all the regular teenage drama you're thinking about, but that doesn't mean that it's impossible. In fact, sometimes starting over can be a really good thing. Take a look at the articles in this section. They will give you some good ideas about how to make new friends and get involved in your new community and school in no time.

"I am so done with moving! Here I am trying to get ready for my senior year and we're on the road again. And then my dad reminds me that he's doing all this for our country and for us, so then I feel bad. I want to be supportive. And I'm proud of him. So, I guess if he can do his job, I can do mine. . . "

Kaitlyn, age 17
Being A Good Friend

It can be overwhelming when you try to make friends with everyone. Sometimes you get caught up in other people's arguments and make poor choices. Remember, it doesn't matter how many friends you have. What matters most is being a good friend to the people you care about.

Listen. Don't be a one-sided friend. Listen to what your friends are saying, and make sure you don't just talk about yourself all the time. Be sure to give them equal time in each conversation.

Stay positive. Even when you've had a terrible day, don't take it out on your friends. Your friends are there to help lift you up, but they don't want to be treated badly just because you don't feel good about things in your life.

Make a list. Think about all the things that are important to you in a good friend. Compare that list to how you treat your friends and ask yourself: Am I doing what it takes to be a good friend?

Avoid gossip and rumors. If you start talking about people behind their backs, you can bet that eventually people will start talking about you too. Gossip and rumors cause a lot of hurt and good friends avoid them.

Ask your friends. If you want to know how your friends feel about your relationship, ask them! They can tell you what they love about you, and they can also tell you what you can do to be a better friend.

Accept your friends for who they are. Good friends don't constantly criticize their friends or try to change who they are. Appreciate your friends for who they are and treat them as you would want to be treated: with respect.

Learn from your mistakes. If you had problems with friends at your old school, think about what caused those problems and learn from it! If you made some mistakes, now is the time to change your ways!

Helpful Tips

Being a good friend is about giving time and respect to the other person and getting time and respect back.

Just because you're new and want to make friends doesn't mean you should accept someone who treats you badly or is always telling you what to do. If you're being a good friend to someone who isn't a good friend to you, get rid of them.
Fitting In

Sometimes when you move to a new place, it can feel overwhelming because no one knows you. You might be worried that you won't be liked or accepted at your new school. It's really easy to think that if you act or talk a certain way you will be more popular and make more friends. But in the end, most teenagers can see through the act. Check out the info below to see ways to fit in.

**Be yourself.** The best way to fit in is to be yourself. Think about all the important things about you. Maybe you love writing stories or maybe you love the outdoors. If you feel like you have to hide any of these things to fit in with a group of kids, maybe it's time to find other friends.

**Don't give in to peer pressure.** If you are being asked to do something that you feel is wrong inside, don't give in just to fit in. It's not worth it. You'll probably wind up with fewer friends and a lot of trouble in the long run.

**Don't change yourself for others.** If all the teenagers at your new school are into something that you don't like, make sure you don't change who you are just to fit in. Stick to your own way to live your life.

**Start small.** Don't try to make friends with too many people at once or change yourself to try to become the most popular kid in school. Get to know the kids at your new school first. Be positive and honest, and those kids who are worth being your friends will want to get to know the real you.

**Get involved.** Find something you're interested in at school or on the installation. Once you've joined an activity, it's easier to feel like you belong because you're around people with similar interests.

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**Helpful Tips**

Remind yourself about all the good qualities you have. When you begin to doubt yourself or notice that you are changing who you are to try and fit in, think about all the things that make you a special individual.

People eventually will see through an act. Sometimes it might feel like the kids who are willing to change themselves and act or dress in a certain way are the ones with all the friends, but in time, others will see through it. Your only job is to be yourself.
No matter how many times you have moved as a military teen, it’s never easy, and it seems like it gets harder the older you get. Part of the reason is that you know what to expect: unfamiliar school, unfamiliar faces, and that all too familiar feeling of being at the bottom of the heap. But it doesn't have to be all bad.

**Do your research.** Learn as much as you can about your new community before you get there. Contact different programs on the installation and use the Internet to learn more about the community. The more you know before you head to school for the first time, the better you'll feel.

**Visit your school.** As soon as you can, go see your new school. Even if it's summer vacation, go check out the building and get the basics down. Find out where the lockers are, the cafeteria, and so on. If it isn't possible to visit your school before you go, try to get on the school's website and learn as much as you can.

**Explore the area.** Once you're all moved in, walk or drive around. Check out the local hang out spots, visit the teen center, and introduce yourself to some other teens. Having even just one new friend can make that first day of school a lot easier.

**Smile.** Did you know that when you smile you have a better chance of making friends? This simple action can make you more approachable.

**Start fresh.** Think of this move as a good thing. You get a chance to start again and forget anything you weren't proud of in your past. If you got labeled as someone who couldn't keep a secret or if you made some enemies along your way, now is your chance to change all that. It's a fresh start!

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**Helpful Tips**

Check out the Youth Sponsorship section of this website. A sponsor can help you through being new by answering your questions, taking you around school, and introducing you to some new people.
Everyone worries about making new friends. You might feel like no one can compare to the friends you have now, or you think you are too shy to meet anybody new. Maybe you just don't want to take the time to make a whole new set of friends. The good news is that there are plenty of things you can do to make this a lot easier.

Get involved. Look for ways to get to know other teens and get involved. Go to the teen center to sign up for a group activity. Go to school and join an afterschool club or sport. Look around town for a part-time job. Once you are surrounded by others with the same interests as you, you'll find it easier to make friends.

Take the first step. Don't wait for people to talk to you. Just smile, say hi, and get things started! Other teens are probably just as shy or uncomfortable as you are, so think about things you can say to start a conversation. Ask about school, music, movies, sports, or something you know you're both interested in.

Take your time. You don't have to have a whole new set of friends on the first day of school. Remember, you can be friendly with a lot of people, and friends with the people you really get to know and have a lot in common with. It's ok to sit back and observe everyone at first to see where you think you fit best.

Be yourself. You are a great person and to make new friends, you have to let others see who you really are. Don't try to act like someone you aren't. Sooner or later people will see that you are just acting! Be yourself and you'll make new friends in no time.

Be positive. Having positive relationships with your peers is one factor in becoming a successful adult. Making new friends is giving you practice for later in life.

Keep in touch with your old friends. Call, text, or email when you can. They'll be able to take your mind off things, cheer you up, and remind you that you'll be able to make new friends in no time.

Helpful Tips
Don't make comparisons. It's easy to compare your last home, school, or friends to where you are now and think, “Things were so much better there.” Instead, make the best of where you are and be positive. Being positive may make you seem more approachable and likeable to other teens.

Check out the Youth Sponsorship section of this website. Getting a youth sponsor before you move means having a friend before you even get to your new location. Your sponsor can give you all the info you need to make you feel comfortable in your new community or school.
Youth Sponsorship Program

Wouldn't it be great if you could talk to someone who lives in your new location and goes to your school so you could ask them all the questions you have? That's what your Youth Sponsorship Program is designed to do! The program helps you connect with another teenager who is already in your new town, knows what's going on at school and on the installation, and can answer any questions you might have.

Meet a new friend. You'll have a familiar face before you even get to your new location. This can make meeting other people much easier too. Learn about your new school and installation before you get there. Before you move, you'll get paired up with another teen your age (your "sponsor") who lives where you'll be living and goes to the school you'll attend. Your new friend can tell you what the other kids are wearing, what the teachers are like, and what fun things are going on!

Ask a lot of questions. You must have a lot of questions about your new town and your new school, and your sponsor can help you answer them. Ask your sponsor things about your school, your teen center, and anything else that's on your mind.

Get a tour. Your sponsor knows best. Ask him or her to take you around the installation or around school to get an idea about what things are like. Then, he or she can introduce you to some new friends as well.

Get started. The first step to a successful youth sponsorship is getting connected with your new sponsor. Ask your parents to contact your new installation. Once the new installation is aware that you're coming, they'll pair you with your sponsor and provide his or her contact information. Even before you arrive, you'll have a chance to get to know your new friend and get acquainted with the new installation. Exchange emails, talk on the phone, or chat online. It's that simple! Remember, your sponsor was once the new kid too, and he or she will be excited to introduce you to your new home.

Meet up. Once you've actually arrived at the installation, make plans to meet up with your sponsor. He or she can then show you around and introduce you to his or her friends. It's a great way to build a social circle - and most of the work is already done for you!
Questions

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