

NEWS LESSON

Why Don't We Invite Friends In?

BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Would you invite friends over if your home was untidy?
2. What makes an evening with friends feel effortless?
3. Would you rather bring food or help clear up?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**pressure**	☐	A	plans that show what you will do and when
2	**untidy**	☐	B	things you like more than other things
3	**preferences**	☐	C	rest and stop feeling worried
4	**hosts**	☐	D	people who invite guests to their home
5	**bill**	☐	E	people who come to see you at your home
6	**relax**	☐	F	a paper that shows how much money you must pay
7	**schedules**	☐	G	not neat, with things in the wrong place
8	**visitors**	☐	H	a feeling that you must do something

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

We want to see our friends, but the laundry, the cooking and the cleaning can stop us asking.

1 You start writing a message: "Would you like to come over tonight?" Then you notice the dishes in the sink, the clothes drying in the living room and the empty fridge. You delete the message and suggest a café next week instead. Seeing a friend should be simple, but inviting someone into our home can feel like a job that needs cleaning, cooking and careful planning.

2 One reason is the pressure to make everything look perfect. Social media is full of clean kitchens, beautiful tables and wonderful food. Real homes are usually messier. There may be clothes drying, toys on the floor or dishes in the sink. Some people worry that visitors will notice these things, even though their friends probably do not care very much.

3 Food can be another problem. People may have different diets, allergies or strong preferences. A simple dinner suddenly needs lots of planning. Then there is shopping, cooking and cleaning up afterwards. Everyone is busy, and arranging a free evening can involve many messages. It can seem easier to meet somewhere else and let somebody else do the washing-up.

4 But there are good reasons to spend time together at home. A quiet evening on the sofa can make it easier to have a proper conversation. Nobody needs to order an expensive meal or leave when the café closes. Friends can relax, bring something to share and stay as long as they like. There is no bill at the end of the evening either. A simple invitation may also mean a lot to someone who has been feeling lonely.

5 Perhaps we need to expect less of ourselves as hosts. Buying pizza is fine, and so is asking a guest to help make the tea. If we wait until our homes and schedules are perfect, we may never invite anyone. Most friends would probably prefer an untidy kitchen and good company to a beautifully arranged table with nobody sitting around it.

Sources: Socius. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Nobody gets a bill after an evening at home. T F NG
2. Friends probably care less about a messy home than the host expects. T F NG
3. Most people now meet friends in cafés rather than at home. T F NG
4. The writer says you should always cook a proper meal for guests. T F NG
5. The text says a simple invitation can matter to a lonely person. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

allergies	careful	conversation	expensive	invitation	lonely	worry

1. Some hosts _____ that their friends will notice the dishes in the sink.
2. Some guests have _____ to nuts or milk, so the host must plan the food carefully.
3. A phone call is quick, but a visit gives you time for a proper _____ .
4. Please send an _____ to every guest before Friday.
5. Many people feel _____ when they spend too much time alone.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. Yesterday I _____ a message to my neighbour. (SEND)
2. Last night, Maria _____ pizza instead of cooking. (BUY)
3. Last week I _____ to invite my sister because I was too tired. (FORGET)
4. I haven't _____ my friends for a month. (SEE)
5. Tom _____ the kitchen before the guests arrived. (CLEAN)

7 Language focus: prepositions

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Many verbs and adjectives need a small fixed word after them. Learn the pair together, for example worried about.

about for from in of on with

1. She is worried _____ the state of her flat.
2. We agreed _____ a date for the party.
3. Thank you _____ coming over.
4. I'm proud _____ my small kitchen.
5. She is interested _____ cooking for her friends.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. What one rule would make hosting feel easier?
2. Have online images raised expectations for an ordinary evening at home?
3. Which would you choose: a perfect dinner next month or a simple one tonight?

9 Role-play: come round on Friday?

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the host

You want to invite a friend to your flat on Friday. It's a bit untidy and you have no special food. Persuade your friend to come anyway.

Student B · the friend

You'd prefer to meet in a café. You're tired and you don't want to see a messy flat. Ask questions and say what would change your mind.

Useful phrases

Why don't you come round on Friday?

I'm afraid the flat's a mess.

I wouldn't mind that at all.

Let's meet at a café instead.

I'll bring dessert if that helps.

That's a fair point, so let's do that.

Afterwards, tell the class: where did you decide to meet, and why?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 H · 2 G · 3 B · 4 D · 5 F · 6 C · 7 A · 8 E

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 T · 3 NG · 4 F · 5 T

5 Vocabulary

1 worry · 2 allergies · 3 conversation · 4 invitation · 5 lonely

6 Verb forms

1 sent · 2 bought · 3 forgot · 4 seen · 5 cleaned

7 Language focus

1 about · 2 on · 3 for · 4 of · 5 in

This lesson is free. If it saved you time, you can support johnplusnews at **ko-fi.com/johnplusenglish**