



# Affordable hangout at home: where budget meets friends

We are not talking about virtual hangouts here; that confusion should be cleared out! It is also not about the hangouts people have these days at restaurants or party centres after two weeks of preparations.

Going to see a movie in a group does not count either (although it can be a fun option).

Let's be frank, meeting friends like this is costly - not just in terms of money, but also in terms of time. Sometimes you will just wish if there were a way to go back to good old fashioned addas at home.

Yet the reality is, people do not or cannot visit others these days without calling; so spontaneous, spur of the moment visits are off the list. Still, at-home hangouts are possible and can be a much better option than prearranged, plastic get-togethers.

## Creating space

You do not need a separate room just to have a hangout. Your living room can work perfectly well for this, especially if the hang-

out is centred around a sports match. If you have roof access or have a balcony/small yard, those too can be prospective hangout spaces.

With some plastic chairs and a portable table, you are good to go. For a younger crowd - sitting mats, blankets, or slightly old carpets can work as well, throw in some cushions and you have yourself a hangout area.

## What's on the Menu?

It's a hangout, not a party, definitely not an all-you-can-eat buffet. Bring snacks - samosas, chana chur, maybe a special biscuit you love from your neighbourhood bakery, or a new type of ice-cream.

It's the least you can do for the host arranging the hangout.

Same applies for the host - snacks and finger food for all with enough paper napkins. As for drinks, mega bottles of sodas exist for a reason, so do easy-to-make powder drinks as well as juices.

## Help out

This is strictly for the guests/hangout attendees - try to keep the mess to a minimum. If you are capable of conducting financial transactions over the phone, you are more than capable of not littering used tissue papers on someone's living room floor.

## Parents vs. children

This is not a battle of the ages. Young children can want their own hangouts, especially if they see their parents hosting, or attending such events. It is possible but certain rules are necessary to keep everyone at peace.

A simple but effective rule can be - no locked doors if you and your friends are hanging out in your room. The frequency too can be controlled like announcing "the third Friday of the month" or "after mid-term/finals Thursdays" as hangout days.

As long as the noise is kept within limits, there is no reason for parents to let their

children have good fun-filled (and snack filled!) hangouts that do not bore a hole in the family budget.

If you are of those brave souls eager to host in-house hangouts, you first need to be awarded a medal by the 21st century standards for creating a scope for social interaction! As for the people hanging out, you can survive without your phone/gadget for two hours, unless you want to be featured in the 'Death of Conversation' photo series (do check it out).

Even if you are having a hangout on top of the Burj Khalifa and eating caviar sprinkled with gold, you are only spending money. As far as hangouts go, it's all about the casual conversations and chats without wearing a fake persona, and that should not cost a single penny.

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Photo: Toukir Ahmed Tanveer

