

meetup

State of Friendships: The 2023 Meetup Measurement Report



State of Friendships: The Meetup Measurement Report on Hobbies, Interests and Friendships

How People are Meeting and the Most Outgoing U.S. Cities and States

Meetup, the platform that connects people at events for shared interests, has done a deep dive into its data to reveal its first-ever “Meetup Measurement Report.”

This inaugural trend report focuses on the state of friendships as seen through Meetup, a global platform. Looking closely at data from the past twelve months, and going back to 2019 to view trends from pre-pandemic to today, we have insights into the hobbies people have, the activities that bring people together, along with first-hand accounts of how adult friendships have been formed. The report also looks at data to determine which countries, U.S. cities, states, and territories are the most active and outgoing.

The report is based on actual behaviors of people using Meetup. The social platform has more than 60 million registered users organizing, searching, joining, and attending in-person and live virtual Meetup events.



Coffee Connect Meetup Group - Montclair, NJ

Letter From The Meetup CEO

As studies point to a loneliness epidemic, Meetup feels optimistic about the future of friendships and people's ability to forge new social connections and strengthen existing connections. This optimism is evidenced by our data, and it is a big reason for the release of our first-ever Meetup Measurement Report.

People registering for Meetup events are the strongest they've been in three years, indicating that people are actively seeking new friendships, connections, and social circles, and they are doing so by attending Meetup events with people who share their interests. In the first 19 days of January 2023 compared to the same time in 2022, Meetup event registrations were up 14% and up by 37% from the same time in 2021. This is a strong signal to have optimism in the fight against loneliness.

As a global organization with 20 years of experience in connecting people, we are in a unique position to share what we know about the state of friendships, hobbies, interests and how people are getting together.

We sincerely hope that this report will serve to tell the story of friendships formed while pursuing interests and hobbies, and most importantly, remind people that new social connections may only be a Meetup event away.

May 2023 be the year for making new friends!

Sincerely,



David Siegel



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Where People are Meeting: A Return to In-person Events

INDOOR & IN-PERSON EVENTS ARE BACK

In stark contrast to earlier points during the pandemic, in 2022 indoor and in-person events were more popular with Meetup organizers and members. Indoor events regained popularity over outdoor events. Although hiking holds the No. 1 spot as the most popular hobby on Meetup, it is followed by indoor activities, which include book clubs, photography, and social Meetup events.

By comparison, in 2020 the majority of event searches (seven out of 10) were for events taking place outdoors.

Comparing In-Person, Online, and Hybrid Events



71%

IN PERSON

People are back together, with **71% of all events created occurring in person**. Fostering in-person connections is what Meetup was designed to do from its inception in 2002. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the company supported online Meetup events for the first time so people could keep connected, safely. In 2022, the vast majority of members seemed more than glad to be back to meeting face-to-face in real life.



49%

HYBRID

49% of events were held in real life and also offered a virtual option to attend, allowing people to meet in person and online through video conferencing. Hybrid and online events open up opportunities to connect locally and globally.



29%

ONLINE

29% of Meetup events were hosted online only. During the pandemic, some groups benefited from offering online attendance, and Meetup is happy to keep them connected. By example, Meetup Live, the Meetup group organized by Meetup HQ, is an online-only event attracting thousands of people to join by video conferencing.



Berlin Board Gamers Meetup Group - Berlin, Germany

Popular Hobbies and Interests

The following data is based on Meetup keyword searches. A Meetup keyword search can be used in searching to find both "groups" and "events" and with the expectation of attending Meetup events in the near future or long-term.

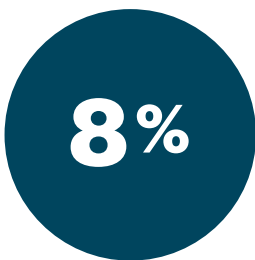
Meetup has identified that people, on average, join five groups across 2.4 different categories of activities, interests, or hobbies. A closer look into that data reveals the following:



of Meetup members join Meetup for a single activity, interest, or hobby



want to pursue two categories of activities, interests, or hobbies



for three categories of activities, interests, or hobbies

The 10 most popular keyword searches on Meetup all have over one million search queries within the platform. Most people register for events occurring in the upcoming week. The following categories have the fewest barriers for people; they're the most likely searches that lead to an event registration (and future connections!) within a short period of time:

- Hiking
- Friends
- Social
- Photography
- Book Club
- Singles
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Yoga
- Badminton

60% of Meetup Searches Prioritized Connections, Romantic and Friendly

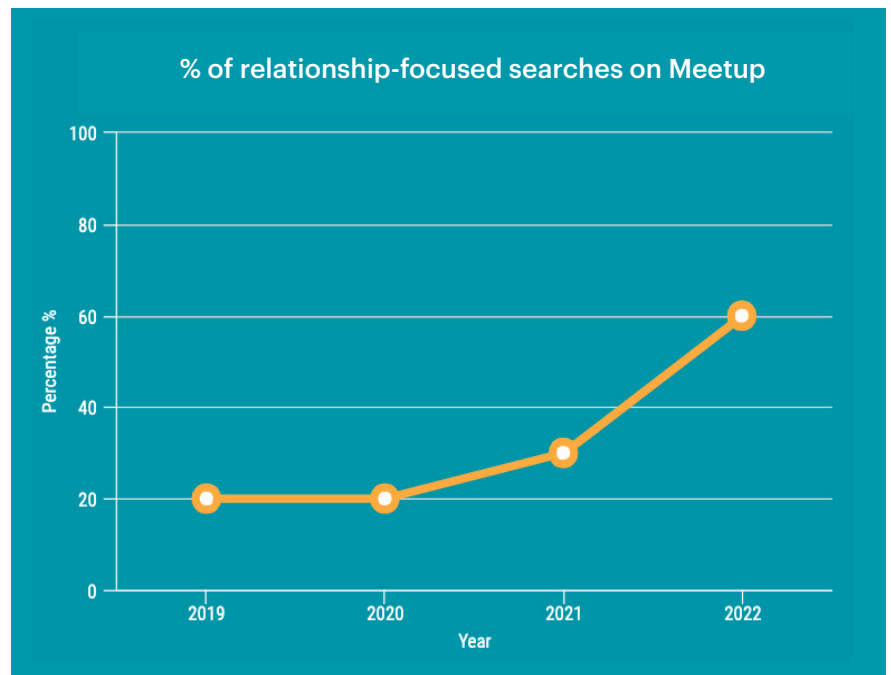
The following data is based on Meetup event searches. A Meetup event search is indicative of when a person is looking for something to do soon (and they can filter events based on events happening now, this week or this weekend); they must join that event's group in order to RSVP and attend that event.



In 2022, an overwhelming amount of event searches—**6 out of the top ten event searches**—showed that people are prioritizing connections, both romantic and friendly. This is 50% higher than what it was last year, and five times more than in 2019 and 2020. This is an interesting point as people are prioritizing relationship building over the activity itself more than in the past.

PEOPLE ARE PRIORITIZING CONNECTIONS, BOTH ROMANTIC AND FRIENDLY

We think this is a direct result of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. After prolonged isolation, people realize that human connections are more important than ever, plus they could be trying to make up for lost time.



Friendships are *the* hot topic on Meetup

In July of 2021 “Friends” took the top spot of event keyword searches for the first time. 2022 ended with “Friends” being the most searched term for events. That demonstrates that people were using Meetup to actively search for friendships, prioritizing the need to make friends over a particular hobby or activity. This is a huge shift in behavior for people using Meetup.

In Meetup’s top event searches for the year, some trends include:



Queer & LGBTQ is the No. 5 most popular event search (in 2022) compared to #135 (in 2021)



Singles is back in the top 5. It was the No. 2 most popular event search in 2019, but during the pandemic, it dropped from its No. 2 spot and fell 4 spots to No. 6 (2020), and then it barely remained in the top ten in the No. 10 spot (2021). In 2022 it returned to the No. 4 most popular spot

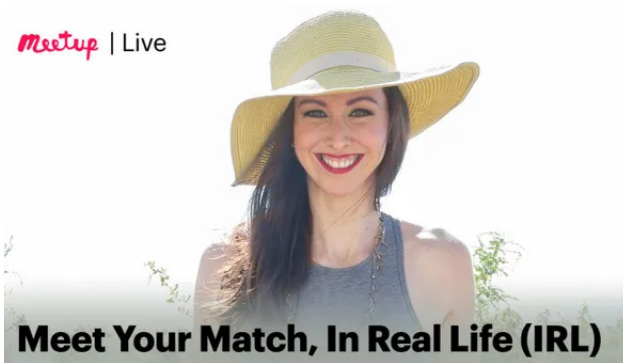


Book Club is back in the top ten of most searched events after a dip in 2021 to No. 12. Previously, it was No. 8 in 2020 and in 2019, No. 9 in 2022

Most Attended Events on Meetup

The following data is based on Meetup event registrations. Meetup can gauge intent for attendance by the number of members who register for a planned Meetup event.

Fitting this year's top trend of looking for connections and friendships, the most popular Meetup event in 2022 was "[Meet Your Match, In Real Life](#)," an online event attracting 5,966 registrations.

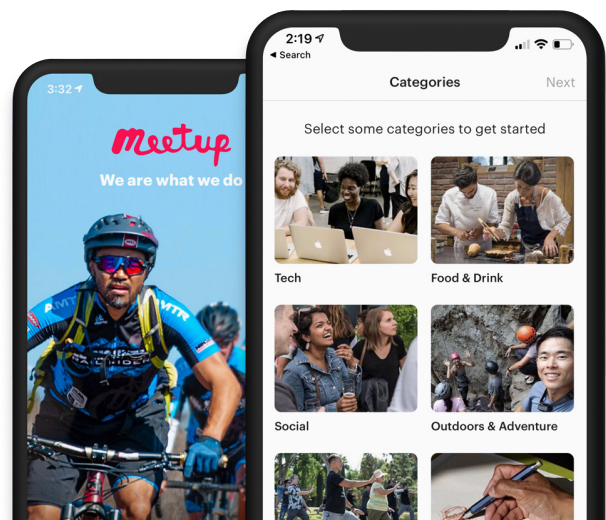


Attendees (5852) See all

 Bob G2. Member 6 shared groups	 Ronlee Member 3 shared groups	 Meetup L. Organizer 3 shared groups	 Ely Member 2 shared groups
 Nanette D. Member 2 shared groups	 Debbie S. Member 2 shared groups	 Cindy T. Member 2 shared groups	 nicole Member 2 shared groups

Shifting Interest Trends

Comparing today's data with data before the pandemic, we see the biggest shift Meetup has ever seen toward people's desire to create friendships.



Shifting Interest Trends

2019

The ten most attended Meetup events were only tech and professional focused events. (10 out of 10 were tech and career focused.)

2020

The ten most popular individual Meetup events included:

- Five tech-focused events
- One event on how to use Zoom

Beginning in 2020, Meetup saw current events reflected on its platform.



As the country and world shut down for the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the No. 1 most popular Meetup event that year was "[Combating Loneliness through Human Connection.](#)"



In June 2020, the platform brought race and social justice leaders together for an online panel discussion as a Meetup Live special event called "[How to Help Dismantle Social Injustice.](#)" This was the eighth most popular Meetup event of that year.

Shifting Interest Trends

In 2021, there was a lasting shift from the professional to the personal

- Only three out of the top ten Meetup events were tech and career focused
- Five out of the top ten most popular Meetup events had a focus on friendship



The No. 1 most popular Meetup event of 2021 was, “[Best Buds: Making New Friends as an Adult](#)” attracting a whopping 12,103 RSVPs.

2022

5 out of the 10 most popular Meetup events focused on the theme of friendships and connections, with “[Meet Your Match, in Real Life](#)” (5,966 RSVPs) and “[Strategies for Ending Loneliness](#)” (4,682 RSVPs) being the top two most popular Meetup events. Others in this Top Ten list on that theme, include,

- [The Power of Authentic Friendships](#) (No. 8 with 3,094 RSVPs);
- [Finding Compatible Connections](#) (No. 7 with 3,161 RSVPs);
- [Attachment Styles Meet Friendships](#) (No. 4 with 4,102 RSVPs)





Zurich Hike & Outdoor, Zürich, Switzerland



East Bay Beer Runners, Oakland, CA



YoPro Hiker Meetup Group - Los Angeles



Adventure-us San Francisco- San Francisco



Orlando Photo + Design Meetup, Orlando, FL



Adventure-us San Francisco- San Francisco

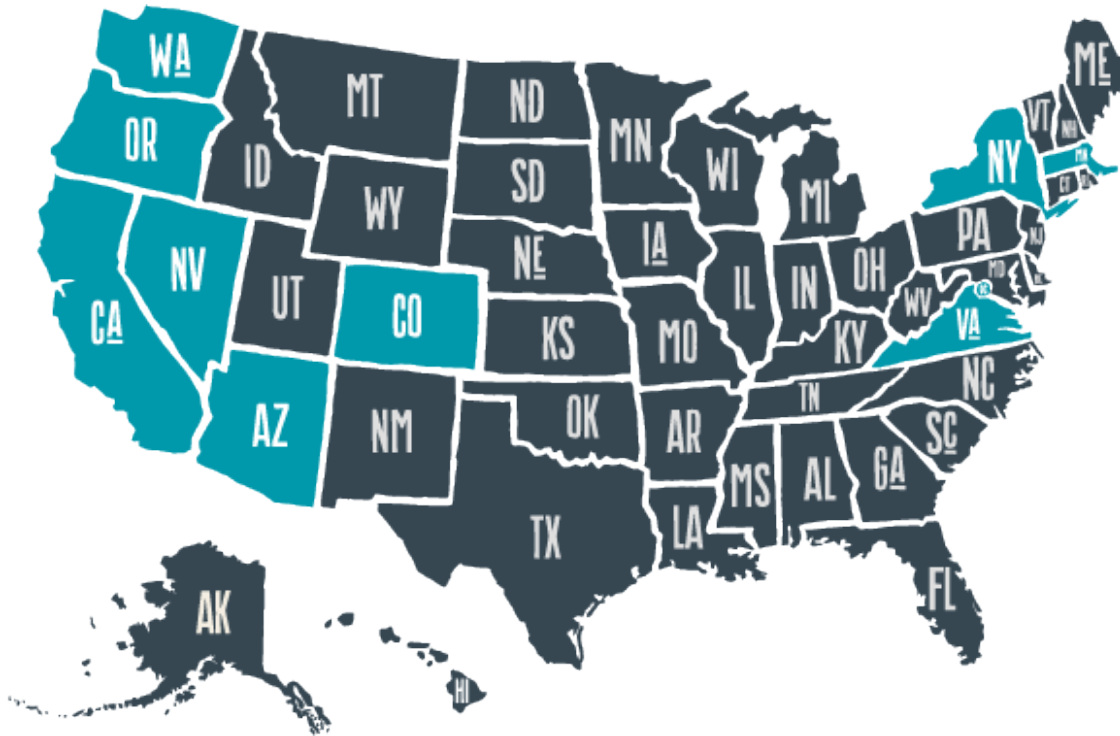
The Most Outgoing Countries

Of the 193 countries where Meetup is used, the following are the top ten most outgoing and active countries on Meetup, based on per capita data.

1. United States
2. Australia
3. Singapore
4. Canada
5. Ireland
6. New Zealand
7. United Kingdom
8. United Arab Emirates
9. Hong Kong
10. Switzerland

The Most Outgoing States

Based on per capita data of people who are using Meetup to pursue their hobbies and interests, the following are the most outgoing U.S. states and territories in order of most active to least.



1. District of Columbia
2. Colorado
3. New York
4. California
5. Washington
6. Massachusetts
7. Oregon
8. Nevada
9. Virginia
10. Arizona

11. Maryland
12. North Carolina
13. Florida
14. Georgia
15. New Jersey
16. Illinois
17. Connecticut
18. Texas
19. Rhode Island
20. New Hampshire

21. Utah
22. Pennsylvania
23. Hawaii
24. Minnesota
25. Vermont
26. Alaska
27. Delaware
28. Missouri
29. New Mexico
30. Tennessee
31. Idaho
32. Ohio
33. Michigan
34. Maine
35. South Carolina
36. Wisconsin
37. Kansas
38. Indiana
39. Nebraska
40. Oklahoma

41. Montana
42. Kentucky
43. Louisiana
44. Iowa
45. Arkansas
46. Wyoming
47. Alabama
48. North Dakota
49. Guam
50. South Dakota
51. West Virginia
52. Mississippi
53. Virgin Islands
54. Puerto Rico

The 50 Most Outgoing Cities

Of the 10,000 cities using Meetup, these are the 50 most active cities.

1. Atlanta, GA
2. Palo Alto, CA
3. Mountain View, CA
4. Fort Lauderdale, FL
5. Marietta, GA
6. Santa Monica, CA
7. Orlando, FL
8. Boulder, CO
9. Cambridge, MA
10. Salt Lake City, UT
11. San Francisco, CA
12. Washington, DC
13. Denver, CO
14. Minneapolis, MI
15. St. Louis, MO
16. Portland, OR
17. Alexandria, VA
18. Asheville, NC
19. Miami, FL
20. Seattle, WA
21. Tampa, FL
22. West Palm Beach, FL
23. Pittsburgh, PA
24. Austin, TX
25. Raleigh, NC
26. Berkeley, CA
27. Santa Clara, CA
28. Richmond, VA
29. Las Vegas, NV
30. Boston, MA
31. Sunnyvale, CA
32. Pasadena, CA
33. Cincinnati, OH
34. Bellevue, WA
35. San Diego, CA
36. Sacramento, CA
37. Charleston, SC
38. Scottsdale, AZ
39. Irvine, CA
40. Hollywood, FL
41. Rochester, NY
42. Fort Collins, CO
43. Charlotte, NC
44. Knoxville, TN
45. Tempe, AZ
46. Saint Paul, MN
47. Saint Petersburg, FL
48. Cary, NC
49. Madison, WI
50. Cleveland, OH



The 50 Most Outgoing Cities Outside of the US

Based on per capita data of people who are using Meetup to pursue their hobbies and interests, the following are the most outgoing cities outside of the U.S.

1. Dublin, Ireland
2. Amsterdam, Netherlands
3. Edinburgh, UK
4. London, UK
5. Calgary, Canada
6. Vancouver, Canada
7. Brisbane, Australia
8. Auckland, New Zealand
9. Dubai, UAE
10. Sydney, Australia
11. Melbourne, Australia
12. Berlin, Germany
13. Perth, Australia
14. München, Germany
15. Singapore, Singapore
16. Stockholm, Sweden
17. Toronto, Canada
18. Zürich, Switzerland
19. Adelaide, Australia
20. Ottawa, Canada
21. Edmonton, Canada
22. Barcelona, Spain
23. Hamburg, Germany
24. Madrid, Spain
25. Montréal, Canada
26. Manchester, UK
27. Paris, France
28. Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel
29. Bangalore, India
30. Hong Kong, Hong Kong
31. Hyderabad, India
32. Pune, India
33. Seoul, South Korea
34. Johannesburg, South Africa
35. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
36. Santiago, Chile
37. São Paulo, Brazil
38. Chennai, India
39. Bangkok, Thailand
40. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
41. Istanbul, Turkey
42. Bogotá, Colombia
43. Mumbai, India
44. Jakarta, Indonesia
45. Buenos Aires, Argentina
46. Moscow, Russia
47. Tokyo, Japan
48. Delhi, India
49. Lagos, Nigeria
50. Mexico City, Mexico



Stories of Real Friendships on Meetup

Meetup launched in 2002, and is proud to have been the first platform dedicated to connecting extroverts and introverts—no matter of race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, or gender identity—to meet in a real-life group setting over a common interest or activity. By doing this, Meetup brings people together over shared interests, making it easier to create friendships.

Below are a few real stories of Meetup acting as a catalyst for new friendships.



“After my divorce, I was looking for someone who liked to travel internationally. I found my travel partner and best friend, Cooki, by organizing a Meetup event about travel. We are now best friends and have been traveling the globe ever since!”

Cindi, Gilbert, AZ

- Cindi has made many friendships through Meetup, but this one friend in particular has become more of a sister to her.
 - They began with short trips stateside then progressed to longer trips abroad. They have traveled together to 6 states and 14 countries.
-
- They both happen to be breast cancer survivors, and when Cindi’s cancer returned, Cooki was by her side to help nurse her back to health.
 - Cindi continues to attend Meetup events.

Thank you to Meetup for helping me organize the Looking for People Who Want to Travel Internationally Meetup group



“Over the years we’ve had a lot of different people attend Western Michigan Geeks, Nerds and Medical Professionals Meetup events. It’s a place where people can come hang out and feel comfortable. It’s not a dating group whatsoever, but there have been four weddings from people who met in our Meetup group.”

David Good, Organizer of Western Michigan Geeks, Nerds and Medical Professionals (4,600 members)



Part of **International Friend Connection – 38 groups**

West Michigan Geeks, Nerds, and Medical Professionals

- Grand Rapids, MI
- 4,659 members · Public group
- Organized by David G. and 28 others

Share:

Members (4,659) [See all](#)

January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 6:00 PM Board Game Night!	4 3:00 PM Let's hang out with cats at K2oo Cat Cafe & Rescue	5 7:00 PM RLM Amusements Weekly Pinball Tournament	6 7:00 PM Meet New Friends @ Cafe Boba	7 1:00 PM Women's pinball 5:00 PM World of Winner
8	9	10 6:00 PM Board Game Night!	11 3:00 PM Let's hang out with cats at K2oo Cat Cafe & Rescue	12 7:00 PM RLM Amusements Weekly Pinball Tournament	13 7:00 PM Meet New Friends @ Cafe Boba	14
15	16	17 6:00 PM Board Game Night!	18 3:00 PM Let's hang out with cats at K2oo Cat Cafe & Rescue	19 7:00 PM RLM Amusements Weekly Pinball Tournament	20 7:00 PM Meet New Friends @ Cafe Boba	21
22	23	24 6:00 PM Board Game Night!	25 3:00 PM Let's hang out with	26 7:00 PM RLM Amusements	27 7:00 PM Meet New Friends	28 9:30 AM Scout Con Game



"I wanted to join a book club that represented Black women, so I started a blog and then a Meetup group. The first Meetup event, held in Los Angeles, had 12 people show up. Two months later the group doubled in size and now my group, Mocha Girls Read, is meeting in 15 cities and online and responsible for lots of fellowship, friendship and encouragement to enjoy reading."

Alysia Allen, Los Angeles, Meetup organizer of "Mocha Girls Read" (10,000+ members)

Mocha Girls Read

Members	Groups	Country
10,359	16	1

Search Mocha Girls Read

Upcoming events

In person events
 Online events

THU, JAN 12 - 10:00 PM EST

Free Movie Passes for Missing

Mocha Girls Read - San Diego • San Diego, CA

6 attendees

📅
☆

SAT, JAN 14 - 4:00 PM EST

(ONLINE) Book Club Meeting: X: A Novel by Ilyasah Shabazz and Kekla Magoon

Mocha Girls Read - Bridgeport • Bridgeport, CT

2 attendees

📅
☆

Who we are

Mocha Girls Read is a book club of Black women who love to read, want to read more, and meet like-minded women. We are here to inspire women to read, share literature, fellowship, and encourage others in the joy of reading. We are an eclectic group of women and so are our reading selections. We don't limit our reading to release dates, gender, race, or genre.

We meet monthly in 15 cities and online. Find out more on our website www.mochagirlsread.com

Alysia Allen

Mocha Girls Read Administrator

Get in touch



"In the past, I had struggled to meet other gay people that I could connect with. Now, as a Meetup organizer I have never felt more connected with the LGBTQ+ community. I feel I am doing my part to provide a sense of camaraderie.

Our Meetup group promotes an upbeat, social atmosphere hosting fun activities such as 'Queeraoke,' game nights, speed dating, and speed friending. We have had over 50 virtual and socially-distanced Meetup events during the Covid-19 crisis while also celebrating our group's 10th anniversary.

I hope our sense of purpose will continue to grow, and that we continue to help people who struggle to feel like they are a part of the community."

Meetup Organizer of The "Non-Scene" Friends (LGBTQ+), Boston, MA (9,300 members)



The "Non-Scene" Friends (LGBTQ+)

📍 Boston, MA
👥 9,316 members · Private group
👤 Organized by Max and 27 others

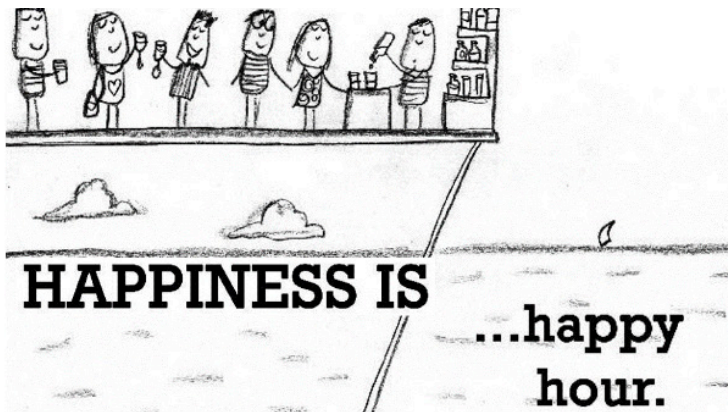
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Max co-organizes a Meetup group with nearly 10,000 members in the Boston area and says he's never felt more connected.



"I was looking for something to do and to meet new friends. I joined the Naples Happy Hour Group. I met Linda and we started to get to know each other and would often talk at the Meetup events. Over the months we grew to know more about each other. We talked about so many things and it was like we had known each other for much longer than we had. Now, we are married!"

Mark Lazar & his wife Linda Lazar, Naples, FL



Naples Happy Hour Club

📍 Naples, FL
👥 1,852 members · Public group
👤 Organized by Steve & Elena and 5 others

Share: [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [✉](#)

Mark Lazar met his wife Linda at the Naples Happy hour Meetup group (1,849 members).

Methodology

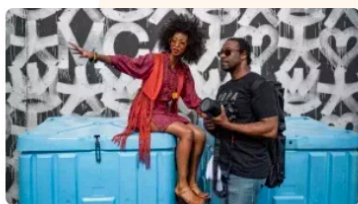
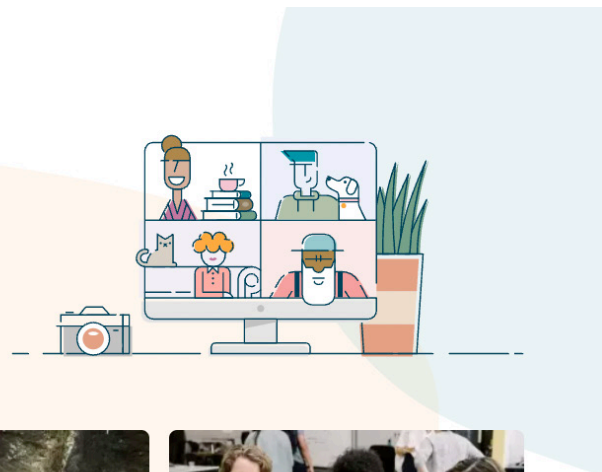
Meetup looked at its platform's event searches as an indicator of what people are looking to do in the near future, group searches as an indication of what people want to do long-term and for an ongoing basis, as well as the most popular events of 2022 and keyword searches.

Meetup looked at data across the past four years to create this report. For purposes of clarification, below is an explanation of commonly used terms:

- **Group** - People join Meetup Groups upon joining Meetup or at any time. New group announcements are sent by email to potentially interested people. Meetup groups can be searched by locations and categories/interests.
- **Event search** - Website function where members can look for events based on time, location, and category.
- **Keyword search** - The terms members use to find both groups and events

The people platform— Where interests become friendships

Whatever your interest, from hiking and reading to networking and skill sharing, there are thousands of people who share it on Meetup. Events are happening every day—log in to join the fun.



Make new friends →



Explore the outdoors →



Connect over tech →

Boost your career

Find your zen

Get moving

Share language + culture

Read with friends

Write together

Hone your craft

What do you want to do?

Search

See what's happening

Starting soon

Today

Tomorrow

This week

Online

In person

Trending near you

meetup

