

How many friends can you have?

Vocabulary

1. **Evolutionary** - Pertaining to evolution or development.

Sample sentence: The evolutionary origin of species.

2. **Fact** - Something known to exist or to have happened.

Sample sentence: The sad fact is that the American hostages in Iraq are forgotten casualties of war.

3. **Released** - To allow to be known, issued, done or exhibited.

Sample sentence: The men were released by firemen after becoming trapped in a elevator.

4. **Index** - A number that shows the price, value, or level of something compared with something else

Sample sentence: The Dow Jones index fell another 50 points yesterday.

5. **Average** - A quantity, rating, or the like that represents or approximates an arithmetic mean.

Sample sentence: My average in science has gone from B to C this semester.

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Let's read

Research by Robin Dunbar, professor of Evolutionary Anthropology at Oxford University, shows that throughout history the human brain can only handle about 150 friends. More than that and the relationships might be less meaningful. This fact is known as the Dunbar Number. The number could be of particular interest if you're from Argentina or Hong Kong. According to a Plaxo, Inc., creator of the smart address book, an Argentinian has on average 479 contacts in his/her address book. In August 2006, Plaxo released their Connected Index which ranks the level of connectedness between people, country by country, based on the average number of contacts in their Plaxo smart address book.

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Discussion A

1. Do you make friends easily?
2. How do you maintain a good friendship?

Discussion B

1. Friendship is the most important relationship. Do you agree? Why? Why not?
2. What is the most valuable thing you have to offer as a friend?
3. Do you think it is a good idea to borrow money from a friend? Why or why not?