

# How To Find Classmates For A Class Reunion

Do you know what a phonebook party is?

If you graduated from school anytime after the year 2000, you probably don't.

A phonebook party was a pizza party where everyone on the class reunion planning committee would bring their local phonebooks to locate former classmates.

Yes, we're serious. And no you don't have to do that anymore....

Finding classmates is a lot easier now with the opportunities available both online and offline.

## Resources To Help You Find Classmates

Searching for classmates is a constant, never-ending process that should involve everybody on the committee.

Locating hundreds of people requires several volunteers to split up the graduating class list and look for each person one by one. The search involves many online and off-line resources and several that use a combination of both.

The resources listed below are a great way to contact people. In reaching out, remember that the most effective thing you can do is inform them of the class reunion and ask for their email address.

### Alumni Association

[SPHSAA.org](http://SPHSAA.org) aka South Pasadena High School Alumni Association maintains a list of graduates and their current addresses. In addition, we keep in touch with our alumni through a Facebook fan page, the alumni website, and email.

Once you have announced that you'll be coordinating a class reunion, the alumni association will gladly provide contact information for classmates. You'll need to sign and return a Class Representative Privacy Agreement to obtain the list. Some of the data you receive may be outdated (especially physical addresses), but it does provide a good start.

Possibly one of the BEST RESOURCES is the fact that you can use [www.SPHSAA.org](http://www.SPHSAA.org) to find your classmates' siblings or friends from other class years. If they are active on the site you can send them a private message, explaining who you are and that you are trying to reach your classmate for the upcoming class reunion. Offer to send them a link to your Facebook Group Page or to your Private Class Website to validate that what you are saying is not a scam. Ask if they will share the classmate contact information with you or if they can get a message to them directly. Then follow up in a week!

The alumni association or the high school administration office are also good sources for finding your old high school teachers. Some may still be teaching. Find out if the school or alumni association can provide a current e-mail address for retired professors or teachers so you can invite them.

### Facebook

One of the best places to locate old classmates is Facebook.com. If you already have a Facebook account, then you are probably connected with several people from your graduating class. Announce to them that you are organizing the class reunion and make them aware of your new Facebook Page or

Class Reunion Website. Ask them to invite anyone they know from your graduating class to join Facebook Group or add their email address on the class reunion website.

As people join your group, other members of your graduating class that are connected to them will join as well. Before long, you will have a good percentage of people getting class reunion updates from you.

If you don't already have a Facebook account, this is a good time to get one.

### **Classmate Search Sites**

A good place to start is [Classmates.com](http://Classmates.com). This website is dedicated to helping you reconnect with your class members. Once you sign up, you will be able to view many of the classmates that graduated with you. Inform them of upcoming class reunion and encourage them to contact you or visit the class reunion website or your Facebook Group.

Additional resources for finding classmates are:

- [MyLife.com](http://MyLife.com) is also another great resource for finding classmates. The only information you need is the first name, last name and the state they reside in.
- [Intellius.com](http://Intellius.com) – You can use this service to look for people based on their old addresses. They have an option where you can search for unlimited classmates for 24 hours for only \$20. This is not only cheap but it gives you a great idea of where your missing classmates currently live.
- [Zabasearch.com](http://Zabasearch.com) – This website will provide exact addresses for people that you are looking for. No sign in required. Cross reference classmates addresses with the local yellow pages to get a telephone number. See [whitepages.com](http://whitepages.com) below.
- [Wink.com](http://Wink.com) – Look up classmates through their 400 million profiles and you may be able to find some additional friends from your school.
- [Peoplefinders.com](http://Peoplefinders.com) has a trial membership (you have to try out one of their offers) that offers access to their website for a full day. Just get your list ready and start looking up the missing classmates.
- [Pipl.com](http://Pipl.com) – This is another great website when it comes to finding missing classmates. You can get tons of information about each profile by simply entering the person's name. If the name is common, you can filter the results by state, age etc to fine tune them. There is no sign in required.
- [Whitepages.com](http://Whitepages.com) is a great way to get phone numbers if you know what town they live in.

### **Email Blast/Communications**

As a class reunion planning committee, make sure that any communications you send out has a list of classmates that you have not been able to find. For example, if you are updating classmates via email, attach a list of missing classmate's to it.

If you are sending out a registration packet or a save the date letter, include it in there as well. In fact, make sure the list of missing classmates is placed in any communications that you send out: whether it is a physical piece of mail or an electronic email.

We have even seen class reunion planners include the link to missing classmates in their email signatures just to drive home the point of how important it is.

### **Class Reunion Website**

Your class reunion website should be a primary resource for missing classmates. You'd be surprised at how many people will find the website and fill out their profiles based on reading about the class reunion on Facebook, or just word of mouth.

Keep an updated list of missing classmates on the class reunion website as well, so as people are filling out their profiles, they can help find others as well.

Ask the alumni association to provide a link to your class reunion website on our Reunion Calendar page. This way, if someone comes to our website looking for information, they can be directed to your website or Facebook page.

### **Use Your Network**

Facebook is a great way to connect but it is not the only way to network. Call or email your friends, family members of former classmates, and friends of friends to help locate people. Just reaching out and calling people, putting up flyers at the local mall, or church will yield tremendous PR and exposure for the class reunion.

Another great place to find some additional people is by sharing the missing classmates list with class reunion planners from other graduating classes. You may find friends and siblings that can help you get in touch.

### **Other Social Networking Sites**

There are other social networking sites ([LinkedIn.com](http://LinkedIn.com), [Twitter](http://Twitter), and [Google Plus](http://Google Plus)) that can be utilized to get in touch with people. These websites have millions of people registered so it's worth it to search for specific names along with zip codes or addresses.

LinkedIn.com is a particularly good site for finding people. It lists a lot of professionals and you can find people relatively quickly just by doing a simple search on their website.

Alternately, just Google the following term [ Name of classmate site:linkedin.com ]. This search will return all the people with that exact name that are on LinkedIn.com

A Google Search, by the way, is another great resource for locating people. By doing a simple name search on Google, you may be able to find where someone works, or hangs out. While it may seem kind of creepy to do things this way, it works.

### **Public Service Announcements**

Many local newspapers and radio stations will provide free space (Airtime) for you to announce a class reunion. Make the most of the limited time or space you will be given by directing your listeners/readers to the class reunion website.

The list above is a great way to get things going in the right direction but it won't help much if your entire planning committee is not helping.

## **Get Everyone Involved**

In the reunion planning meetings, make it known that the number one priority in the initial stages in finding classmates. While the classmates search committee is ultimately responsible for finding them, the entire planning committee and volunteers should be doing everything they can to spread the word.

Encourage people to go on their Facebook accounts, classmates.com accounts and connect with people that they still keep in touch with to inform them of the class reunion. Every member of the reunion planning committee should consider it their first mission. They should also understand that the success or failure in finding classmates will ultimately reflect on the actual class reunion.

## **Competition**

Turn your classmate finding into a competition. Announce that the person who helps find the most classmates will go to the class reunion for free. Maintain a leader board that lists who has found the most classmates every month on the class reunion website to keep people motivated. Doing this will add dozens of classmate finding volunteers at no cost.

## **Ask Classmates As They Register For The Class Reunion**

As people register to attend the class reunion, send them a list of missing classmates along with the confirmation. Ask them to share any information they may have including where they may currently live, what company they worked for etc. Any information they can provide will lead to another avenue that can be explored.

Class reunions are about reuniting people that haven't seen each other in years. Reconnecting former best friends and even rivals is all part of the fun of having one. With the resources listed above, you will be able to find many of your former classmates, without having to host a phone book party 😊