

# How Facebook Friends Work

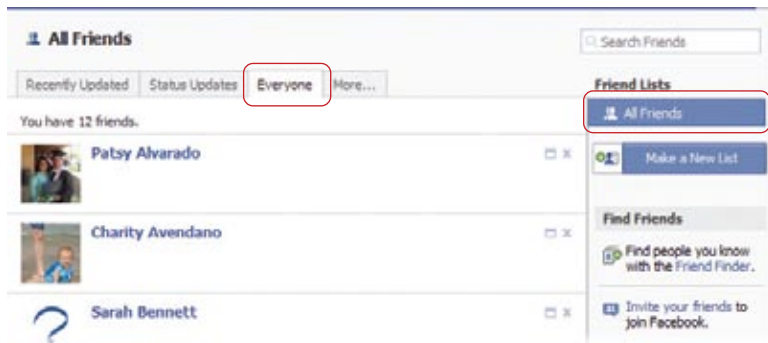
In the world of Facebook, a *friend* is any Facebook member who has agreed that you two have something in common. Maybe you play on the same softball team, volunteer at the local animal shelter together, or keep running into each other at parties thrown by the same ex-roommate. Maybe you dated, took a road trip together, or you're second cousins twice removed. How you know a Facebook friend doesn't matter; all that matters is that you *both* agree that you know each other.

**Note** Facebook has no way of verifying the relationships between friends. But one of the major differences between Facebook and *MySpace.com*—the other big social networking site—is that Facebook strongly encourages truthfulness. So, while having a zillion “friends” is considered a status symbol on MySpace, it's not on Facebook. On Facebook, the goal of friends is to put together a manageable list of people you actually know—and actually care about keeping up with.

Two people become Facebook friends when one person extends an invitation and the other person accepts, or *confirms*. When you become friends with someone in Facebook, three things happen:

- **You appear on your friend's *Friend List* (page 50) and on her profile page (and vice versa).** On Facebook, as in life, you're known by the company you keep: Everyone with access to your friend's profile (or yours) can see the relationship between the two of you. And with the click of a mouse, folks can hop from your friend's profile to yours, or from your profile to your friend's.

**Note** One of the best, most addictive things about Facebook is its confessional nature. Facebook *profiles* encourage members to pontificate at length about subjects that don't often come up in polite conversation. So, when you're friends with someone in Facebook, you might be surprised at the juicy details you learn about them.



- **You can see your friend’s profile (and vice versa) even if he’s not in your network.** This means you can see the events he’s planning to attend, the groups he’s joined, and all the other people he’s friends with, among other personal details.



- **You can sign up to receive automatic detail-packed updates, such as *news feeds* (page 78), chronicling your friend’s Facebook activities (and vice versa).**



**Note** Chapter 5 shows you how to sign up for updates on your friends’ Facebook activities—including news feeds—and how to customize the updates your friends get about you.