



Pair up!

It makes sense to vary pair partners. It lets everyone get to know everyone else. Here are some ways to vary partner selection.

- “Stand up. Find a partner you haven’t talked with today”
- “Stand up. Find a partner you don’t know very well.”
- Number off. Go up to the number of half the class, then restart.
- Use playing cards. For pairs, colors match (e.g., 4 of spades partners with 4 of clubs.)
- Make/ get alphabet cards. (ABAX makes them). Lower and upper case. Match the letters.
- “Letter off” with the alphabet. Want a challenge? Go Z → A. (They gotta think.)
- Use 4 or 6 colors of index cards to have them make name cards (helps you learn their names). For pairs/groups, say, “pink works with blue. Yellow works with green.”
- If you were an animal, what would you be? Find someone else who would be the same thing?
- **Find someone who** (variations);
 - ... (whose) name has the same number of letters as yours.
 - ... was born in the same month as you.
 - ... has the same color cell phone as you.
 - ... is wearing the same color as you
 - ... is the same (or a very different) height than you.
 - ... got up at about the same time as you this morning.
 - ... has the same favorite color, lucky number, etc.
 - ... is somehow the same as you (you decide how. Explain it.)
 - ... had the same thing for breakfast as you.
 - ... has the same number of brothers and sisters as you.
 - ... has the same length of hair (or hair color) as you.
 - ... is the same astrological sign as you.
- **Line up** in the following ways. After they make the line, divide them into pairs. For a greater challenge, have them line up silently (gesture), then check by saying their answers. In large classes, they work in teams of about 8.
 - How long it took to get to school today.
 - How what time they went to bed last night.
 - What time do you get up on Sunday?
 - Height
 - Birthday, January 1 to Dec. 31.
 - Biggest hand (compare palms)
- Are you wearing glasses, contacts or not. Find someone who is wearing the same.
- Think of a food you love. Find someone else who loves it.
- Think of a food you hate. Find someone else who hates it. (The same strategy can be done with movie stars, sports teams, etc.)
- Get a lot of small objects of different colors (poker chips, paper clips, etc.). Distribute them. They find someone with the same color.
- Are you a cat person or a dog person (...bird person? Fish person? Etc.)
- Work with the person sitting (2) chairs away.
- Everyone write down two opposite adjectives (hot/cold, black/white), etc. Collect them. Use ½ of the papers. Tear the words apart. They find the person with the opposite word.
- Everyone write a sentence on a strip of paper. Use ½. Tear the strips in half. They find the person with the other half.
- Copy some of the target vocabulary from their book, etc. Everyone gets one work. They have to make a sentence with both words.
- Walk around the room. When I say, “Stop!”, shake hands with the person next to you. S/he’s your new partner.
- Who has the same last letter as your name?
- Who has the same last number as your cell phone number?
- Half the class closes their eyes, spins and points. That’s your partner! (May take 2-3 tries to get everyone.)
- Give students “business cards” with their names on them. Use them for attendance. That way, you have an easy way to match them.