

# Home Groups

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## Why home groups?

Statistics tell us that the majority of international students are never invited into an American home during their entire time in the U.S. But we can change help to change that! We have found that being part of a home group helps students feel like they are connected to a “family.” This sense of community is a big part of what keeps them coming back week after week. As they build trust with us and others in the community, they begin to let their guard down and let us know them in a deeper way. They begin to express curiosity about why we do what we do. They may even want to try out a Bible Study. But even if they don’t show spiritual interest, we let them know that they are important to us. This is primarily an access/blessing ministry, but we’ve also found that it can also be a chance to nurture relationships to a point where we can ask if students want to study the Bible.

## Planning

At UTA, we run three simultaneous home groups on Friday nights. Each group has a leader who is responsible for delegating various tasks to a team of volunteers. Some of the tasks involve lining up host homes, communicating to students where the group will meet that week, making sure there is transportation from campus to the host home, having a welcome person for the night who serves as a sort of emcee, someone to remind the team to pray for the Friday group throughout the week, someone to be a greeter for first-time guests (this person would get their e-mail information to later be invited to our Yahoo and Facebook groups and also encourage them to sign a media release), someone to lead the music/game time, someone to lead the prayer time (not all groups have this), someone to lead the English discussion group, someone to lead the M:28 Bible study, and someone to follow up with adding new students to our communication platforms. The Bible study passages are chosen by the group leader.

Ultimately the Home Group leader is responsible for:

1. Casting the M-28 vision,
2. Orientating new volunteers,
3. Mentoring volunteers and
4. Caring for the volunteer team.

## Typical Structure of a Friday Home Group at UTA

5:45-6:00	Volunteers pick up students on campus and bring them to the host home.
6:30-7:45	Student eat a meal prepared by the host. Volunteers often help out by bringing sides and desserts to supplement the main meal. Occasionally we have a potluck where students share but not too often.
7:45-8:30	Students gather in a large group for introductions, announcements, and music or a game. (Our home group also has a time to share prayer requests and pray for them.)
8:30-9:30	Students break into English discussion group or Bible Discovery group.
9:30-10:00	Students enjoy dessert and fellowship until time to leave.

## Resources

There are several online free resources available for discussion questions. Here are a couple that we like:

[www.esldiscussions.com](http://www.esldiscussions.com)

[iteslj.org/questions](http://iteslj.org/questions)

There are also many online resources to find group icebreaker games. Here are some:

<https://youthgroupgames.com.au/youth-group-icebreaker-games/>

<https://www.icebreakers.ws/get-to-know-you>

<https://www.jubed.com/search/ice-breaker>

## Easy Recipes for Large Groups

### Tortilla Soup

Note: This recipe is tripled from the original. It serves 18-20.

#### Ingredients:

6 15 oz. cans ranch-style beans  
 6 cans chicken and rice soup  
 6 cans cream-style corn  
 6 cans rotel tomatoes  
 3 small cans chicken  
 Tortilla chips  
 Shredded cheddar cheese

#### Instructions

Mix all canned ingredients undrained into a stock pot. Heat to boiling and simmer for 2 hours. Serve over tortilla chips and top with cheddar cheese if desired.

### Texas Cowboy Stew Recipe By: Glenda Beall

(<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/82160/texas-cowboy-stew/>)

Prep 30 m, Cook 1 h, Ready In 1 h 30 m

"Hearty, filling and man-pleasing describes this stew. Link sausage, cumin, chilies, and chili powder is what gives this soup its Southwest flavor. This dish is quick, easy, and tastes best when it simmers in a slow cooker or even on the stove all day. Bake some Mexican cornbread, toss a simple green salad, and you have a great meal."

#### Ingredients

2 pounds ground beef	2 (15.2 oz) cans whole kernel corn, with liquid
2 (16 oz) packages kielbasa sausage, sliced into 1/2 inch pieces	1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes with green chile peppers, with liquid
2 cloves garlic, chopped	1 (10 oz) package frozen mixed vegetables
1 onion, chopped	4 cups water
2 (14.5 oz) cans peeled and diced tomatoes, drained	2 teaspoons ground cumin
4 medium baking potatoes, peeled and diced	2 teaspoons chili powder
2 (15 oz) cans pinto beans, with liquid	salt and pepper to taste

#### Instructions

1. Crumble the ground beef into a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sausage, garlic and onion; cook and stir until the meat is no longer pink. Drain off grease, and transfer the contents of the skillet to a large pot.
2. Pour the tomatoes into the pot with the meat, and stir in the potatoes, pinto beans, corn, diced tomatoes with chilies, mixed vegetables and water. Season with cumin, chili powder, salt and pepper. Cover, and simmer over medium-low heat for at least 1 hour. Stir occasionally. The longer this stew cooks, the better it gets.

### Snow on the Mountain

Note: This recipe is tripled from the original. It serves 18-20.

#### Ingredients:

6 c. cooked chicken	3 t. salt
1.5 c. chopped green peppers	1.5 t. pepper
1.5 c. butter	6 c. chicken broth
8 oz. sliced fresh mushrooms	6 c. half & half
1.5 c. flour	1 c. chopped pimento

#### Instructions:

Cook chicken. Shred. Chop green peppers. Melt butter in stock pot. Saute mushrooms and peppers in butter. Add flour, salt, and pepper. Cook on low, stirring constantly. Add broth and half & half. Cook until thick, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Add pimento and chicken. Serve sauce over rice salad-bar style with the following suggested toppings:

Chopped tomatoes	Toasted slivered almonds
Canned pineapple	Chow mein noodles
Chopped celery	Coconut (this is the "snow" for the top of the mountain)
Chopped green onions	

### Sausage Hashbrown Breakfast Casserole

(<http://www.plainchicken.com/2014/12/sausage-hash-brown-breakfast-casserole.html>)

Yield: 10, Prep time: 10 min, Cook time: 35 min, Total time: 45 mins

#### Ingredients:

2 lb hot breakfast sausage  
 1 (30-32oz) bag frozen shredded hash browns  
 1 tsp salt  
 1/2 tsp pepper  
 1/4 tsp garlic powder  
 1/4 tsp onion powder  
 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese  
 8 eggs  
 2 cups milk

#### Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a large skillet, cook sausage until no longer pink. Drain fat.
3. Add hash browns to skillet and cook until lightly brown. Place hash browns in bottom of lightly greased 9x13-inch pan. Top with sausage and cheese.
4. Whisk together eggs, salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder and milk. Pour over hash brown mixture.
5. \*\*Cover and refrigerate at this point if baking later.\*\*
6. Bake, uncovered, for 35-40 minutes.

### The Best Vegetarian Chili in the World

Note: This recipe is tripled from the original. It serves 18-20.

#### Ingredients:

2 T. olive oil	6 28-oz. cans whole peeled tomatoes, crushed
1 medium onion, chopped	1/2 c. chili powder
4 bay leaves	2 T. ground black pepper
2 t. ground cumin	2 15-oz. cans kidney beans, drained
1/4 c. oregano	2 15-oz. cans garbanzo beans, drained
2 T. salt	2 15-oz. cans black beans
4 stalks celery, chopped	2 15-oz. cans whole kernel corn
4 jalapeno peppers, chopped	
6 cloves garlic, chopped	
4 4-oz. cans chopped green chili peppers, drained	
4 12-oz. pkgs. vegetarian burger crumbles	

#### Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Stir in the onion, and season with the bay leaves, cumin, oregano, and salt. Cook and stir until onion is tender, then mix in the celery, green bell peppers, jalapeno peppers, garlic, and green chili peppers. When vegetables are heated through, mix in the vegetarian burger crumbles. Reduce heat to low, cover pot, and simmer 5 minutes.

Mix the tomatoes into the pot. Season with chili powder and pepper. Stir in the kidney beans, garbanzo beans, and black beans. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, and simmer 45 minutes. Stir in the corn, and continue cooking 5 minutes before serving.

Other ideas: <http://thediylighthouse.com/the-captains-log-diy/11-cheap-meals-feeding-large-groups-budget/>