First Year Orientation
Ice Breaking or Introductory Activities
Getting Acquainted Exercises

Creativity circle
All participants stand in a circle. The group leader produces a balloon. Each person must give it a new identity before throwing it to another person. No duplication.

Story Time
• Begin with five to ten people
• Present a topic to the group and ask each participant to share a related short personal story with the group
• Possible topics are best weather stories (tornado, a hurricane, a blizzard), worst haircuts, pet/animal stories, worst/best dates, an ugliest childhood outfit that your parent/guardian and you wear, or a story about running into someone in an unexpected place

Nicknames
Everyone should make a list of all the nicknames they have ever had. Each participant must then explain how he/she earned the nickname, and tell personal feelings about the nickname.

The 30-second Reporter
Materials Needed: Index cards, a writing utensil per person and a stop watch.

Have the participant’s pair up with someone they do not know very well. Ask them to select one person to ask the questions first. This person will have exactly three minutes to ask as many questions to their partner as possible. After the three minutes are up, the roles are switched and the second person introduces their partner to the rest of the group. The object is that they will only have 30 seconds to get as much information out to the group. You may want to compete to see who can give the most information.

Facilitators Notes: Excellent activity to do with a new group of strangers. Everyone likes talking about him or herself.

The Juggle Competition
Materials Needed: Five small items that can be tossed around.

Have everyone get into a circle. Place five small items at your feet. The object is to juggle the five objects around the room as quickly as possible. Grab your first item and toss it to the person across the room saying his or her name. That person then tosses the same item to another person saying his or her name. If the object drops, they need to start from the beginning again. Once the first object is through it is time to add the second. Keep adding a new object each time one is completed. During the chaos ask the group members to suggest ways to get the objects around quicker. Hopefully, someone in the group will come up with the idea of moving next to the person receiving the object.
Good Questions
Tell your partner about the town you grew up in
Tell your partner about every job you have ever held in your life
Tell your partner what your perfect vacation would be
Tell your partner what you consider to be your happiest moment
Tell your partner about a movie star you most idolize
Tell your partner what your ideal job/career would be
Tell your partner why you decided to attend Notre Dame

Creativity Circle
All participants stand in the circle. The leader produces an object (e.g.: sock, ball, koosh). Each person must give the item a new identity before throwing it to another person. No duplication allowed!

Living Name Tag Mingle
- Provide each participant with a piece of 11 x 17 newsprint and a 1 foot length of string or yarn
- The facilitator reads several questions and participants write the answers on the newsprint. The newsprint becomes a giant name tag as participants put the string on the top of the sheet and wears it around their neck.
- Participants mingle while wearing name tags and read others’ answers
- The facilitator may wish to play music during the mingling

TV Theme Songs
- Distribute cards with the names of characters of classic TV shows with classic theme songs (e.g.: Brady Bunch, Adams Family, Jetsons, Beverly Hillbillies, Flintstones, etc.)
- One character name per card. Give one card to each person
- Ask people to find the members of their group (without telling them that they’re members of TV shows or providing any other details)
- Once people are in teams, give them 15 minutes to develop a song about your focus (e.g.: orientation, residence hall life, activities) to the tune of their show’s theme song
- Gather everyone together again and have each group perform their song

Birthday Party
- Participants are told that when the whistle blows they are to pretend that it is their birthday party
- They are the only one in the room who knows everyone and it is their job to introduce everyone to everyone else in the next three minutes

Words From Your Partner’s Name
- On a sheet of paper the two partners write out their names and attempt to make other words using only the letters included in the names.
- After a set time limit the one with the most new words wins.

From Lead On: Handbook for Group Facilitators