

## **My Night with the Bunco Babes**

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A couple of years ago, my friend Cheryl, always the life-of-the-party type, decided to start a women's Bunco group. Now, Bunco is a simple dice game that requires 12 people to play. When Cheryl approached me about joining this group, I initially balked at the once-a-month time commitment. I mean, I'm not big on commitment, and free time—forget about it. I just didn't want to be tied down. But she crooned "C'mooooon, it will be fun!" So I reluctantly gave in and added my name to the "Bunco Babes" player list. We set our Bunco night for the first Friday of every month at 7:00 p.m., and established a schedule where we would rotate to a different person's house each month.

When the first Friday evening rolled around, I whined to my husband, "It's cold and dark out and I'm tired. I really don't feel like going." This only added fuel to the fire for my husband, who was already not especially thrilled with me going to begin with. "So just stay home," he replied. Now herein lies the beauty of Bunco. You simply *cannot* back out at the last minute. All 12 players need to show up for the game to be played. If you back out at the last minute, you spoil the game for everyone. So I dragged my tired tushy over to Cheryl's house for that first game, and have been hooked ever since.

You see, at that first game, I figured out the secret behind Bunco that no one tells you. This incredibly mindless dice game actually serves as a cover for women to get together and talk. Yes, talk! You get to talk to your friends--for hours! Uninterrupted by children, homework, housework, cooking, or carpooling. It's awesome. There are three tables of four players each. Players rotate throughout the night, giving each person ample opportunity to talk to everyone there.

Another secret benefit of Bunco is you get your exercise. This is because you not only get to talk, but you get to laugh. I'm talkin' full out belly laughing. We laughed until our stomach muscles ached and our cheeks hurt. This exercise benefit is especially important because the host provides a delicious array of hors' d'oeuvres, chips, dips and M&M's (we cover all the food groups) to munch on throughout the night.

Amazingly enough, in between all the chatting and laughing, we did manage to squeeze in a couple of rounds of the game. As the evening wound to a close, and we prepared to leave, we all agreed that Bunco night was a huge success. The food was great, the company was even greater, and the consensus was that plain and peanut M&M's (we don't discriminate) needed to be included at every Bunco function from that day forward.

When I finally rolled home at midnight, quietly slipping into bed beside my sleeping husband, I lay there for a while laughing into my pillow as I recalled the jokes and conversations of the evening. And I could hardly wait until next month when I would get to do it all over again.