

# Johnson County Culture

## “Iowa City’s Downtown Block Party”

### Reading



Have you ever heard of a ‘block-party’? Block parties are community events. Unlike normal parties, it is not hosted by one person or family at their home. Instead, it is a celebration that is open to the public and it is hosted by the city. This means that local businesses, restaurants, bars, and officials work together to create a huge celebration.

Iowa City has had a block party every year since 2017. This year (2025) the block party is at the end of June. It will occur from 3pm until 10pm. You arrive at any time and leave at any time. You can also arrive, have lunch, walk around, leave, and then return later. It is free to enter and exit.

There are many great and fun activities for children. These activities include dance parties, drawing on the street, and face paint! For adults, the block party staff are selling cups. If you buy a Block Party cup, then you can take your alcoholic drink and walk around the party. If you do not have a cup, then you cannot walk around drinking alcohol because it is prohibited. These cups (or ‘tickets’) can be purchased on the day of the event or online beforehand.



You can’t miss this party! Not only is it so much fun, but it is also huge! The party is located on 14 city blocks. Parts of Iowa Ave. and Clinton St. are closed off to cars so attendees can walk in the street. This event is so huge that you should avoid having dinner downtown on this day if you do not like music, crowds, and parties. In fact, if you live close to downtown, it is likely that you will be able to hear the music, laughter, and celebration from your home.

Lastly, you may be asking, why does this party happen? What is the occasion? This party is simply a celebration of summer in Iowa City. It is a chance to meet new people, try new restaurants, and spend time outside.



Image: *Iowa City Block Party*. Downtown Iowa City.

## Questions

**True or False? If False, correct the statement.**

1. The Iowa City Block Party happens every winter. True / False
2. This celebration is a private event and you need an invitation to attend.  
True / False
3. Drinking alcohol is prohibited at the Block Party. True / False
4. This is a great opportunity to try different restaurants in Iowa City.  
True / False
5. You should get to the block early because it only lasts for two hours.  
True / False
6. The Block Party is fun, but it is not good for kids. True / False
7. The Block Party is a celebration of summer. True / False
8. If you like music and dancing, you should attend the party. True / False
9. This party is an annual event. True / False

### **Free Response Questions**

1. Why is the event called a Block Party? Have you heard of this event before?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What kinds of food and drinks are available?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Is the event free? Once you enter, can you leave and come back? Explain the policies.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Why does this celebration happen in summer? Think of a few different reasons.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Would you go to the Iowa City Block Party this year? Why or why not?

**Share a story**

1. Write about a similar celebration from your own culture. Do Block Parties exist in your home country? Do you have summer festivals or celebrations? If so, what are they like?
2. Have you ever been to the Iowa City Block Party? Imagine you are going this year. Who will you invite? How will you invite them? Why are you taking them and not someone else? What are you excited to do or see at the party?