

Worksheet: Soft Partying (B2-C1)

Article

The nightlife calendar is not what it used to be. Across big cities, a growing number of adults are dressing up, heading out, and then calling it a night before the last train. The trend has been nicknamed soft partying: socialising that keeps the buzz but drops the hangover. Instead of chasing a 2am finish, people meet for an early set, a low-key dance class, or a bar that turns the lights up at nine and helps everyone wind down.

For many, the change is less about willpower and more about time. Parents want to catch up with friends without sacrificing a Sunday morning. Others are cutting back on alcohol because they train before work or simply want their head clear. Organisers say the appeal is that it sets the tone for the week: you can make the most of a night out and still show up the next day. The events are often cheaper, too, which matters when prices keep creeping up and wallets feel stretched.

There is also a social angle. Some people still worry they will feel left out if they skip traditional nights, but soft parties try to make the choice easy, not preachy. Drinks menus are mixed, and those who want a small glass to take the edge off are not treated as the problem. The bigger shift is cultural: going out no longer has to mean going overboard. For many in their thirties and forties, the new status symbol is waking up fresh.

True / False

1. Soft partying is described as going out earlier and avoiding heavy hangovers.
2. The article claims most soft parties aim for a 2am finish.
3. Some venues help people wind down by ending events earlier.
4. Parents are mentioned as wanting to catch up without losing the next morning.
5. Cutting back on alcohol is presented only as a moral choice.
6. Organisers say soft partying can set the tone for the week.
7. The article says people never feel left out if they skip traditional nights.
8. Menus often include options for people who want to take the edge off without overdoing it.

Phrase Match

Match each phrase (1-10) to the correct definition (A-J).

Phrases	Definitions
1. dressing up	A. talk and share news after time apart
2. heading out	B. deciding to stop and go home
3. calling it a night	C. creating the mood for what follows
4. wind down	D. putting on nicer clothes for an occasion
5. catch up	E. experiencing exclusion or not belonging
6. cutting back on	F. reducing nervousness or intensity slightly
7. sets the tone	G. using an opportunity in the best way
8. make the most of	H. relax and become calmer
9. feel left out	I. reducing the amount of something
10. take the edge off	J. going out to a place, especially for fun

Synonym Match

Match each word (1-10) to the closest synonym (A-J).

Words	Synonyms
1. hangover	A. give up
2. low-key	B. ill feeling after drinking
3. sacrifice	C. too moralising
4. appeal	D. quiet and not flashy
5. wallets	E. under pressure
6. stretched	F. strength
7. cultural	G. a sign of success
8. status symbol	H. linked to society
9. preachy	I. attraction
10. intensity	J. money and finances

Discussion Questions

Student A (personal experience)

1. Do you like dressing up when you go out, or do you keep it simple?
2. What time do you usually start heading out on a weekend?
3. When do you normally end a night and call it a night?
4. What helps you wind down after a busy week?
5. Who do you most enjoy catching up with in person?
6. Have you ever tried cutting back on alcohol for a period? Why?
7. How do you make the most of a social event when time is limited?
8. Do you ever feel left out when friends choose a different plan?

Student B (opinions and deeper discussion)

1. Is soft partying a healthy shift, or just a rebrand of ageing? Explain.
2. What does it mean to set the tone for a week socially and mentally?
3. Should venues adapt to earlier crowds, or protect traditional nightlife?
4. Does cutting back on alcohol change the quality of friendships?
5. Why do some people still feel left out when they make a sensible choice?
6. Is taking the edge off with a drink normal, or a sign of stress culture?
7. What would a balanced night out look like for most adults in 2026?
8. Do status symbols change as people age, or do they stay the same?

Answer Key

True / False: T, F, T, T, F, T, F, T

Phrase Match: 1-D, 2-J, 3-B, 4-H, 5-A, 6-I, 7-C, 8-G, 9-E, 10-F

Synonym Match: 1-B, 2-D, 3-A, 4-I, 5-J, 6-E, 7-H, 8-G, 9-C, 10-F