

Making the Most of Your Socially Distant Summer

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Summer normally brings a welcome break from routine. Vacations, camp and family visits — among other activities — fill days normally booked with school, work and commitments.

This year, summer looks a little bit different. First, plans changed during the initial wave of the pandemic. And now that case numbers have increased once more in some areas, options for summer fun have been switched up all over again.

What's a bored, tired family to do in the long months ahead? With technology, things you already have on hand and a little creativity, there are many fun ways to fill your days.

Try a Virtual Camp

Many sleep-away and day camps have transitioned to online experiences. Administrators will sometimes ship supplies and materials to your door. Then, they'll meet with campers on digital platforms for tours, live demos and question-and-answer sessions about science, history and other topics.

Hit the Great Outdoors

Some parks in your area may remain open, which makes them great spots for mini getaways. Just make sure you call or check online first to see which facilities are available and to get information on how to [visit safely](#). Bring anything you may need — including snacks and hand sanitizer — with you.

Of course, nature is often as close as your backyard. Start a new garden, or tend to an existing one. Create an obstacle course using items already in your garage. Or pitch a tent to create a camping experience without the hassle of packing. Some national parks even offer [virtual campouts online](#) with outdoorsy lessons, stories and games with park rangers.

Return to Recess

Playground games aren't just for kids. Grownups and little ones alike can join together in childhood favorites. Try hide-and-seek, kick the can or a scavenger hunt around the neighborhood — or even inside your house.

Go to a Show

Many large concerts, festivals and other live events can't go on as planned. However, organizers are creating safe backup experiences that can be enjoyed at a social distance.

Search your local listings for details — you might be able to visit a drive-in movie or see live music outdoors. And many artists and performers will continue to live-stream their offerings. Pop some popcorn before you tune in to make it more of an event.

Learn Something New

Museums, libraries and state governments have launched online tours and programs. Take a virtual field trip and marvel at the artistic beauty. Or explore the history of your state or local community.

You can also search online for [video tutorials](#). Learn everything from drawing to knot-tying to arts and crafts, like making paper-mâché bowls or duct-tape bow ties. The options for virtual learning are nearly endless.

Shift Your Sports

Team sports like basketball, baseball and football involve close contact with others. So, many summer leagues and camps have been postponed or called off. But if you have athletes in your family, there's a lot they can do to stay in shape for the eventual return to the field or court, even while staying at home.

Practicing drills can hone their fundamentals. Other workouts — think running, online exercise videos and cycling — will build fitness they can call on later. Some groups are offering online clinics and presentations by star athletes.

And, together, you can work on mental skills, such as reducing performance anxiety. One [technique](#) is to make a list of how to reframe negative emotions, such as thinking of pregame jitters as a sign your body is preparing to compete.

Sweat Together

Of course, you don't have to be an athlete to benefit from physical activity. Nearly every gym or fitness studio now has an online program, and many are family-friendly. You can try online dance, ninja-type obstacle classes or active games, like [plank tic-tac-toe](#).

In addition, there are some sports and activities that are compatible with social distancing — like disc golf, regular golf without carts or skateboarding. And if you have a large family, you can create your own team for soccer, bocce ball or kickball.

Revisit Old Trips

You might not be boarding a plane or train to a far-off land this year; however, one of the best parts of travel is the memories. Dig up souvenirs, photos and other mementos of past trips and make a scrapbook of them.

And Start Planning New Ones

Someday, these restrictions will lift. We'll all be able to move a bit more freely. It's never too soon to daydream about your next vacation; peruse online reviews and travel guides for ideas.

Popular destinations are offering virtual tours and live webcams of attractions like [beaches](#), [butterfly gardens](#) and [zoos](#). These can provide entertainment in the moment — and inspiration for future adventures.

Stay Safe and Informed This Summer

We know you want the best information to make decisions for your family at every stage of the pandemic. Visit our [Coronavirus Resource Hub](#) for news and updates, and know that we are always here to provide safe, whole-person care when you need it most.

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