

# The Ultimate Guide to *Backyard Camping*

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If you're looking for a fun outdoor experience for the whole family but don't want to travel too far, set up camp just outside your doorstep!

Backyard camping is a great opportunity to step away from electronics, enjoy fresh air and make memories with family. It offers flexibility to choose a weekend when the weather is nice. Staying close to home also eliminates some of the stressful aspects of camping, and it frees up time to relax outdoors. Backyard camping is great for first-time campers – especially when introducing little ones to the experience.

If you're ready to have a fun weekend in the convenience of your own backyard, here's a guide to help you plan your outdoor adventure!

## *Set Up Your Campsite*

Even though you're just steps away from home, to get the full

camping experience, you'll want to keep trips in and out of the house to a minimum. It's best to prepare meals and pack ahead of time just as you would if you were traveling.

Pitch your tent in a flat, shaded area in your yard. Set up chairs around your firepit and get a campfire started for the evening.

Since you're not going far, you can add more to your campsite than if you were hauling equipment for a camping trip. You don't have to worry about fitting everything into the vehicle. In addition to comfortable chairs for sitting around the campfire, you can bring nice outdoor blankets and pillows for stargazing or watching a movie.

## *Plan Meals and Snacks*

Remember: prepping makes cooking effortless. For example, you could try breakfast burritos, hot melted sandwiches for lunch, and a foil packet dinner to make

ahead and simply heat over the fire/grill. Meal prep also makes for a quick and stress-free cleanup so you can spend more time making memories.

As with a camping trip, pack a cooler full of beverages and bring snacks (i.e. trail mix, fruit, crackers, etc.) to hold everyone over in between meals – and limit trips inside.

A camping experience isn't complete without cooking over a campfire! From pudgy pies to s'mores, there are a variety of meals (and treats) to make over a fire. The kids will love it! You can also fire up the grill to cook kabobs, burgers or other summertime barbecue favorites.

## *Create, Play, Explore and Unwind*

When it comes to outdoor activities, the sky's the limit! Here are some ideas for you to try!

- **Make crafts outside**  
Spending more time in nature can spark your creativity! Kids will love making crafts outside, where no one has to worry about spills or messes.
- **Play outdoor games**  
Games are a fun way for the family to bond. Have a game day! Set up some games around the backyard: cornhole, lawn darts, croquet or other family favorites.
- **Explore a nearby trail**  
Even during a backyard camping trip, you can still go on a hike. Check if you have trails nearby and start exploring! Observing and learning about local birds, plants and other wildlife can be a great educational experience.
- **Watch a movie under the stars**  
If you have access to a projector, bring it outside. Set up a comfortable area to watch a film once the sun goes down. Hang string lights and lay out those pillows and blankets. Don't forget the snacks. And, before the movie begins, make popcorn over the campfire.

You don't have to go far for a memorable camping adventure with the whole family. With no traveling (and less planning) required, it's a great way to relax, connect with nature and enjoy the great outdoors with loved ones. Happy camping!