



The Best Camping Activities for Kids for an Exciting Weekend!

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Trails and Trips

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“I’m bored.” Two words that send shivers down every parent’s spine. Nature is beautiful, but to a child, it can become boring fast. That’s why it’s a must to plan camping activities for each day you’ll be away.

The best camping activities make must-do activities, like setting up the tent and cooking meals, fun. They also include things to do whether the weather is sunny or rainy and whether the sun's still up or the area is pitch black. The tips in this article have ideas for young children, older kids, and the whole family.

You'll want to plan out your activities while you're still home. A lot of these ideas will require you to pack items and supplies that you wouldn't normally bring to the campsite and that won't be available once you get there. At the end of this article, we'll also quickly go over five tips that every parent should know before their **camping** trip with the kids.

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Our Favorite Camping Activities for Kids



1. Put a spin on the traditional scary story.

Once the sun has set, gather everyone around the fire and bring a flashlight. Start off the beginning of the scary story, then pass the flashlight to your left to let the next person tell the next part. This is a great alternative to the traditional scary story, especially if you have little ones who are easily spooked. You'll all probably end up laughing instead of cowering in fear.

2. Start an ongoing game of campground Bingo.

Create your own campground Bingo cards or print them out online. If you have very young children, look for cards with pictures instead of phrases. Play throughout your first day(s) at camp – it'll help everyone tune in to what's around them as they look for plants, wildlife and camping gear. The winner gets to decide what to do the last day of the trip!

3. Play I Spy while the campsite is being set up.

Getting the campsite set up can be boring for your kids, but since one of the parents should be nearby to help out, you can't **head off on a hike** just yet. While you're hanging around, play I, Spy. There'll probably be a ton of camping gear and items scattered around to choose from and the challenge will help the time pass until everyone can move on to the first camping adventure.

4. Let them help you cook.

If you usually bake or cook with your kiddos at home, you can do the same at your campsite. You don't want to put them in charge of cooking chicken, of course, but bacon and eggs for breakfast or pigs in a blanket should be easy enough for them to handle with your supervision. For **dessert**, put strawberries and marshmallow on a skewer, then roast them on the grill or over the fire.

5. Go on a scavenger hunt and collect what you find.

Bring large paper bags for everyone and attach a scavenger hunt list to the front. When an item is found, it goes into the bag. Keep the items small and safe. For example, search for coins, bottle caps, twigs, smooth rocks, etc. Consider having everyone wear gloves in case they touch a plant or bug that could harm them. When you're done, everyone can dump out their bag and compare their treasures.

6. Paint (or sketch) the landscape.

There's no better place to paint than outside because you won't have to worry about the mess. Bring along some canvases and painting supplies, like palettes, paintbrushes, paints and disposable cups to fill with water. Find a beautiful lookout and set up an easel or just have your kids lean the canvas against a tree. Everyone can paint what they see in front of them and compare their artwork after.

7. Name the local flora.



Walk around the campsite with your kids to discover and identify the local flora. You can go old school and bring along an identification book or you can **use an app** to help. Turn it into a challenge by telling your kids that whoever correctly identifies five species first wins a prize, like an extra marshmallow on their S'mores. Just a tip: don't let your kids touch the plants, at least not until they've identified it and ruled out poison-anything.

Alternative Ideas: You can do the same with the wildlife in the area, from bugs to animals. You can also search specifically for animal tracks and then try to identify them.

8. Create leaf animals.

Look around your campsite or head into the woods to gather leaves of all different sizes, shapes, and colors. Back at the campsite, lay out a big piece of paper and start building a leaf animal. If you need inspiration, there are a ton of ideas on **Pinterest**. The animals can be as simple or as intricate as you want, making this a great activity for kids (and adults) of all ages.

9. Make your own colorful lantern.

Bring along mason jars and non-toxic glow sticks to make your own lantern. Cut off the ends of the glow sticks and dump them out into the mason jar. Put the lid on and shake to coat the sides. Play around with different color combinations to see what you come up with. For example, red and blue will make purple, and if you add white you can turn it into a pastel shade.

Alternative Idea: Do the same with 10 plastic water bottles and set up a glow in the dark bowling alley. Use any ball you brought along to bowl with.

10. Play flashlight tag.

Our next favorite camping activity for kids is a classic – Flashlight tag is pretty much just regular tag, but instead of tapping (or tackling) your sibling, you “catch” them by shining your flashlight on them. This is best for older kids who you don’t have to worry about wandering off or getting scared in the dark. If you have young children, you can still play by pairing them with older siblings or parents. Oh, and pack some extra batteries – if this game is popular with everyone, you’ll need them.

11. Build a fairy house.

Want to add a little magic to your campsite? Build a fairy house together. First, sketch out your plans on a piece of paper. Then, gather what you’ll need – rocks, sticks, moss, pebbles, acorns and large pieces of bark or if you have it, cardboard. You don’t

want to destroy a tree for this project – instead, look around for what’s laying on the ground. Start by building a base and then putting the house together on top.

12. Start a camping memory rock collection.

Have your kids collect medium and large rocks that are smooth enough to write on. Gather several at the very beginning of your camping trip. As something funny, exciting or memorable happens, use a Sharpie to write the memory down on a rock. Keep them all together in a bin or jar. When the trip is over, you’ll have a whole collection of memories to take home with you.



13. Go stargazing and hunt for constellations.

City kids may have never seen the sky as big and clear as it is at your campsite. If they’re mesmerized by the stars, spread out a blanket, have everyone lay on their back

and use a map to pick out the constellations above. You can also **use an app** that will identify the specific stars and constellations you're looking at. If you think ahead, pack a telescope.

14. Make pet rocks (and sticks and pinecones).

Pack a kit with Sharpies, googly eyes, faux feathers, pipe cleaners, and glue. Hunt around the campsite for large rocks, sticks, and pinecones. Decorate with your art supplies and set up your new “pets” by your tent so they can join in on the fun. Just make sure to throw them out or bring them with you when you leave – you don't want animals getting hurt or sick from eating your crafts.

5 Must-Know Tips for Camping with Kids

Deciding on the best camping activity ideas is only part of planning. Here are five must-know tips for camping with children.

1. Go car camping instead of backcountry camping, especially if none of you have been backcountry camping before. Car camping is when you drive up to your campsite and set up right nearby.
2. Do a dry run. Set up the tent in the backyard and have everyone sleep together **as a family**, just as you will at the campsite. You'll find out if the tent is big enough if your children are terrified to sleep outside, if you need to pack more blankets than you originally thought, etc. It'll also give you experience setting up the tent so you don't get frustrated the day off.



3. Get there when it's still light out. It's frustrating and difficult to set up camp at night. During the daytime, you'll get it done in a fraction of the time and can even get the kids involved to help out.

4. Don't plan anything too involved for the first night. Keep everything from the meals to the activities simple and close to the campsite.

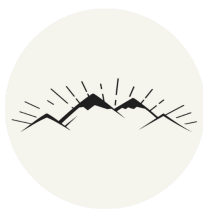
5. Want to keep your kids happy throughout the entire trip? Adhere to their regular routine as much as possible, which means the same times for meals, naps, and bedtime.

Final Thoughts on Camping Activities for Kids

Camping activity ideas for kids is about the parents just as much as the young 'uns. Keeping your kids busy during the day will help them sleep soundly at night, which gives you some **grownup time** to unwind, chat with one another and maybe even open a bottle of red.

Further read:

- [The Best Cookware for Camping](#)



All Outdoors Guide Team

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By **All Outdoors Guide Team**

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