



NATURE JOURNALING CHALLENGE

Record your observations of nature through sketches and notes

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, COMPLETE AT LEAST FOUR NATURE-INSPIRED JOURNAL ENTRIES.

Nature journaling builds mindfulness, observation, and detail-oriented skills. It's also really fun! Create your own nature journal to record all of the wonderful things you experience while completing the Adventure Challenge.

How to Draw - [John Muir Laws](#) has a vast library of videos to help you learn to draw. YouTube can also be a helpful resource.

Relief Rubbings - Place your paper against the bark of a tree or over a leaf. Use the side of a crayon or your pencil lead to rub over the item and capture every ridge. This [website](#) has some ideas.

Flower or plant pressing - You can preserve plants and flowers you find by pressing them. This [site](#) walks you through making a flower press with cardboard. Then, tape your pressed items into your Nature Journal. Make sure you are collecting specimens in approved areas.

Change it up! - Use a variety of art supplies to enrich your experience. Crayons, markers, pastels, stamps, and watercolors make creating fun and add variety to your journal.

Try a Prompt - Using prompts can help get a journal entry started. Here is an example from [John Muir Laws](#): "I notice. . .", "I wonder. . .", and "It reminds me of...".

Use an App or Field Guide - Apps like [iNaturalist](#) and local Field Guides can help you identify the plants and animals you see.

Time-lapse - Record the same plant over all four seasons. Note any changes you see in the plant and its surroundings. Or, visit the same spot at different times of the day.

Assemble a Nature Journaling Bag - Put all of your supplies together in one, grab-and-go place. Be sure to include your art supplies, a clip-board or easel, a magnifying glass, binoculars, and any other items that enrich your experience.

Photography - Take your camera outside and capture what you see. Print your pictures and record your notes in your nature journal.

Engage Your Senses - Find a spot to sit. Notice what you see, taste, touch, smell, and hear. Record your observations in your journal.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Create Your Own Field Guide - Field guides tell readers about a specific area or topic. Pick your favorite trail, animal, or plant, and create your own field guide.





JOURNALING PROMPTS

Tree Silhouettes - On a clear winter day, observe the shapes of bare trees against the sky. Sketch the silhouettes of the branches and trunks, noting how different tree types have unique shapes even in winter.

Pine, Fir, and Spruce Cones - Record the various types of cones you find from pine, fir, and spruce trees. How do their shapes, sizes, and textures differ? Collect examples and sketch or describe them in detail.

Frost-Bitten Leaves - Photograph or sketch the delicate patterns and colors found on frost-bitten leaves. How do the frost and cold temperatures affect their appearance? Pay attention to the colors and textures.

Twig Study - Study and sketch twigs from various trees. In the latter part of winter, note the date and outside temperature when you first see a tree's buds begin to swell in anticipation of spring.

Snowflake Study - If it's snowing, try to catch snowflakes on a dark surface or paper before they melt

Plant Growth Over Time - Choose a plant or tree to observe over a week or two. Draw it every few days and record how it changes. Does it grow taller? Do new leaves or flowers appear? Write about how the plant is responding to spring's warmth and sunlight.

The Sounds of Spring - Sit quietly outside and listen for the sounds of spring: birds chirping, raindrops pattering, the wind rustling through trees, or insects buzzing. Describe these sounds in your journal. Can you describe what's happening in the environment based on the sounds?

Nature Color Palette - Enjoy recording the bright colors of spring. Take a walk and find as many shades of green, pink, purple, yellow, etc., as possible. Sketch different plants or areas and match the colors as best as possible with colored pencils or crayons. How many different shades of that color can you find? What do they tell you about the plants growing in spring?

Autumn Wind - Pay attention to the wind. How does it feel in the fall compared to the warmer months? How does the wind affect the trees, plants, and animals? Can you hear any sounds in the wind, like rustling leaves or branches?

Foggy Morning - If you get up early and there's fog, observe how it looks in the morning light. How does the fog make everything look different? How does it feel to walk through fog? Write or draw your experience.

Describe a Desert Sunset - What colors do you see in the sky? How does the temperature change as the sun sets? What animals or insects do you hear?

Sketch a Wildflower - Find a flower in the wild and draw it. Write down its colors, size, and where you found it. Can you name it? What insects might visit it?

ANIMALS EMERGING FROM HIBERNATION

In Utah, many animals come out of hibernation in the spring. Keep an eye out for these and other critters and record them in your nature journal! Follow [these guidelines](#) about staying safe amongst some of Utah's more dangerous wildlife.

-Black bears, lizards, frogs and toads, ground squirrels, woodchucks, snakes, bats, Uinta chipmunks

BIRDS RETURNING TO UTAH

Much like the above, many birds migrate back to Utah as the weather gets warmer and food like insects, seeds, and flowers become easier to find. Record them in your journal as well!

-Swallows, warblers, robins, shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, hummingbirds, mourning doves, cuckoos, and road runners





WINTER ADVENTURE CHALLENGE | *Frosty Fun and Good Times Galore*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, EXPLORE THE OUTDOORS IN THE WINTER

Utah is famous around the world for its snow. However, getting outside during this season requires some creativity and determination. Discover the benefits of outdoor activities in Utah's wintery landscapes.

Winter Photography - Experiment with photography during winter, capturing the dramatic effects of frost, snow, lower angles of sunlight, and the prominent colors in the landscape.

Winter Art - Snow is an excellent art medium. You can use water mixed with food dye as paint and, using a spray bottle, create your artwork on the snow.

Snow Sculptures - Get creative with snow and other natural materials as you sculpt snow into fantastic shapes.

Build a Snow Fort - This article by [Childhood by Nature](#) provides helpful inspiration and information about snow forts and structures.

Winter Night Hike - There is something magical about a quiet, bright, winter night. Bundle up and take a walk outside. See how many plants you can identify, animal tracks you can spot, and constellations you recognize.

Cross-country/Nordic Skiing - A great way to get exercise in the snow, cross-country skiing offers a full-body workout while letting you explore peaceful, scenic winter trails.

Ice Fishing - Drill a hole in the ice and spend the day on the frozen lake, patiently waiting for a bite. Ice fishing is a relaxing way to enjoy the outdoors and connect with nature during winter.

Sledding, Tubing, or Ice-blocking - Classic winter fun! Kids can slide down hills on sleds or tubes or try ice-blocking in southern Utah, where large ice blocks are used instead of traditional sleds.

Build a Snowball Catapult - Construct a catapult for the ultimate snowball fight.

Cross-country/Nordic Skiing - A great way to get exercise in the snow, cross-country skiing offers a full-body workout while letting you explore peaceful, scenic winter trails.

DIY Bird Feeder - Make a bird feeder to support local wildlife through the winter and enjoy watching birds in your backyard. An easy option is to roll pine cones in peanut butter and birdseed to create simple, natural bird feeders. Learn how here.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Snowmobiling - Speed through Utah's snowy backcountry and explore scenic areas that are typically inaccessible by foot. With supervision, snowmobiling can be an exhilarating winter activity for older youth.

Winter Survival Skills - Organize a winter survival activity where kids learn practical outdoor skills like building an emergency shelter or starting a fire in the snow (under supervision).

Winter Wildlife Tracking - Track animal prints in the snow and learn more about local wildlife in the winter months!





Experiment with Salt and Ice - Explore the effects of salt on ice in different conditions.

Fat Tire Bike Riding - Ride specially equipped bikes with wide tires that can handle snowy trails, making for a thrilling winter biking experience through Utah's winter landscapes.

Frozen Bubble Art - On cold days (around 14°F or lower), try blowing bubbles and watching them freeze, creating intricate patterns and shapes that can be captured on camera.

Hockey - Whether on a rink or a frozen pond, hockey is an exciting and competitive way for youth to stay active and develop teamwork and coordination.

Ice Climbing - For the adventurous, ice climbing provides the chance to scale frozen waterfalls and ice-covered rock faces, often with the guidance of a professional instructor.

Ice Skating - Glide across frozen ponds or outdoor rinks and enjoy the crisp winter air while learning basic skating skills.

Polar Bear Plunge - For those brave enough, the Polar Bear Plunge involves diving into icy waters. It is a fun and challenging way to test your limits while participating in community events.

Snowshoeing - Explore winter landscapes by strapping on snowshoes and trekking through the snow, whether on groomed trails or off the beaten path.

Winter Stargazing - With clear skies and shorter days, winter nights can be ideal for stargazing. Youth can learn about constellations, the winter sky, or even try winter constellations like Orion.

Other Winter Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematic (STEM) Activities - Share any other outdoor winter STEM experiments you've done!

(Note: Indoor experiments will not count.)

Winter Camping - Take your camping skills to the next level by camping in the snow. Winter camping will challenge you to be resourceful and teach valuable outdoor survival skills.

Winter Disc Golf - Disc golf courses remain open year-round, but playing in the winter adds a fun twist with snow-covered baskets and the challenge of navigating frosty, sometimes slippery terrain.

Winter Geocaching - Use a GPS device or smartphone app for a winter geocaching adventure. Many caches are hidden in winter-friendly areas, and it can be a fun way to explore while getting outside.

Winter Hike - Bundle up and hike on snow-covered trails or the try hiking trails Southern Utah desert, where the quiet beauty of winter offers a serene and peaceful way to enjoy the outdoors.

Winter Photography - Experiment with photography during winter, capturing the dramatic effects of frost, snow, lower angles of sunlight, and the prominent colors in the landscape.

Winter Geocaching - Use a GPS device or smartphone app for a winter geocaching adventure. Many caches are hidden in winter-friendly areas, and it can be a fun way to explore while getting outside.





WINTER GAMES CHALLENGE | *Channel Your Inner Olympian*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, PARTICIPATE IN A WINTER SPORT.

The Winter Olympics are returning to Utah in 2034! We are excited to welcome an international audience to our beautiful state. To celebrate, we encourage you to get out and engage in some of these sports. Here are some ideas for ways your family can build excitement for the Winter Games.

Host Your Own Games: [This Tinkergarten Article](#) has wonderful ideas for your family to host your own Winter Games.

Ice Skating- Utah is home to both man-made and natural opportunities for ice skating. If you've never tried ice skating, head to one of the 16 ice rinks around the state to test your skills. Utah even has an [Olympic-sized rink](#) available for the public to skate on!

Ice Hockey – Once you've learned how to handle ice skates, try out the game of hockey. Hockey requires balance, speed and agility. Utah is now home to the Utah Hockey Club, the first professional hockey team in Utah; try attending one of their games if you get the chance!

Downhill Skiing – There are 15 ski resorts in Utah, all offering unique terrain and opportunities to test your skills. Check out Ski Utah's website to find information on all the resorts, and if you're a 4th, 5th or 6th grader don't forget to apply for your [Ski Utah passport!](#)

Or look into these programs:

[Epic SchoolKids Utah Pass-](#) A FREE program offering 5 days of skiing and riding in Park City for kids in Kindergarten through 5th-grade.

[Power Kids Pass-](#) Kids 12 and under receive a FREE ski pass at participating resorts.

Sledding- We all know how much fun sledding can be in the winter! Sledding is a great way to get the thrill of sliding on snow without traveling too far. Bring a group of your friends to a local sledding hill and have fun sliding on the snow!

Snow Shoeing – Although winter does add some extra obstacles in getting outside, snow shoes are great tools to stay on top of deep snow. Snowshoeing is a fun way to explore areas of our natural world closed off to us in the summer. If the snow is deep enough, you can travel off-trail without causing damage to the landscape.

TOO WARM FOR SNOW? TRY THESE!

Sandboarding - Look for large sandy hills near your home and see if you can sled or slide down one. Be sure to find a slope that isn't too steep and has no sharp rocks!

Street Hockey - No skates required! Try this fun version of the famous winter sport.

Skating - Strap on your skates or rollerblades and enjoy an indoor rink or an outdoor path.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Special Olympics Volunteer- Youth ages 8 and up can help with the [Special Olympics in Utah](#).





Biathlon - Biathlon combines two sports - cross-country skiing and shooting. Soldier Hollow, located in Midway, is the only biathlon course in Utah. Their facility hosts world championships and is a training ground for many Olympians! Check out their campus, attend a competition or try the biathlon yourself!

Cross-Country Skiing - Cross-country skiing is a great way to get some good exercise during the winter months. Many campgrounds and complexes in northern Utah groom their roads in the wintertime for cross-country skiing, which is a necessity for efficient cross-country skiing. Try this fun form of exercise once the snow starts falling!

Learn about Avalanches - The Utah Avalanche Center is Utah's avalanche forecasting non-profit. Their job is to educate and inform the public on the conditions of our snowpack during Utah's winter months. As you take part in any backcountry activity, whether hiking, snowmobiling, skiing.

Build a Winter Obstacle Course - Snow makes great building material as it will usually stick together if there's enough water in it. Try building ramps, slides or tunnels out of snow to compete with your friends.

Snowball Dodgeball - Snowball fights are a fun way (as long as everyone wants to be involved!) to enjoy snow. Using soft snow (no ice!) make snowballs and see if you can get enough friends together to play a game of snowball dodgeball.

Snow-Water Equivalency Test - Are you curious about how much water is in snow? Collect a bowl full of snow after a storm and then melt the snow in a microwave. Do you notice that there was less water in the bowl than there was snow? Try doing this with different snow storms over the winter, what do you notice?

Curling - Curling is a slower-paced game played on the ice, but doesn't require you to wear ice skates. The goal of the game is to slide a large stone into a bullseye that sits in the center of the ice. Your goal is to get your stone closest in the bullseye's center while knocking out your opponent's stones





FOLLOW A TRAIL CHALLENGE | *One step at a time*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, FOLLOW A TRAIL

Whether you're walking, rolling, running or strolling, getting on a trail can be one of the easiest, cheapest ways to enjoy the outdoors. Explore all kinds of trails during this Adventure, and be sure to map your favorite in your Adventure Passport!

LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES

Plan Ahead and Prepare - Check the weather in the area. Then, make sure you are prepared for possible extreme weather.

Pack What You Need - There are 10 essential items you should pack as a good starting point for any outdoor activity. These include: food, water (½ liter per hour of activity is a good baseline), emergency shelter (a reflective space blanket works great), extra clothes or layers, multi-tool, navigation (map/compass), light (flashlight/headlamp), first aid kit, fire (lighter or match), and heat/sun protection (sunglasses and hat).

Bring a Trash Bag - Make sure you dispose of your waste appropriately. Also, pay it forward and contribute to others' outdoor experience by picking up trash you find.

TRAIL ETIQUETTE

Share the Trails - It is likely you will meet other people while enjoying Utah's trails. If you are hiking or running, uphill users always have the right of way. If you are riding on a bike, yield to hikers, runners, and horseback riders. Everyone yields to equestrian users or people using an assistive device. If you need to move off the trail, make sure you step on a durable surface like rock or dry grass.

Water Exploration - Explore your local stream, pond, or river from the shore to learn about the plants, animals, and ecosystems that thrive there. Identify species of fish, birds, and aquatic plants, and understand their role in maintaining healthy waters. Practice responsible behavior by respecting wildlife, avoiding pollution, and following "Leave No Trace" principles. This is a great way to get your Observe Wildlife and Plant Discovery badges as well!

Use Respectful Noise Levels - Be aware of the noise you create or invite into the outdoors. If you'd like to listen to music, use one earbud and keep the other ear open to help you be aware of your surroundings. Respect quiet hours and guidelines at campgrounds and lower the volume of your phone ringer.

Be Kind - Everyone is welcome in and has a right to use public spaces. Share a kind word or quick smile with those you meet.

Use Tools - Utah is full of fantastic hiking trails, many close to large populations. You can explore the outdoors and enjoy nature by hiking along a marked trail. There are also great apps like AllTrails and local guidebooks to help you find the perfect trail for you!

Mountain biking - If you want something more adventurous, you can ride your bike on a mountain trail. If you haven't tried it before, choose a beginner-friendly trail. You'll see it's fun to test your balance and coordination while enjoying the challenge of going over bumpy terrain.

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Nature Walk - Enjoy a nature walk and take your time to look at the plants, trees, and animals around you. As you walk, take in the sights and sounds of nature- the rustling leaves, the chirping birds, and the breeze in the trees. Take your Nature Journal along and record what you see.

Horseback Riding - A great way to explore the trail. Be sure to follow trail rules for horseback riders, watch for obstacles, keep your horse comfortable, and ensure they can access water to drink along the way.

Follow a River - Some popular trails follow river corridors. The rich soil and land around rivers is called a riparian habitat, which creates a home for diverse species! Trails along the Virgin River, Jordan River, Logan River, or Little Cottonwood Creek are usually flat and accessible. Try finding a river trail near you and follow it as far as possible.

Summit a Peak - Utah is home to high peaks, the tallest mountain being Kings Peak in the Ashley National Forest at 13,528 feet. See if you can find a trail to the summit of a mountain near you! Follow the trail to the top, and depending on the time of year, check for signs of snow or bad weather.

Snowy Trails - Many parts of Utah see snow for much of the year. If you're hiking on trails covered in snow, wear shoes or boots with good tread; microspikes can be used on icy trails. Don't ride or walk on muddy or wet trails, as that will damage them.

Orienteering - All about using a map and compass to find your way. You can follow the trail while learning how to navigate and solve challenges, testing your skills in both direction and teamwork.

Off-Highway Vehicle - Ride in an OHV and enjoy some of the miles of motorized trails.

Geocaching - Geocaching is a great way to practice using a map to find a specific location in and on trails near you. Do some research on potential geocaches in your area, and then get on the trails and see if you can discover a hidden treasure!

Make a Map - As you spend time on a trail, try to draw a map of the route. These maps could be of your climb to a high peak or just a simple walk through your neighborhood trails. As you build your map, include landmarks, topographical lines, and distances.

Design your Trail - Look at the mountains or hills around your home. Do they already have trails? If not, imagine where you might put a trail. How would you navigate the steep rocky sections? Switchbacks? Will you need a bridge to cross rivers or gullies?

Scavenger Hunt - You can turn your hike or walk into a scavenger hunt. Look for certain things in nature, like specific plants or animal tracks. It's a fun way to see who can find everything on the list first. Or see if you can find every color in the rainbow as you hike.

Play Tree Huggers - While you're out on a trail next time, see if you can identify a species of tree (use iNaturalist for help identifying!), and when you call it out, see who can be the first one to go and hug that kind of tree.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Topographic Maps - Learn to read a topographical map and use it to navigate a trail. This site might help!

Backpacking - Combine hiking and camping for the ultimate adventure.





STARRY SKIES CHALLENGE | *Twinkle, twinkle!*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, EXPLORE THE NIGHT SKY.

Did you know that Utah has the most designated dark sky parks in the world?

Apps: Here are some [helpful Apps](#) for identifying the stars

Stargazing - Spend time under the stars! You can bring a telescope or binoculars to get a closer look at things like planets, the Milky Way, or constellations. You can borrow telescopes from some libraries.

Identify Constellations - Did you know that many cultures have their own constellations and constellation stories? Constellations are also different depending on the hemisphere you live in. See how many constellations you can find and name. Then find and name your own constellation!

Astronomy Programs or Star Parties - many parks and outdoor places offer programs that teach you about the night sky. These programs often feature astronomers or experts who show you different constellations, planets, and other cool things in space.

State and National Park Events - Attend events like full moon hikes or meteor shower watches. Some national and state parks host special events during these times, so you can learn more about the night sky while taking a guided hike or listening to a talk from a ranger or other expert.

Astronomy Programs or Star Parties - many parks and outdoor places offer programs that teach you about the night sky. These programs often feature astronomers or experts who show you different constellations, planets, and other cool things in space.

Camping in Dark Sky Reserves - some national parks or dark sky reserves have campgrounds where you can experience the night sky at its best. You can camp in a tent, camper, or hammock and enjoy the stars while exploring the outdoors during the day. Backpacking - backpacking to camp in remote areas lets you experience the wilderness at night under dark skies. The quiet and peaceful surroundings make stargazing even more magical.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Light Pollution - Light pollution impacts our health and our animal friends. Research the impacts of light pollution and find something you can do to help.

Throw a Party! - Gather friends and family to admire the night sky. Help them identify your 5 favorite constellations.

Night Sky in the City - if you live in a city environment, try to observe the night sky. What can you see despite the city lights? Do you notice any stars, the moon, or the clouds? Describe your nighttime sky experience in the city by writing or with a sketch.

Moon Tracker - watch the moon each night for a fun project and track its phases for a month. Write down what it looks like and draw its shape in your journal. Note how it changes from crescent to half moon to full moon. The moon rises about 50 minutes later each day, so use a weather app to know when to go outside. A moon phase chart can help you track its changes and notice other things around the moon, like clouds or stars.





See Shooting Stars - Meteor Showers happen when Earth passes through debris from comets, causing meteors (or "shooting stars") to streak across the sky. In Utah, you can catch some amazing meteor showers each year. Check apps or with local astronomy clubs for dates and peak times (usually after midnight, so you might need to set an alarm!). Popular meteor showers in Utah include the Perseid Meteor Shower in August and the Geminid Meteor Shower in December.

Night Hiking or Walking - hiking or walking in the dark can be a peaceful and different experience compared to daytime hiking. With the right gear, like a headlamp and good shoes, you can enjoy the quiet of the night and connect with nature and the stars.

MoonTracker - Watch the moon each night for a fun project and track its phases for a month. Note the appearance of the moon each night in your nature journal and track any changes you see.

Astrophotography - if you want to capture the beauty of the night sky, try astrophotography! To get the best shots, find places with little light pollution. Use long-exposure settings for best results, and aim your camera at a part of the sky with no lights or obstructions.

Dark Sky Sites - Utah has the highest concentration of Dark Skies in the world. Visit one of the sites and learn about what qualifies an area as a Dark Sky.

Night Hikes - Night hikes are a great time to observe nocturnal and diurnal wildlife. Using a headlamp with a red light will help you see and still allow your surroundings to stay dark.





CAMPING CHALLENGE | *Take your home outdoors*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, LEAVE THE INDOORS BEHIND

Camping is a wonderful way to unplug and unwind. Here are a variety of suggestions designed to meet every level, from an indoor blanket fort to overnight backpacking.

Indoor Camping - Build a fort indoors with blankets and pillows. Spend the evening unplugged; play games, read a book, or tell stories.

Set up a Tent - Practice picking an appropriate site and setting up your tent. Make sure you are prepped for all kinds of weather.

Camp in your Backyard - Backyard camping is fun and a great way to build skills and confidence.

Community Camping - Attend a local camping event or participate in an organized camping experience through schools or community centers. Several organizations rent camping gear. They can help you find the right fit for your family.

Camp at a Campground - There are a variety of campgrounds with diverse amenities. Find one that works for your family and give everyone the gift of an overnighter outside.

Go on a Day Hike with a Backpack - Pack a small backpack with essentials (water, snacks, first aid, sunscreen) and go on a day hike. Practice navigating the trail, managing your gear, and taking breaks as needed. Camp overnight at a nearby location or in a designated backcountry area if possible.

How to Use a Compass - Use a map and compass to practice basic orienteering skills and navigate through local parks or trails.

Learn to Tie Basic Knots - Learn how to tie useful knots like the square knot, bowline, or clove hitch that are essential for camping tasks.

Pack a Backpack - Pack a backpack with all the essential camping gear: a sleeping bag, food, water, a first-aid kit, and a flashlight.

Learn About Basic First Aid - Learn basic first aid skills, such as how to treat a scrape or cut or what to do in case of a minor injury. Pack a first aid kit. Bringing gauze, ace bandages, and large band-aids are helpful on any overnight camping trip.

Build a Shelter - Learn how to create a basic lean-to or shelter using natural materials like branches and leaves.

Identify Safe Wild Plants - Learn to identify safe, edible, or useful wild plants in your area (like dandelions, which can be used for medicinal or nutritional purposes).

Practice Water Filtration - Learn how to purify water by using a filter or boiling it for survival situations.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Backpacking - Feel confident in your camping skills? Try backpacking! Whether it's one night or a huge adventure, you will stretch your camping skills.

Leave No Trace - Take the beginner Leave No Trace training to sharpen your stewardship skills.

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OUTDOOR COOKING

There are many exciting ways to cook outdoors—perfect for developing new skills and enjoying meals in nature! Lots of city and county parks feature public grills. You can try many of these activities at a local park!

Make a Campfire Meal - Learn to cook a simple meal over a campfire, outdoor grill, or portable stove. You can try foil packets with veggies or meat, s'mores, or hot dogs for a classic campfire experience.

Cook Using a Camp Stove - If you can access a camp stove, an experienced adult can guide you in making meals like pasta or scrambled eggs outdoors.

Campfire Cooking Skills - Learn to cook on a grate or a rock placed near the fire. This technique is great for making meals like grilled cheese or burgers.

DIY Solar Oven - Use a cardboard box, aluminum foil, and plastic wrap to create a simple solar oven. This ecofriendly method can be used to cook meals like s'mores, baked apples, or roasted vegetables. Find online tutorials to help guide you!

Tin Foil Packet Cooking - Wrap meals like chicken and veggies such as potatoes in foil packets. Place them in the campfire coals or grill for a delicious meal.

Skewer it! - Did you know marshmallows aren't the only thing you can cook over a campfire? Try skewering hot dogs for a classic campfire treat, or get creative with fruits like fresh pineapple and peaches and veggies like bell peppers and zucchini. Grill them over the fire for a delicious and healthy outdoor snack.

Cooking with a Dutch Oven - If you have a Dutch oven, you can cook stews and soups and even bake bread or desserts like cobblers over the fire.

One-Pot Meals - Use a single pot or pan to make easy, hearty meals like chili, pasta, or stir-fried rice. These dishes are great for campers with limited equipment and are perfect for sharing.

Cooking with a Cast Iron Skillet - A cast iron skillet is ideal for outdoor cooking. Try making scrambled eggs, pancakes, or grilled sandwiches on a campfire or portable stove.





WATER ADVENTURE CHALLENGE | *Hit the water and cool down all across Utah*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, EXPLORE WATER

The water is a great place to cool off during Utah's hot summers. It is also a precious resource in our state. Explore and protect Utah's waterways!

Be Safe - Learn vital skills to be safe in and around water. Visit the [Utah Drowning Prevention Coalition](#) for more.

Visit your local Water Park - There are several free water parks throughout Utah. Check out your city's Parks and Recreation website for more information.

Take Swimming Lessons - Check out city and county parks and recreation programs for affordable swimming lessons. Already know how to swim? Try learning a new stroke or extend the length of time you can tread or float.

Visit a Local Swimming Pool - Utah has many public swimming pools, with outdoor pools open during warm months and indoor pools available year-round. City and county parks offer low-cost access to swimming pools. If you live in Salt Lake County, check out the free ["My County Rec Pass"](#) for kids ages 0-18.

Explore Utah Waterways - There are so many fun places to play in the water in Utah. Find a local lake or river, or take a picnic to a new site.

Try Paddleboarding - Learn to paddle on a stand-up paddleboard (SUP). Learn to balance, paddle, and steer your board. This activity builds strength and confidence while having fun on the water. Remember your personal flotation device (PFD) for safety!

Try Out Other Watercraft - Try rowing a boat, learning to sail, or paddling a canoe. Each of these watercraft allows you to explore. If you love fishing, try doing it from a watercraft! Follow all local safety guidelines, including wearing a personal flotation device (PFD).

Water Exploration - Explore your local stream, pond, or river from the shore to learn about the plants, animals, and ecosystems that thrive there. Identify species of fish, birds, and aquatic plants, and understand their role in maintaining healthy waters. Practice responsible behavior by respecting wildlife, avoiding pollution, and following "Leave No Trace" principles. This is a great way to get your Observe Wildlife and Plant Discovery badges as well!

WATER STEM ACTIVITIES

Float or Sink? - Fill up a bucket or kiddie pool with water. Gather some items from the backyard, a nearby park, or around the house, such as rocks, feathers, shells, leaves, flowers, and more. Guess whether each item will sink or float. Then test your guesses!

Design a boat - Using materials around the house, like tinfoil, cardboard, or plastic, design a small boat. Then, test how many pennies each design can hold. Which materials and shapes can carry the most pennies?

Rain Gauge - Set up a simple rain gauge in your yard. You will need a ruler, a clear container, and a waterproof marker. Use the ruler and marker to write measurements on the outside of the container in inches up to 4 inches. Then, place your rain gauge on a flat surface in an open area to collect rain. Record your measurements in your Nature Journal.

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TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Where Does Your Water Come From? - Find out where your local water comes from and the work being done to keep it clean.

Water Conservation - Look around your home. Are there places where you could save water? Find one way to save water and help your family implement it.

Great Salt Lake - Learn more about Utah's most famous lake. Choose an action you will take to help preserve it.

Capsize Drills - Practice what to do if you capsize in a kayak, canoe, or paddleboard. Learn how to safely get back on your watercraft in calm conditions.

Emergency Response - Understand basic emergency response skills such as how to call for help, stay calm, and perform simple self-rescue techniques.

Water Navigation with a Map and Compass - Learn how to use a map and compass for water navigation. Practice identifying landmarks and finding your way around local lakes or rivers while building your map reading and navigation skills.

Group Water Relay - Have fun with a water relay race! Organize a race where you paddle, row, or sail through various checkpoints. This team challenge is perfect for practicing water skills and having fun with friends or family.

Fishing from a Watercraft - Try fishing from a kayak, canoe, or paddleboard! Learn the basics of casting and balancing while enjoying a peaceful day on the water. Explore fish habitats and discover different fishing techniques.

Float Challenge for Older Kids - For a more advanced challenge, experiment with creating something that can float and hold a heavy object, like a rock. Use materials like plastic, sticks, or paper to craft a floating object strong enough to support the weight of the rock. Test your creation in water and adjust your design until it works.

Riparian Habitats - Riparian habitats are areas along streams, rivers, or lakes that many species depend on for food and shelter. Can you notice a difference in plant and animal life along a water source compared to drier areas? Nature Journaling: Document how the land, plants, and animals change near a water source. Write about your observations or draw a picture of a riparian habitat.

Learning to Sail - Experience the basics of sailing! Learn to control a small boat using the wind to guide your sails. Master the techniques of tacking, jibing, and steering while enjoying the thrill of moving with the wind.





OBSERVE WILDLIFE CHALLENGE | *Whooooo's There?*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, OBSERVE WILDLIFE

Utah's wildlife can be observed from designated sites like preservation areas or from your neighborhood. From bird watching to fishing, there are many ways to engage with animals here in Utah.

Leave No Trace Principle 6 - Respect Wildlife- Follow this principle by giving wildlife space, never feeding wildlife, and avoiding wildlife during sensitive times like mating, nesting, or raising young.

Use the Thumb Trick - Use this trick to make sure you are observing wildlife from a respectful and safe distance. 1) Stick out one arm at full length. 2) Raise your thumb and cover one eye. 3) Aim your thumb at the wildlife you see. If you can cover the entire animal, you are an appropriate distance away. If not, back up slowly until you can cover them.

Utah's Division of Wildlife Resources - This Division regularly holds classes and events, many of which are free. Visit the website or sign up for their newsletter for more information.

Visit a Nature Preserve - Many nature preserves have walking/ hiking trails to help visitors see the wildlife in the area.

Fishing - Utah is home to many rivers, lakes, and streams teeming with wildlife. These bodies of water host various fish species, including rainbow and cutthroat trout, bass, and even catfish. Before fishing, make sure to obtain the proper fishing license!

Birding - Head to a local green space in your neighborhood and see what birds you can spot. If you're curious about the species you encounter, try using iNaturalist or other wildlife identification apps.

Explore Local Wildlife Attractions - Utah's Hogle Zoo is a great place to see wildlife up close and learn about different species. Other educational destinations, like the Ogden Nature Center, American West Heritage Center,

and Best Friends Animal Sanctuary, also offer valuable opportunities to learn about wildlife. Tip: Many zoos, nature centers, animal sanctuaries, and preserves accept SNAP EBT benefits for discounted or free admission.

Build a Bird Feeder - Only put out a bird feeder during times of the year when birds need extra help finding food, such as in winter or during migration. Research the birds that live near you and learn what they like to eat. For example, the black-throated sparrow in San Juan County enjoys seeds, insects, and berries!

Visit the Living Planet Aquarium - Utah is fortunate to have the Living Planet Aquarium along the Wasatch Front, visit the aquarium to learn about the diverse animals that inhabit our planet's deep oceans. Tip: The Living Planet Aquarium accepts SNAP EBT benefits, offering a discounted admission rate of \$2.

Create an Animal Habitat - Choose one of your favorite wild animals and learn about the food, shelter, and resources it needs to survive. After researching, try creating a small habitat that models what the animal needs in the wild—such as a butterfly garden, a bird feeder, a water source, or a bat house.

Animal Signs Scavenger Hunt - While hiking, biking, or exploring your favorite trails, see if you can find signs of wildlife. Look for things like antlers, fur, scat, or footprints. As you find these signs, try to guess which animals might have left them behind!
Use Binoculars - Libraries usually have binoculars, which you can check out! If you don't have access to binoculars, make your own by tying two cardboard tubes together, covering them with paper, and decorating! They won't magnify what you're looking at, but will help you focus on smaller areas to see wildlife!





Sit and Spot - Find a quiet spot in your neighborhood, schoolyard, park, cemetery, or on a trail. Try drawing or writing in a notebook about what you see, hear, smell, and feel. Older youth can spend a few hours each week returning to the same spot, recording the animals they see in their yard or local park.

Make a Bug Hotel - Collect a few bugs (roly poly bugs, also known as pillbugs, work great!) and place them in a large container filled with moist dirt, twigs, leaves, and food. See if you can track where they burrow and what they're eating!

Tie a Fly - In fly fishing, anglers identify which flies are hatching in an area and then create artificial flies to attract fish. Try making your own fly using materials you find outdoors. If you're unsure where to start, check out online video tutorials for guidance.

Make a Reptile Rockpile - This is a great activity if you live in a hot, sandy area. Pile a bunch of rocks in a sunny spot outdoors, leaving gaps for reptiles to enter and exit. See if you can spot any reptiles coming in and out of your rockpile!

Wildlife Photography - See if you can sit still and capture a photo of an animal in its natural habitat. You don't need a special camera—phones can take great photos!

Junior Ranger Programs - Many of Utah's national and state parks offer Junior Ranger programs, which include activities like tracking animal prints, bird watching, and learning about habitats. With five national parks and 46 state parks, there's likely one near you!

Nighttime Wildlife Viewing - Many animals - such as bats, great horned owls, desert tortoises, and beavers - come out at night when it's dark and quiet. With the sun setting earlier in the fall, it's the perfect time to spot these nocturnal creatures!

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Insect observation - Look for insects in gardens, parks, or your home. Use a magnifying glass or take a photo with a phone to enlarge it and see details. Become a Citizen Scientist - Throughout history, everyday people—like you—with a good eye for observation and a love for nature have made important discoveries about the world around us. Check out the National History Museum of Utah's website to learn more about cool citizen science projects you can take part in!

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Citizen Science - There are a variety of Citizen Science opportunities you can participate in. Each one gives you the chance to help scientists gather information about animals in your area.

Endangered Animals - Utah has 17 endangered animals, including the California Condor and the Colorado Pikeminnow. Find an endangered animal that interests you and learn more about it. Get involved in local preservation and protection efforts. Bring your friends along!





UTAH ROCKS! CHALLENGE | *And so do you!*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, EXPLORE UTAH'S GEOLOGY

This challenge can be met in a variety of ways. From rockhounding to rock climbing, you're sure to find something you love because Utah Rocks!

Indoor Bouldering - Fun, low-wall climbing involving short, challenging "problem" routes, usually without ropes.

Slacklining - A fun balance challenge that involves walking on a flat piece of webbing stretched between two anchor points, like trees or rocks. Start with a low slackline to practice walking across and see how long you can balance.

Take a Walk with Dinosaurs - Utah is home to several trails that include fossilized dinosaur tracks. Take a walk into history and connect with Utah's prehistoric wildlife.

Rock Exploration Hikes - Utah is known for its stunning rock formations, including hoodoos, arches, and canyons. Plan a hike to discover these natural wonders, selecting a trail appropriate for your group's age and skill level.

Petroglyph Hiking - Offers the chance to view ancient rock carvings in natural landscapes like rock faces. Southern Utah is home to several well-known petroglyph sites. Please visit respectfully, preserving their cultural significance for future generations.

Rock Exploration Hikes - Utah is known for its stunning rock formations, including hoodoos, arches, and canyons. Plan a hike to discover these natural wonders, selecting a trail appropriate for your group's age and skill level.

Rockhounding - Search your local area for igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rock. Take a look at where in your local geology they may have come from. Check out public lands like those managed by the BLM or National Forests, which allow rock collection in reasonable quantities. Check local rules before collecting. Visit this site for more information. Then use an app to help you identify your rocks!

Local Geology - Get to know your local geology! Utah's landscapes boast a variety of geological masterpieces. Dig into how your local topography was formed.

Wet Canyon Hiking - A unique way to explore narrow, water-carved canyons like the Narrows in Zion National Park. Always check weather and water conditions for safety.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Via Ferrata - Via Ferrata routes combine hiking and climbing, making them ideal for beginners. Using steel cables and ladders, these routes make climbing more accessible to a wider range of people. They offer families a great opportunity to experience technical rock climbing in a safe, controlled environment. Via Ferrata routes can be found in Kane, Washington, and Uinta Counties, with most requiring a guide service for access.





Rock Hopping / Stream Scrambling - Involves exploring natural stream beds, hopping from rock to rock, or scrambling across large boulders. Rock hopping is more about balance and coordination, while stream scrambling is a more rugged adventure requiring strength and careful foot placement. Just be sure to stay safe and choose spots with manageable water conditions. For younger kids, start with calm, shallow streams to explore creek beds.

Scrambling Hikes - Scrambling means using your hands to navigate over rocks and boulders on the trail. Try beginner-friendly trails with light scrambling. Only experienced adventurers should attempt steep trails with challenging scrambling sections.

Rappelling - A technique used to descend steep rock faces or cliffs. Many climbing gyms and guiding operations offer programs that help climbers transition from indoor climbing to outdoor climbing. Consider signing up for a 'gym-to-crag' program or hiring a local guide to learn the ropes.

Adaptive Climbing - Several non-profits and climbing gyms offer adaptive climbing opportunities for people with disabilities. A few opportunities: National Ability Center, Wasatch Adaptive, Ogden Valley Adaptive, the Front and Momentum.

Cave Exploration - An adventurous way to explore the hidden world beneath the surface. Explore easy, safe caves like Timpanogos Cave and learn about the cave ecosystem and amazing rock formations from the ranger.

Fossil Hiking - Embark on a hike to witness ancient remains in their natural setting, leaving them undisturbed and preserving their legacy. Utah is home to numerous paleontological treasures, from fossil beds and deserts to ancient seabeds. Explore these awe-inspiring sites and connect with the past at places like Raptor State Park, Dinosaur National Monument, and Jurassic National Monument.

Slot Canyon Hiking - This takes you through narrow, winding passages carved by water. Utah has several stunningly beautiful slot canyons, like Peek-Boo Canyon and Willis Creek Narrows.

Canyoneering - An adventurous activity that combines hiking, climbing, and rappelling through canyons. For a safe introduction, start with rock hopping or shallow stream exploration. Safety: Canyoneering requires route finding and the use of technical equipment. Hire a guide outfitter to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience.





UTAH'S WILD PLACES CHALLENGE | *Look, listen, leave no trace*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, SPEND TIME IN A WILD PLACE.

Utahns are fortunate to have access to a variety of state and national parks, as well as other Wilderness spaces. In fact, Utah is comprised of roughly 70% public land. There is something for everyone in Utah's wild places.

Dark Skies - Utah has the highest concentration of dark skies in the world. State and National parks often host night sky events. You can get your Starry Skies badge at the same time!

Preserve Ancient Sites - Utah wilderness spaces are also home to numerous ancient Native American sites. As you visit them, think about the people who built them. Some are sacred sites and should be approached with additional care and respect.

Leave No Trace - Leave no trace principles are important to follow wherever we are, but especially important in Utah's wild places. Visit the website and help your family prepare a pack to take with you.

Utah National Parks - Utah is home to the Big 5 National Parks: Zion, Bryce, Arches, Canyonlands, and Capitol Reef. We also have [nine national monuments](#) and several landmarks. Visit a National Park, monument, or landmark that you haven't visited before.

Utah State Parks - There are 46 [state parks](#) in Utah, located throughout the state. Many state parks have Jr. Ranger programs that help you get to know the park and its inhabitants. Find your local state park and plan a visit.

Utah Wilderness Areas - The Bureau of Land Management, Utah, oversees [35 wilderness](#) areas and 77 Wilderness Study Areas. A Wilderness (note the capital W) is an area designated under the [National Wilderness Preservation System](#). Learn more about the qualities of these special places and the [approved activities](#) we can engage in there.

Leave What You Find - It is absolutely ok to admire and take pictures of the items you find. However, it is important to protect the area by leaving all items, natural and historical, where you found them. Natural objects are protected by law on public lands. Cultural artifacts are also protected. Cultural artifacts include any item over 50 years old, and may be items like old jars or cans, or items from indigenous people. These artifacts should be left where they are. In addition, natural materials, like antlers, flowers, and rocks, are vital to ecosystem health. Removing these items may impact wildlife health. Instead, write about or draw what you find in your nature journal.

Who Came Before - Get to know the tribes who lived or currently live in the area you are visiting. The Native Land Digital site is a great place to start. As you visit wild places, write or draw pictures about how ancient people lived in the area.

The San Rafael Swell - Commonly referred to as 'The Swell', this area of Utah is home to places worthy to visit. Goblin Valley State Park, The Wedge Overlook and the Jurassic National Monument are just a few of the incredible sites you'll be able to see here. Along with fossils, petroglyphs and pictographs can be found all through The Swell, so be sure to look up at the canyon walls as you explore!

Jordan River Parkway - Located in the heart of many of our cities in northern Utah, the Jordan River is a truly wild place right in the middle of a neighborhood. The Jordan river flows south to north, bringing water into the Great Salt Lake from Utah Lake. Known as Pia Okwai or 'big flow' in Shoshoni, the Jordan is a vital habitat for species like cranes, deer, trout and catfish!





Bonneville Salt Flats - The Bonneville Salt Flats are located west of the Great Salt Lake and stretch for 30,000 acres. The unique, flat and vast landscape make this a beautiful spot to practice nature photography.

Little Sahara Recreation Area - Located in Juab County, this recreation area, which sits on Bureau of Land Management property, is 60,000 acres big and is a popular location for OHV users. Sand Mountain, Black Mountain and White Sand Dune bowls are popular features of these free moving sand dunes. Camping is also a popular activity in Little Sahara.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Wilderness Camping and Backpacking- Take your wilderness skills to the wilderness. Be sure to camp in approved areas and apply your Leave No Trace training.

Build Your Own Structure- Learn more about the varieties of ways to build your own structure, like a lean-to, debris hut, or tarp shelter.





PLANT DISCOVERY CHALLENGE | *What's growing?*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, GET ACQUAINTED WITH UTAH'S PLANTS

Plants play a vital role in Utah's varied landscapes. From gardening to admiring Utah's giant trees to relaxing in your neighborhood's green spaces, we hope you enjoy discovering the plants in your area.

Identify Plants - Use a guidebook or plant identification app to learn about the plants in your neighborhood. This app can help you identify plants: [Seek](#).

Visit [Utah's National Champions](#)- This list contains some of Utah's largest trees. Make sure the ones you visit are on public land.

Shop Local - Visit a local farmers market or join a [Community Supported Agriculture](#) group to get fresh, local produce. Find a fruit or vegetable you haven't eaten before and explore some new recipes!

Plant a Garden - There are many resources available for beginning to advanced gardeners. Check out these [USU Extension pages](#) about gardening to help you get started.

Get to Know Your Local Plants - What native plants live in your area? Resources like the [Utah Native Plant Society](#) can help you identify local plants native to Utah.

Protect Utah from Invasive Species - Join the fight against invasive plants in Utah. Find a local event (State Parks often host these) where you can help remove invasive plants from your area.

Plant Native Species - Native plants are adapted to local climates and soils, requiring less water and maintenance. They provide essential habitat and food for local wildlife including birds, insects, and pollinators.

Visit Pando - Did you know that the heaviest and largest tree lives in Utah? The Pando Aspen Clone weighs 13 million pounds and consists of 40,000 aspen trees born from a single seed.

Visit your Local State or National Park - Utah is home to many majestic state and national parks. Remember, 4th-grade students get a free pass to all federal lands and waters.

Create a Planter - Upcycle used plastic food containers (like yogurt, cottage cheese, or to-go cups). Poke a few holes in the bottom, fill with dirt, and plant a seed(s). Place in an area with lots of sunlight, provide the appropriate amount of water, and watch the plant grow!

Visit a Botanical Garden or Nature Preserve - Local botanical gardens and nature preserves are the best places to learn about native plants! Research locations close to home and embark on an adventure to witness thriving greenery. Good to know: Many locations offer free or discounted admittance for families who receive SNAP EBT.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Grow Something New! - Are you an avid gardener, ready for a challenge? Try growing a plant you haven't grown before.

Spread the Word - There are several invasive plant species in Utah. Research one, and then spread the word to your school or neighborhood.





Nature Mandala - A mandala is a design used for contemplation or meditation. In the autumn, many plants drop leaves, seeds, pinecones, and flowers. Investigate your yard, a park, or a hiking trail, and search the ground for plant pieces that catch your eye. Arrange your treasures on the dirt or grass to create a pattern or design made from organic material.

Garden Bouquet - Gather flowers from your yard, deck, or balcony garden to create a beautiful bouquet for yourself or as a gift. Stewardship Tip: Please refrain from picking wildflowers. Removing them from the mountains means they don't have an opportunity to reproduce, wildlife loses them as a source of food, and the scenery for other recreators diminishes. If you don't have any flowers growing at your house, visit a U-Pick farm.

Root, Stem, Leaf, Flower, and Seed - Learn how to distinguish parts of a plant and how each part functions for its overall success. Choose a plant to draw and label each part of the plant.

Preserve - Typical forms of preservation include drying, canning, and salting. Gather herbs or produce and decide the best preservation technique.

Seed Saving - Harvesting, drying, and saving seeds is an ancient practice that can keep gardening costs low and adds another layer of connection to the garden.

Apothecary - Many medicines come from flowers, plants, and trees, and you can grow herbs to use as natural remedies in food or tea. Here are a few examples that grow well in Utah's arid environment and ways to use them - mint for an upset stomach, chamomile to relax, rose petals for self-love, and echinacea root for an immune system boost. Ensure any herbs you grow are safe for consumption by purchasing from a garden center or cross-referencing identification sources.

Join a Community Garden - Community gardens are shared spaces where individuals or families tend to different garden sections. Some are free to join, while others may charge a fee to rent a plot. Find a garden near you and enjoy the satisfaction of growing your food!

Visit a Botanical Garden or Nature Preserve - Local botanical gardens and nature preserves are the best places to learn about native plants! Research locations close to home and embark on an adventure to witness thriving greenery. Good to know: Many locations offer free or discounted admittance for families who receive SNAP EBT.

Cornucopia - A cornucopia is a horn-shaped object overflowing with freshly harvested food. Try building your own cornucopia. Find a basket, cardboard box, or any other container and fill it with items harvested from your garden, the farmers market, a U-Pick farm, or treasures found while exploring the outdoors. Arrange the harvest as an artistic expression of abundance.

Share the Abundance - If you grew produce, share it with neighbors, family, and friends! Also consider community programs where home gardeners can bring in extra produce to provide food for families in need.





NATURE MINDFULNESS CHALLENGE | *Use your senses to connect to nature*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, PRACTICE MINDFULNESS OUTDOORS

Natural spaces can look different. Studies have shown that even looking at images of nature can produce benefits for our mental health. As you explore these suggestions, take advantage of whatever resources are available to your family.

Use Your Senses - Take some time in a natural space. Find a comfortable position. Then, when you are ready, focus on what you see. Then, direct your attention to each of your other senses. This is a great activity to experience during different seasons and notice what changes and what stays the same.

Yoga - Many yoga poses incorporate nature. Find some of your favorite yoga poses and do them in a natural space.

Hunt for Colors - During time outside, look for different shades of a specific color. Notice how many items you find!

Careful Steps - As you walk, notice each step that you take. Can you take silent steps? Do your steps leave a footprint? Try taking steps like animals- big dinosaur steps, gallop like a horse, or teeny tiny steps like a ladybug.

Gratitude - Practice gratitude for the things you see, hear, taste, touch, and smell. Each of them is there for you to enjoy. Mindfully think or talk about the things you are grateful for.

Breathing - Natural spaces can be a powerful place to focus on your breathing. Try an activity like box breathing. Breathe in for 4 seconds. Hold your breath for 4 seconds. Breathe out for 4 seconds, then hold your breath for another 4 seconds. Breathing activities like this one can support self-regulation and are great strategies to use anywhere.

Cloud Gazing - A blanket and a cloudy day can make for real fun! Find a comfy place and observe the clouds. What direction are they moving? Can you find clouds that look like something else? This [site](#) has additional ideas for mindful cloud gazing.

Forest Bathing - Forest bathing is a mindfulness, meditative experience in a natural space. [National Geographic Kids](#) has a helpful article on how to start forest bathing.

Go for a picnic - Take your meal or even a snack outside! Find a comfy spot, enjoy your food, and take some deep breaths in a natural space.

Identify Bird Songs - Learn more about your local birds. When you are outside, listen for the calls from a specific bird. What time of day do they sing the most? Where is the song coming from?

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Challenge Course - Outdoor ropes courses build confidence and resilience. Try one out!

Take a Class - Forest bathing and yoga classes are offered all over Utah. Try enrolling in a class or guided session.





Nature Journaling - Nature journaling is an excellent way to be mindful of your surroundings. Find a leaf, rock, or other item that catches your interest. Draw or write about the item in your nature journal. Use writing prompts or drawing strategies to notice details about the item and its surroundings.

Sit and Listen - While in nature, sit and listen for all the sounds you may notice. Listen to streams as they flow over rocks, or the wind in the trees. What do these sounds make you feel?

Talk to a friend - Nature has a way of allowing us to open up! Bring a friend outside who may be struggling with loneliness or sadness. Spending time outdoors can help provide us with necessary vitamin D to help boost our moods, and is even better to do with a friend!

Practice Kindness - Living and recreating in Utah means you will encounter other people while recreating outdoors. Be sure to practice kindness when you encounter others outdoors. If you are riding a bike, be sure to yield to walkers or hikers. If you bring pets outside, be sure to keep them on a leash unless it is okay to do otherwise. Be kind to everyone you meet and share good vibes with new friends!

Read, write or paint outdoors - Natural spaces can help spark creativity. If you enjoy painting, try doing it outdoors! Try using nature as a form of inspiration for your art.

Start a garden - Connecting with nature through growing food is a great way to stay grounded. Learning how to tend to a garden during many seasons will help you be in touch with how weather changes and where and how certain foods grow!

Be a steward of the earth - Make everyday earth day! Taking care of our natural spaces can be a great way to boost your mental health and find peace during chaotic moments.

Go for a run - The repetitive motion of running or cycling can help our brains unlock some of the stress that we may be holding onto. Try doing something repetitive outdoors and see how your brain might come up with creative solutions to problems.

EKO Challenge - As you earn all your adventure badges throughout the challenge, find ways to be mindful during each activity. Be aware of how you're feeling as you follow a trail, go camping or stare at the starry skies. We hope the challenge allows you to not only have fun, but learn something new about yourself and the world!





SHARE NATURE WITH A FRIEND CHALLENGE | *everything is better with a friend*

FOR THIS ADVENTURE, INVITE A FRIEND TO JOIN YOU OUTDOORS

Just about everything is better with a friend. Bringing a friend can help others try something new and take your adventures outdoors to a whole new level. Or maybe your friend is there to teach you! Either way, you both have a blast.

Donate Gently Used Outdoor Gear - Donating your items can make enjoying the outdoors more accessible for others. Items like winter coats and boots make a difference in enjoying time outside.

Unstructured Outdoor Play - The outdoors give rise to natural curiosity, creativity, and play. Gather a friend or two and play outside. Discover where you are, develop new games, and build your friendships.

Snow Sculptures - Get creative with snow and other natural materials as you sculpt snow into fantastic shapes.

Introduce a Friend to Something New - Sometimes, trying something new, like camping, can be challenging. Invite a friend to join you in one of your favorite outdoor activities. Help them prepare by making a list of the supplies they will need, like water, sunscreen, and good shoes.

Join a Group - Organizations like 4-H, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and YMCA offer fun opportunities to get outside and make new friends.

Volunteer - Places like Tracy Aviary offer volunteer opportunities. Grab a friend and help community organizations continue to offer powerful outdoor experiences.

Community Gardens - Many communities have common garden areas. This is a wonderful opportunity to gather with your neighborhood friends and grow delicious food.

Local Food and Traditions - Fall is a season of harvest and celebration. In Utah, many fruits, vegetables, and other foods are gathered during autumn. Explore what is in season near you: What local foods are available during this time? How do people in your community celebrate the harvest? You might learn about events like Melon Days in Green River, Peach Days in Brigham City, or the Fall Harvest Festival in Wellsville.

In some communities, traditions like pine nut harvesting are an important part of the season, especially for members of the Paiute and Goshute tribes. Is there a particular food or tradition that helps you connect to the season?

Join a 4H Club - H stands for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health and is over 100 years old! Joining 4H is only \$10 a year, and members gain confidence and learn about leadership while exploring agricultural activities, indoor gardening, food preparation, and recreation (and many other activities)

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Volunteer - Places like Tracy Aviary offer volunteer opportunities. Grab a friend and help community organizations continue to offer powerful outdoor experiences.

Organize a Gear Drive - Help others get outside by organizing or volunteering at an outdoor recreation gear donation drive.





Rock Climbing - Sport climbing is an activity that requires two people to participate together. One person will be climbing while the other belays. As a belayer, make sure that you are aware of the needs of your climber and provide the proper tightness in the rope as they climb the wall. Safety: Outdoor rock climbing demands a solid understanding of technical equipment. The best way to learn is with a qualified guide. For a top-notch educational and safe experience, choose a guide certified by the American Mountain Guide Association.

Outdoor Yoga - Find a quiet place outdoors with plenty of room to move around. Take a few deep breaths then practice linking movement with breath. Or Sign up for an outdoor class with a local yoga studio or recreation center. Tip: Youth ages 0-18 can sign up for a free My County Rec Pass, which gives access to 18 Salt Lake County parks and recreation amenities, including yoga classes.

Junior Ranger Programs - Junior Ranger Programs - Many of Utah's National and State parks have Junior Ranger programs that include activities like tracking animal prints, bird watching and learning about habitats. Utah has 5 national parks and 46 state parks, so there's probably one not too far from where you live! Help a fourth-grade friend sign up for a free national Parks Pass and join the Junior Ranger Program together.

Utah Wild Places - Explore the Utah's Wild Places, choose your own adventure ideas. Decide on a new location to visit and bring a friend along with you! Or bring a friend to your favorite wild place.

Watershed Education - In Salt Lake County our drinking water comes directly from melted snow that flows down the mountain in streams and rivers. Little Cottonwood Canyon, Big Cottonwood Canyon, and Bells Canyon are protected watershed areas. We can help ensure clean drinking water by following watershed regulations - no swimming (that includes wading and splashing), no dogs or animals in watershed areas, and no camping within 200 feet of watershed lakes and rivers. This is a perfect opportunity to view activity and life around flowing water and lakes without getting wet. Tell a friend or trail user about why it's important to protect the watershed and lead by example.

Group Water Relay - Have fun with a water relay! Organize a race where you paddle, row, or sail through different checkpoints. This team challenge is excellent for practicing your skills and having fun with friends or family.

Autumn Harvest Crafting - Use natural materials like fallen leaves, acorns, pinecones, and even colorful autumn flowers to create your own autumn-inspired crafts. You can make leaf rubbings, create a fall wreath, or make a nature-themed greeting card using your findings. While crafting, take some time to reflect on how the changing season influences your creativity. What colors, textures, and patterns do you see around you? How do these natural materials spark new ideas for your projects?

Join a 4H Club - 4H stands for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health and is over 100 years old! Joining 4H is only \$10 a year, and members gain confidence and learn about leadership while exploring agricultural activities, indoor

Attend an EKO Event - Our many community partners throughout the state will be hosting EKO-themed events. Find one near you on our community calendar and bring your friends!

Share the EKO Adventure Challenge! - Tell your friends, siblings, parents, grandparents, teachers, summer camp counselors and others about the EKO Adventure Challenge! The more people we have outside together, the better!





UTAH FOREVER CHALLENGE | *Ensuring Utah's outdoors for years to come*

DO YOUR PART TO BE A STEWARD OF UTAH'S LAND, ANIMALS, AND PEOPLE.

"The places we love today should still be here tomorrow — beautiful, welcoming and thriving. That's Utah Forever."

- Utah Office of Tourism

Take the Pledge - Take the [Utah Forever Pledge](#) and commit to being a good steward of our state and its resources.

Be Prepared - There are several aspects of being prepared to engage in the outdoors. Practice checking the weather, including air quality and the UV index. Gather all the materials you'll need in your outdoor backpack.

Pack What You Need - There are 10 essential items you should pack as a good starting point for any outdoor activity. These include: food, water (½ liter per hour of activity is a good baseline), emergency shelter (a reflective space blanket works great), extra clothes or layers, multi-tool, navigation (map/compass), light (flashlight/headlamp), first aid kit, fire (lighter or match), and heat/sun protection (sunglasses and hat).

Respect Cultures - Utah is home to a variety of cultures. Each deserves to be treated with respect. While engaging in the outdoors, get to know the cultures of the areas you visit. Ancient sites are a heritage and should be shown respect and maintained for future generations.

Leave No Trace - Aim to leave each space you visit better than you found it. Learn and follow the [Leave No Trace](#) principles as you engage outdoors, and preserve ensure that our amazing landscapes are available for future generations.

Water Exploration - Explore your local stream, pond, or river from the shore to learn about the plants, animals, and ecosystems that thrive there. Identify species of fish, birds, and aquatic plants, and understand their role in maintaining healthy waters. Practice responsible behavior by respecting wildlife, avoiding pollution, and following "Leave No Trace" principles. This is a great way to get your Observe Wildlife and Plant Discovery badges as well!

Welcome Visitors - Every year, Utah welcomes tourists from all over the world to experience its outdoor spaces. In 2034, Utah will take center stage as we host the Winter Olympics. Create a space where visitors are welcome in your community and where you show off your state with pride.

Get to Know Utah's Tribes - There are 8 federally recognized Tribes and over 50 tribal nations in Utah. Additionally, there are many historical Native American sites. As you visit them, learn more about the native tribes that built them and the indigenous communities there today. The [Native Land Digital site](#) is a great place to start.

TAKE IT UP A NOTCH!

Volunteer - Find ways to volunteer in your area. The [UServeUtah](#) site is a great place to start.

Participate in the Utah Youth Service Month - Utah holds the [Youth Service Month](#) from April 11th to May 11th.

Join a Youth Council - Many communities have youth councils. Find one in your area!

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Watershed Education and Respect - In Salt Lake County our drinking water comes directly from melted snow that flows down the mountain in streams and rivers. We can help ensure clean drinking water by following watershed regulations - no swimming (that includes wading and splashing), no dogs or animals in watershed areas, and no camping within 200 feet of watershed lakes and rivers. This is a perfect opportunity to view activity and life around flowing water and lakes without getting wet and a great opportunity to help educate less informed users.

Plant a Tree - It can be hard to believe that a mighty tree comes from something as tiny as a seed! Try this adventure two ways!

Help the Trails Out - When you're out on a trail, see if you can remove dead branches or long grasses that hang over the trail.

Plant a Perennial and an Annual Flower - Some flowers and plants come back yearly; they are called perennials. Other plants and flowers need to be replanted every year; they are called annuals.

Seed Saving - Our ancestors relied on seed saving to plant crops. While we can easily buy seeds today, that wasn't always the case. Harvesting, drying, and saving seeds is an ancient practice that can keep gardening costs low and add another layer of connection to the garden.

Join a Community Garden - Community gardens are shared spaces where individuals or families tend to different garden sections. Some are free to join, while others may charge a fee to rent a plot. Find a garden near you and enjoy the satisfaction of growing your food!

