

Summer Recreation



Don't Get Overheated

Summer is the time to enjoy the outdoors, but beware the sun

Heatstroke can impact anyone — even young people. That's why it's important to protect yourself from the year's most powerful sunshine, and to hydrate often.

INSIDE THE NUMBERS

An average of 9,200 people are hospitalized annually with heat-related issues, and there are tens of thousands more who visit emergency rooms. Children take advantage of summer to play outside, and that can put them at a greater risk of exhaustion and heat stroke — in particular if they haven't been as active during the school months. They also may fail to rest and rehydrate during the hottest parts of the day. They are also at risk of being left behind by drivers: Nearly 40 children under age 15 die annually in hot vehicles. Pets are also endangered by temperatures that can quickly reach 120 degrees.

STAYING HYDRATED

As our body temps rise, we perspire and replacement fluids are required. Staying hydrated also eases the heart's duties when pumping blood to our muscles. Monitor your hydration through the color of your urine. Those with the right hydration levels are clear and pale. Darker fluid means you need to drink more. These dangers are only heightened



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because some 75% of Americans in one survey had a net fluid loss — meaning, they were already dealing with chronic dehydration. About 520,000 people are hospitalized for dehydration annually in the U.S., and about 10,000 die.

PROTECT YOURSELF

Wearing clothing and sun-

screen that protects your skin from the sun's heat and damaging rays is critically important. One in five U.S. citizens will develop skin cancer over the course of their lifetime, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. The Academy recommends choosing broad-spectrum options that shield skin from both UVA

and UVB rays. Look for water-resistant products with an SPF of 30 or higher. For another layer of protection, opt for long sleeves, pants and wide-brimmed hats when possible.

BE WEATHER WISE

Prolonged sun exposure can also lead to cramps, heat

exhaustion and heat stroke — the latter of which happens when the body pushes blood away from your brain and other vital organs in a last-ditch effort to cool your skin. Try to avoid being outside during the hottest part of the day, or on days when the forecast calls for particularly high temperatures.

Fun and Games

There can be so much more to summer than swimming and suntanning

Unfortunately, most of us don't have regular access to a luxurious pool or lazy beach. But you can still have plenty of summer fun with old standbys like Frisbees, volleyball or horseshoes — right in your own backyard. Here's a look back at the fascinating history of these classic summertime games.

THROW A FRISBEE

One of the activities most associated with summer was actually discovered by happenstance. Walter Morrison and Lucille, his future wife, began tossing a popcorn lid to one another out of boredom on Thanksgiving 1937. Finding it was fun, they brought a five-cent cake pan on a swimming trip and again began tossing it back and forth. When another beachgoer offered them 25 cents for the flying disc, Morrison realized he'd stumbled upon something that could perhaps turn a hefty profit.

He initially partnered with Warren Francioni after World War II to make lighter, more durable plastic versions that served as the prototype for everything that followed. Later, after forming his own company called American Trends, Morrison introduced new versions called Flying Saucers and Pluto Platters. Wham-O subse-



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quently bought Morrison's company, and the new owners coined a name that stuck — the Frisbee. By the 1960s, they were everywhere.

PLAY VOLLEYBALL

The game of volleyball is much older, having been invented in 1895 by William Morgan, an athletics director for the Holyoke, Mass.-based

Young Men's Christian Association. He developed an early version of the game when he couldn't find another indoor sport for businessmen who weren't interested in or physically able to play basketball. Official rules for volleyball followed over the next few years, under the supervision of the YMCA and the NCAA. By 1928, the U.S. Volleyball Association

had been formed.

TOSSING HORSESHOES

This fun backyard game actually goes back centuries. The practice of throwing quoits, or iron rings, was enjoyed by both Roman officers and medieval peasants, who were said to have played their own versions of a game that closely resembled horse-

shoes. They may have only turned to horseshoes because they couldn't find the proper iron rings. Settlers brought the tradition to the North American colonies, where it flourished. The National Horseshoe Pitchers Association was founded in 1926, and still oversees a series of championship tournaments.

Boating Safety

Don't let a fun day on the water turn into a tragedy

Navigating a boat makes you responsible for the vessel itself, your own safety and that of your passengers, as well as other boaters and those tubing, fishing or jet skiing. Waterway rules and safety tips from organizations like BoatUS are meant to keep us all safe, and should be strictly adhered to. Unfortunately, unforeseen hazards like fire, damaging obstacles in the water or weather may also arise — so it's important to have the proper training and equipment.

ACCIDENT STATISTICS

Unfortunately, the U.S. Coast Guard reports thousands of boating accidents each year, with hundreds of unneeded deaths. Alcohol remains a contributing factor in as many as 20% of these fatalities, despite the consistency of warnings and strict laws. The actual cause of death is drowning in more than 75% of these cases, according to the Coast Guard. The vast majority of these tragedies can be prevented. Some 85% of victims weren't wearing a life preserver. More than half of the children who die were also not wearing proper life jackets. Safety instruction classes were not attended by more than 70% of those who died after boating accidents.



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RULES OF NAVIGATION

The rules of navigating on waterways have long been established, but don't exist on street signs as they do on a roadway. The best way to learn them is to take an approved class. In general, boaters are responsible for driving at safe speeds, yield-

ing to others, and powering down near marinas, homes and docks, among other safety actions. Drivers should also have a lookout to help identify oncoming traffic and potential water hazards.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Boats are required to have at least one approved life jack-

et for everyone on board. They should be in good condition and properly fitted, a critical issue for smaller riders and children. Everyone should know where extra life preservers are located, as well as key safety tools like a fire extinguisher, dock pole, radio and flares. Extinguishers are particularly important because of

the possibility of fire around the engine or fuel system. Ideally, the lookout is also capable of operating the boat, should the driver become incapacitated. Every one should be familiar with the radio's emergency channels, and be prepared to relay critical information if there is an emergency.

Bring the Outdoors In

Summer strolls can bring us up close with soaring mountaintops, wildlife reemerging after the winter, babbling brooks and incredible plant life.

You can do more than commit these images to memory, if you have the patience and the right photo equipment.

BEFORE YOU GO

What you buy and bring along is largely determined by what you plan on photographing. Shooting pictures of fast-moving wildlife is far different than something stationary like scenery. Capturing a bird in flight, or a deer in the moments before it darts away, will require a special lens. They get you close to the action without scaring away wildlife. On the other hand, landscapes are best shot with wide-angle lenses that take in the widest possible expanse. If you're unsure which specific lens to buy, talk to experts at local camera shops, photography studios or university art departments to learn more. Make sure you have a sturdy backpack to carry all of this equipment, and any other



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necessities you may need along the way. A good pair of walking shoes or hiking boots is also a must.

START SMALL

It's easy as a newcomer or amateur to become overwhelmed once you accept the fact that outdoor photography isn't going to be a point-and-shoot operation. But you don't have to become an instant

expert on cameras, lens and all of photography's related equipment. Start small, with whatever camera you have, while you get comfortable with the process. Sometimes, the experiences themselves will lead you to your next purchase.

Local experts can also help guide you to the best places to find whatever you're looking for in the great outdoors. But whatever path you choose, be

prepared to exercise a great deal of patience. You could spend hours, even in a recommended spot, before spotting certain wildlife. Weather may impact your landscape photography. So take plenty of sunscreen, rain gear, bug repellent and water.

LEARN MORE

When you're ready to take your new hobby to a whole

new level, consider taking lessons from a pro. They can be expensive, and you'll have to find the right teacher depending on your level of experience. But there is much to be learned about camera functions, adjustments to lighting situations and specific lenses. What you learn might give you even more enjoyment from your next summertime shoot.

The Best Beach Trip Ever

Making the most of an oceanside adventure requires a little planning

The sea has long drawn weary vacationers looking to splash around, get a tan and recharge. Too often, however, vacation planning never gets past picking out a page-turning beach book. You'll need to pay attention to changing weather patterns, research the beach's specific rules, pack needed refreshments (including plenty of water) and bring the proper accessories to shield yourself from the sun while allowing for a little beachy fun.

WATCH THE WEATHER

Beachfront weather can change quickly. You may arrive to clear skies, only to watch as dark clouds come rolling in. Don't be caught off guard. Check local weather forecasts before you head out, utilizing modern-day hour-by-hour readings to gauge how the weather patterns might change. And stay vigilant for sudden shifts. Storms and excessive heat can be deadly.

WHAT TO BRING

It's tempting to stop at fun sodas, sugary juices and alcoholic beverages when planning a beach trip, but the seaside heat will cause everyone to lose lots of water through perspiration. Freeze water bottles overnight, and line your ice chest with them.



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They will keep other foods and drinks cool, while providing steady hydration for everyone at the beach. Bring an umbrella or tent so everyone can take a break from the sun. Bring sunscreen with the recommended SPF to avoid a painful sunburn. Make sure your phones are fully charged. Don't forget the fun and

games, including beach balls, snorkels, noodles, fins, goggles, skim boards, horseshoes or other games. Consider buying a beach cart to get it all there. Knock off any sand before you leave, and rinse off in designated areas. It can damage your beach gear, and create a mess that's a pain to clean up.

FOLLOW THE RULES

Every beach has its own set of regulations. Some allow pets, while other don't. You typically cannot bring glass bottles. Some have banned alcohol, umbrellas or tents. Stay in clearly marked areas when walking or setting up for the day, since fragile dunes

and grasses act as important flood-protection barriers. Stay well away from any wildlife. Don't leave anything behind, especially trash. Don't take up any more room than you actually need. Fill in any holes you may dig, since they can be dangerous to other unsuspecting beachgoers and to sea creatures like turtles.

Take a Hike

There's adventure to be had whether at a park or on your own

You'll need the right gear, and a good sense of where you're headed. Once you get going, however, hiking can be one of the best ways to get needed exercise while communing with nature.

RULES OF THE TRAIL

Those on their way uphill are given the right of way. Hikers who are descending should come to a full stop and step aside so they can climb by. When allowed, bicyclists yield to all others, including those on horseback. Stay on the trail, unless you absolutely have to step aside while yielding. You can damage or even kill plants and animals without knowing it. Leave everything as you found it, and pack out all trash.

GEARING UP

This may look a lot like walking, but the long distances that are usually associated with hiking means you'll need more specialized gear. More advanced hikes may require additional tools, as well.

Invest in a pair of high-quality boots that can handle a wide range of terrain, so you won't have to pause before venturing off paved trails.

Depending on how rugged your surroundings are, you may also need a pair of hiking poles. Purchase a sturdy, roomy backpack to carry energy bars, a compass, flash-



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light, camping gear and water.

FINDING A PLACE

Hiking opportunities are all around us, from local parks to faraway adventures. Start with city or state parks, since they'll typically have shorter, well-marked trails that provide more stable footing. As

you grow more experienced and confident, consider national parks and well-known major trailways. These government-run facilities will have maps and lots of helpful information on their websites. You can also consult independent sites like AllTrails.com.

SAFETY

First-timers should make sure they're healthy enough to take up hiking. Don't trust your gut instinct. Instead, visit a doctor to get a sense of how far you should push yourself. Start with shorter trips and a lighter backpack. You won't need as much water or as many snacks,

but don't leave them behind. Pack sunscreen, a first-aid kit and pest repellent. Hiking with a friend is a good idea as you become more experienced, too. Once you've gotten the go-ahead from a medical professional and some shorter hikes under your belt, you and friends can take longer trips.

Kids Camps

As summer drags on, children may need some new challenges

As school ends, it seems there are limitless possibilities for fun-seeking kids. But after a few weeks, they may become restless and bored. That's why summer camps have been a mainstay for so long. Excite their imaginations with educational and skills-based opportunities, and help spend down some youthful energy with recreational activities and cooperative events.

WHAT THEY OFFER

There's a camp to suit any child's interest, from the sports-focused to the outdoorsy to the studios. Traditional nature camps might offer options like camping and horseback riding, while sports camps drill in on needed skills to succeed at the next level. Science and math camps offer clinics designed to excite the mind. There are camps devoted to music, cheerleading, the arts and so much more. Many of them offer options for all ages, too.

Begin by searching local resources for camps in your area. More details can be found through the American Camp Association, which details camp accreditation and its history. Accredited camps must meet 250 different standards in program quality, health and safety, according to the ACA. Take into account not just the top-



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ics covered but the length of the camps themselves.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD

Summer camps offer lessons beyond the classes and events, as children learn more about living independently, acclimating to different environments and getting along with new acquaintances.

When it comes to overnight, weekend or weekly camps, however, they may also feature an extended period away from home. In some cases, that can be the biggest adjustment of all. Camp may be the first time that they weren't in constant contact through phone or text. So commit to writing each other often, up to

and including once a day, if that will smooth the way.

Those who've already begun have sleepovers at a relative's or friend's house usually have an easier time being away, but any child is at risk of developing homesickness. Talk it all over before signing up, making sure that they are prepared for what's involved. You may be

able to save your child some stress if you notice signs of deeper sadness or extreme nervousness in these early discussions. It might be better to wait until they are older. Either way, many camps offer counseling from trained professionals to help with these difficult transitions — so be sure and inquire about those services.