

Over 200 Summertime Activities

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Since we don't use the phrase "I'm bored!" in our home, we don't hear our kids complaining about being bored during those long days at home during the summer months. But ... I have to admit that we're still an incredibly normal family. Even without the "b-word" in their vocabulary, there are still those times when my three children (ages 15, 11 and 7) just seem to be at a total loss for something constructive to do.

On one of those "I-can't-think-of-anything-to-do" days, I had my children sit down and make a list of everything they could do completely on their own without parental help. After they brain-stormed about it for over an hour (which was a good anti-boredom activity itself!), the kids had a list of about fifty activities. Surprisingly, they even included a few household chores like dusting and weeding. I asked for input from some other moms, and now my children have a list of over two hundred ideas to beat summertime boredom. And the list just seems to keep growing!

Thanks to the suggestion of one mom, we've put each item on this list onto individual pieces of paper, placed the papers into a container, and when the children need inspiration for an activity, they choose two or three papers and then decide which idea they want to do, either as a group or individually. The mom who suggested pulling ideas out of a container told me she found this method more helpful than giving the kids a huge list of possibilities. By narrowing the choices down to just two or three, it was easier for the kids to pick out the one that sounded the best to them.

200+ IDEAS FOR SUMMERTIME (or anytime!) ACTIVITIES

In no particular order, here's our current (but continually growing!) list of activities:

- 1) ride bikes
- 2) roller skate
- 3) play basketball / shoot baskets
- 4) play board games
- 5) make a tent out of blankets
- 6) squirt with hoses
- 7) run through the sprinkler
- 8) jump rope
- 9) read books
- 10) blow bubbles
- 11) make homemade play dough
- 12) play with play dough
- 13) press flowers
- 14) do crafts with pressed flowers
- 15) write a letter to a relative, friend or pen pal
- 16) clean bedroom
- 17) vacuum living room
- 18) clean bathroom
- 19) make a craft
- 20) draw
- 21) color
- 22) paint
- 23) pull weeds
- 24) watch a movie
- 25) write stories
- 26) use binoculars
- 27) use magnifying glass
- 28) use microscope
- 29) bird watching
- 30) write a play
- 31) act out a play
- 32) invent circus acts
- 33) perform a circus
- 34) play card games
- 35) make art on the front walkway with sidewalk chalk

- 36) play catch
- 37) play baseball
- 38) collect rocks
- 39) collect leaves
- 40) collect feathers
- 41) play Frisbee
- 42) make Frisbee's out of old plastic lids; decorate with markers
- 43) dust the house
- 44) brush the pet
- 45) write "thank you" cards
- 46) read a magazine
- 47) play dress-up
- 48) play Cowboys
- 49) pick vegetables
- 50) play outside with the pet
- 51) build a fort in your rooms
- 52) build a fort in the backyard
- 53) do a jigsaw puzzle
- 54) play on the Geosafari
- 55) play on the computer
- 56) listen to a story or book on tape
- 57) do extra schoolwork to get ahead
- 58) do brain teasers (ie: crosswords, word searches, hidden pictures, mazes, etc.)
- 59) cook
- 60) prepare lunch
- 61) surprise a neighbor with a good deed
- 62) play store
- 63) prepare a "restaurant" lunch with menus
- 64) hold a tea party
- 65) have a Teddy bear picnic
- 66) play with toy cars
- 67) play dolls
- 68) play house
- 69) chase butterflies
- 70) collect caterpillars and bugs
- 71) plant a garden patch or a pot of flowers
- 72) collect seeds
- 73) hunt for four-leaf clovers
- 74) learn magic tricks
- 75) put on a magic show
- 76) plant a container garden
- 77) sprout seeds or beans
- 78) make sock puppets
- 79) put on a puppet show
- 80) make Christmas presents
- 81) make homemade wrapping paper
- 82) make homemade gift cards
- 83) make picture frames from twigs glued onto sturdy cardboard
- 84) crochet or knit
- 85) make doll clothes
- 86) sew buttons in designs onto old shirts
- 87) run relay races
- 88) make bookmarks
- 89) take a quiet rest time
- 90) take a shower or bath
- 91) bathe a pet
- 92) feed the birds or squirrels
- 93) watch the clouds
- 94) organize a dresser drawer
- 95) clean under the bed
- 96) empty the dishwasher
- 97) vacuum under the couch cushions; keep any change found

- 98) write these ideas onto pieces of paper; pick out one or two to do
- 99) whittle
- 100) whittle bars of soap
- 101) practice musical instruments
- 102) perform a family concert
- 103) teach yourself to play a musical instrument (recorder, harmonica, guitar)
- 104) fold laundry
- 105) sweep kitchen or bathroom floors
- 106) sweep front walkway
- 107) sweep or spray back patio
- 108) sweep or spray driveway
- 109) wash car
- 110) vacuum car
- 111) vacuum or dust window blinds
- 112) clean bathroom mirrors
- 113) clean sliding glass doors
- 114) clean inside of car windows
- 115) wash bicycles
- 116) clean garage
- 117) play in the sandbox
- 118) build a sandcastle
- 119) work with clay
- 120) copy your favorite book illustration
- 121) design your own game
- 122) build with blocks or Legos
- 123) create a Design Box for craft supplies (copper wire, string, odds-and-ends of things destined for the garbage, pom-poms, thread, yarn, etc.)
- 124) plan a neighborhood or family Olympics
- 125) have a marble tournament
- 126) paint a picture with lemon juice on white paper and hang it in a sunny window and see what happens in a few days
- 127) finger paint with pudding
- 128) make dessert
- 129) make dinner
- 130) give your pet a party
- 131) paint the sidewalk with water
- 132) start a journal of summer fun
- 133) start a nature diary
- 134) have a read-a-thon with a friend or sibling
- 135) have a neighborhood bike wash
- 136) play flashlight tag
- 137) play Kick the Can
- 138) check out a science book and try some experiments
- 139) make up a story
- 140) arrange photo albums
- 141) find bugs and start a collection
- 142) do some stargazing
- 143) decorate bikes or wagons and have a neighborhood parade
- 144) catch butterflies and then let them go
- 145) play hide-and-seek
- 146) create a symphony with bottles and pans and rubber bands
- 147) listen to the birds sing
- 148) try to imitate bird calls
- 149) read a story to a younger child
- 150) find shapes in the clouds
- 151) string dry noodles or O-shaped cereals into a necklace
- 152) glue noodles into a design on paper
- 153) play hopscotch
- 154) play jacks
- 155) make up a song
- 156) make a teepee out of blankets
- 157) write in your journal
- 158) find an ant colony and spill some food and watch what happens

- 159) play charades
- 160) make up a story by drawing pictures
- 161) draw a cartoon strip
- 162) make a map of your bedroom, house or neighborhood
- 163) call a friend
- 164) cut pictures from old magazines and write a story
- 165) make a collage using pictures cut from old magazines
- 166) do a secret service for a neighbor
- 167) plan a treasure hunt
- 168) make a treasure map
- 169) make up a "Bored List" of things to do
- 170) plan a special activity for your family
- 171) search your house for items made in other countries and then learn about those countries from the encyclopedia or online
- 172) plan an imaginary trip to the moon
- 173) plan an imaginary trip around the world; decide where you would want to go
- 174) write a science-fiction story
- 175) find a new pen pal
- 176) make up a play using old clothes as costumes
- 177) make up a game for practicing math facts
- 178) have a Spelling Bee
- 179) make up a game for practicing spelling
- 180) surprise an elderly neighbor or relative by weeding his/her garden
- 181) fingerpaint with shaving cream
- 182) collect sticks and mud and build a bird's nest
- 183) write newspaper articles for a pretend newspaper
- 184) put together a family newsletter
- 185) write reviews of movies or plays or TV shows or concerts you see during the summer
- 186) bake a cake
- 187) bake a batch of cookies
- 188) decorate a shoe box to hold your summer treasures
- 189) make a hideout or clubhouse
- 190) make paper airplanes
- 191) have paper airplane races
- 192) learn origami
- 193) make an obstacle course in your backyard
- 194) make friendship bracelets for your friends
- 195) make a wind chime out of things headed for the garbage
- 196) paint your face
- 197) braid hair
- 198) play tag
- 199) make a sundial
- 200) make food sculptures (from pretzels, gumdrops, string licorice, raisins, cream cheese, peanuts, peanut butter, etc.) and then eat it
- 201) make a terrarium
- 202) start a club
- 203) take a nap outside on your lawn
- 204) produce a talent show
- 205) memorize a poem
- 206) recite a memorized poem for your family
- 207) read the newspaper
- 208) write a Letter to the Editor about an article or issue in the newspaper

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