



10 Family Fun Ideas

1. Build a Backyard Obstacle Course

Kids need to move, and what better way is there to get them to do that than to provide them with an obstacle course. Look around your home and yard and use whatever you have on hand: pool noodles, balls, chairs, unused 2'x4's, hula hoops, etc. to create a challenging and fun course. If you have a swing set, put it to work! Provide as many opportunities as possible for your kids to jump, crawl, run, toss an item, and strengthen their balance. A search on the Internet for this topic will give you some ideas, or [read this blog](#). Your obstacle course can be as simple or as fancy as you want it.

Make the building of the obstacle course a family activity by giving your kids an opportunity to share their ideas, build stations and establish the rules of the race. Or set them loose and see what they design—with your approval, of course!

Time your kids to see who can make it through the course the fastest. Have them run it backward or hop through it on one foot. Change the order in which they go through each obstacle.

2. Get Messy in the Name of Art

Give your children permission to be messy (temporarily) in the name of art! Kids routinely show their artistic side when given crayons, markers, paper and paints. But for something different, let them be creative with items you have around the house! Pull utensils from the silverware drawer, or macaroni and aluminum foil from the pantry. Give them access to buttons and yarn, and other small items. The key is to provide opportunities for them to combine textures, shapes, lines and colors they don't normally get to use.

Lay down a bed sheet or blanket as a pallet and give your kids some ground rules.

- Tell your child what materials are available for their use and which are off limits.
- If your child is creating a temporary design, make that clear; but take a picture of it if you can.
- Establish whether their design must stay on the pallet or can go beyond the edges.
- Come to an agreement with your budding artist that at the end of the time you've decided upon,



everything will go back in its place. Take clean up on as a team and have some fun with it.

When they proudly show you what they created, celebrate that creativity. You might end up with a famous artist in your midst!

For inspiration, check out art by [Heidi Hooper](#) and [Saxton Freymann](#). Or see this [Google search result](#).

3. Share a Joke

If you find yourself standing in line with your kids, or they're waiting for dinner to finish cooking, help them pass the time by playing a game. Share a riddle or joke—"Dad jokes" are some of the funniest! The first person to laugh, loses. Here are a few riddles to get you started:

- R: What begins with an "E" but only has one letter?
- A: An envelope.
- R: Why do ducks have tail feathers?
- A: To cover their buttquacks.
- R: What has a thumb and four fingers, but is not a hand?
- A: A glove.

If you have a large family, you could continue the game with the remaining members until only one person who hasn't laughed is left. If you begin with a list of jokes, you can take turns reading the jokes, or the winner can read the jokes in a new game.

4. Cook a Meal Together

What can make meal time more fun and engaging for your kids? Cooking the meal together! Assign each family member to help with a different task. Even the littlest ones can brush butter on garlic bread or set the table! Older kids may need some instruction from you, but could cut up items or do the actual cooking.

You may find that kids who usually shy away from eating a particular food item are more willing to try it if they take part in preparing it for the family. Likewise, an older child may gain the confidence they need to plan a meal of their own.

Take it up a level: Organize a cook-off with your kids! Have each child pick what they want to make and share the results with each other to determine the best recipe. Share their work (either an image or a sample of the real thing) and let your friends and family be the judge!

5. Go a Nature Walk

What kind of nature is your area best known for? Is it birds or butterflies? Rocks or bugs? Flowers or trees? Or is it shells? Pick one and make a list of the varieties your region offers. (The internet can help.) Then go on a family walk and see how many varieties from your list you can find!

While walking, talk to your kids about God and how He creates everything—each beautiful, purposeful and interesting in its own way—just like He made each one of them!

Hint: Timing is everything! Your best opportunity to see different birds is just after



sunrise or just before sunset. Butterflies are most active during the warmest time of the day. And some flowers only open at night, while others close at night.

6. Create an Alphabet Gratitude Journal

Focus your family members on what's positive in their lives by putting together an alphabet gratitude journal! You'll need some blank paper, glue, scissors, and a bunch of magazines and fliers you don't mind being cut up. Decide whether you'll make one journal as a family or if each person will make their own.

Cut out images of items you are grateful for. On the first page of your journal, glue down an image of an item that starts with the letter A. Examples are a juicy, red apple or an announcement about Awana. Before moving on to the next page, stop and thank God for that item. Tell Him why you are grateful to have it in your life. Work your way through the alphabet, stopping to pray after each page.

Don't have any magazines to cut up? Children can draw the items they are grateful for. Older kids can even write a paragraph about each item. Make sure to put a date on the journal. It will be fun to return to in years to come.

7. Play "Would You Rather"

Encourage dinner time conversation and play a game of "would you rather" with your family. Go around the table, taking turns asking the questions. Here are a few suggestions

Would you Rather:

- ... be able to smell only bad-smelling things or never be able to smell again?
- ... be able to breathe underwater or run on top of water?
- ... write a best-selling book or star in a movie?

For a bigger challenge, choose a theme that each question must relate to (food, summer, silliness, etc.) For more ideas, the Internet can help.

Whether your questions are humorous and off-the-wall or realistic and serious, you are sure to learn a lot about one another and have a lot of fun in the process.

8. Put a new twist on Ding Dong Ditch

For an activity your kids are sure to love, teach them Ding Dong Ditch. Now before you say, "That's not very nice," this version has a twist. After ringing your neighbor's doorbell, leave a gift before you run and hide.

There is so much people need and so many things that would brighten someone's day. Consider a plant, homemade cookies, a card or poem. Or maybe give a grocery gift card, a hand-drawn coupon offering to help with a house project or toiletries. Get creative with your kids. You can gift anonymously or sign your names on a card. Include a Bible verse and some kind words.

Now drop off your gift and hide! Your kids will get a kick out of seeing the surprised look on their "victim's" face and knowing they helped make someone's day. And let's be real; the odds of them hiding without getting caught are slim.

Note: A couple of things to keep in mind. Only choose friends and neighbors who wouldn't mind someone ringing their doorbell and running. And be mindful of any local laws or health restrictions.



9. Make Your Own Puzzle

Print a copy of the cover of your child’s handbook, or the cover of any favorite book, and turn it into a fun puzzle! Glue the copy to something that is both sturdy and can be easily cut—cardboard, poster board or card stock would work. If you don’t have anything to back the copy, no worries! Use printer paper for a low-budget project.

Based on the skill level of your child, cut the picture into puzzle pieces. Shuffle the pieces around and give them to your child to put together. Some kids will need to look at the actual book to help them put the puzzle together while others will enjoy the challenge of figuring out what the book is as they work!

Family Game Night: For some friendly competition, make a puzzle for each of your kids and time how fast it takes them to put it together. The first one done, wins! For an individual activity, time your child on the first round and then challenge them to beat their own time. Join them in the fun and see if they can beat you!

10. Bury a Time Capsule

Do you want to remind your future selves of what you were doing in 2020? Do you want to leave a message for others? A family time capsule is a fun way to do so.

In order to preserve the items you want unearthed in the future, it’s important to start with an airtight container that has a secure seal and won’t break. Some websites recommend stainless steel containers as the best choice.

Ask each family member to tuck some things into the container: a picture, drawing, small toy, poem, a family story, tokens, for example. Include something with the date on it, but avoid items that could rust over time and damage the contents. Consider asking family members who live far away to contribute. (It’s a great activity for a family reunion!)

