



SUMMER GUIDE

TO FUN

STAY SAFE WHEN AROUND FIREWORKS

Fireworks have been integral components of celebrations for centuries. These pyrotechnics originated in ancient China, with their earliest forms thought to be made from bamboo stalks thrown into a fire. Fireworks ultimately evolved into gunpowder-filled paper tubes. Modern fireworks still largely use traditional gunpowder as well as additional ingredients like aluminum and iron to create flashes, bangs and sparks. Additional elements are blended to create the colors that make for vivid fireworks displays.

Fireworks can be a wonder to behold, but there is no denying that shooting them off can be dangerous business. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that eight deaths and an estimated 9,700 injuries involving fireworks occurred in 2023. Of the eight deaths, five were associated with misuse of fireworks and two with a device malfunction. Fireworks injuries increased between 2008 and 2023, which underscores the importance of fireworks safety.

To celebrate safely, the CPSC urges consumers to follow these tips:

- **Keep a bucket of water** or a garden hose nearby in case of fire or another mishap.

- **Make sure fireworks are legal** where you live and only purchase and set off those that are labeled for consumer use. Never purchase fireworks that are designed for professionals.

- **Only light one firework at a time**, then move away from it quickly.

- **Children should not be allowed to play with** or ignite fireworks. This includes sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures that can reach or exceed 2,000 F, which is hot enough to melt some metals.

- **Soak malfunctioning fireworks in water.** Do not try to relight them.

- **Never place any part of your body directly over** a firework when lighting the fuse.

- **Never point or throw fireworks** at anyone.

- **Douse spent fireworks** with water before tossing them in the trash.

- **Stay sober** when using fireworks. Alcohol or drug impairment can cause people to act recklessly and make mistakes when handling fireworks.

Spectators should remain at a distance from any fireworks being ignited. Fireworks should be lit away from buildings or trees. Many times it is safer to let professionals handle the fireworks since they are trained in the proper

Saturday, June 27 **Saturday, July 25** **Saturday, Aug. 29** 

Live Music **Beer Garden**

Saturday, Sept 26

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- 5/23/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 5/30/2026** - MSTS 410 Sprint Car Special
- 6/6/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 6/13/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 6/20/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 6/27/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 7/3/2026** - Independence Day Special
- 7/11/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 7/25/2026** - Sunoco Late Model Night
- 8/1/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 8/8/2026** - Bob Haase Memorial
- 8/15/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 8/22/2026** - Regular Race Night
- 8/28/2026** - Lynn Langenberg Memorial
- 9/26/2026** - Wyatt Frisch Memorial

Weekly Racing Admission:

Adult Ticket: \$15.00
Kids 10 to 15: \$10.00
Kids 9 & Under: Free
Pit Pass: 30.00
Kids 6-13 Pit Pass: 10.00
Kids 5 & Under Pit Pass: Free

SMTS May 30

Adult Ticket: \$30.00
Kids 10-15: \$10.00
Kids 9 & Under: Free
Pit Pass: \$35.00
Kids 6-13 Pit Pass: \$10.00
Kids 5 & Under Pit Pass: Free

Independence Day Special July 3

Adult Ticket: \$20.00
Kids 10-15: \$10.00
Kids 9 & Under: Free
Pit Pass: \$35.00
Kids 6-13 Pit Pass: \$10.00
Kids 5 & Under Pit Pass: Free

Bob Haase Memorial SLMR Aug. 8

Adult Ticket: \$25.00
Kids 10 to 15: \$10.00
Kids 9 and under: Free
Pit Pass: \$35.00
Kids 6-13 Pit Pass: \$10.00
Kids 5 & Under Pit Pass: Free

Lynn Langenberg Memorial Aug 28

360 Sprints, Championship Night

Adult Ticket: \$25.00
Kids: 10-15: \$10.00
Kids: 9 and under Free
Pit Pass: \$35.00
Kids 6-13 Pit Pass: \$10.00
Kids 5 & Under Pit Pass: Free

Start Times:
Hot laps start at 7:00
Racing starts at 7:30

2900 Old Highway 8 • Norfolk, NE 68701

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GET FIRED UP ABOUT THESE FIREWORKS ALTERNATIVES

Fireworks are integral components of many large celebrations. Pyrotechnics may rise into the sky right after midnight at the start of a new year, during sporting events, and of course to mark Canada Day or Independence Day festivities.

Although fireworks can be impressive displays with their awe-inspiring designs and colors, they are best left to professionals and ideally avoided by amateur enthusiasts. In 2023, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated that 9,700 individuals were treated in hospital emergency departments for fireworks-related injuries. The CPSC indicates that the majority of fireworks injuries are burns that affect hands, fingers, head, face, and ears. Leaving fireworks to professional pyrotechnics experts can reduce injuries and even deaths.

That leaves the question of what revelers can do to make their celebrations festive without relying on fireworks? There are plenty of options and fun alternatives to fireworks.

• **Confetti:** Throwing confetti can simulate the different colors of fireworks displays. Choose recycled paper that will not have a detrimental effect on the environment, and clean up thoroughly after the celebration.

• **Noisemakers:** Children can bang pots and pans or use other items to make noise in celebration to simulate the pops and bangs of fireworks.

• **Sprinklers:** Instead of sparklers, kids can use sprinklers and water features for fun. Some pools have water return jet add-ons that spray water up in the air or out over the pool. When paired with colorful underwater lights, this can make an impressive display to swim through on a hot evening.

• **Snappers or caps:** Depending on the area where you live, smaller popping novelty items that make a loud popping noise when thrown or stepped on may be sold. They are generally safer to handle than traditional fireworks.

• **Balloons:** Everyone can play games involving water balloons or even regular balloons. Sitting or stomping on balloons can create loud pops reminiscent of fireworks.

• **Fiber optic novelties:** Celebrants can wave fiber optic wands or other novelties that cast bright lights. Additional options are glow sticks that also can light up the night.

Although fireworks can be impressive, it's best to watch them from afar and leave their handling to professionals. Safer alternatives are best for home celebrations.

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Ages 6 - 9 : : Ages 10 - 13

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June 2-25
T/Th: 5:30 or 6:30pm
Fee: \$50 M / \$80 N
Registration Deadline: May 21

JULY SPORTS CLINICS
Limited to 30 in each session
Fee: \$35 M / \$50 N

Pre-K & Kindergarten: 5:30-6:15pm
Grades 1-4: 6:30-7:30pm
Jumpstarter B-ball Clinic: July 6-8
Kickstarter Soccer Clinic: July 27-29

Mighty Motor Skills: July 13-15
Ages 3-6 (w/ adult): 5:30-6:15pm
Volleyball Basics Clinic: July 20-22
Grades 1-4: 6:00-7:00pm

SPORTS CAMPS

Soccer Camp (Gr. 3-8)
June 1-3, 9:00-11:00am
Fee: \$60 M / \$90 N

Tennis Camp (Gr. 1-6)
June 1-3, 9:00-11:00am
Fee: \$60 M / \$90 N

Rick Squiers All-American Volleyball Camp (Gr. 4-12)
June 8-9, 9:00am-4:00pm
Registration link provided on our website

Mike Trader Basketball Camp
June 15-17, 8:00am-4:00pm
Ages 7-18
Registration link provided on our website

Golf Camp (Gr. 3-8)
June 22-24, 8:00-10:00am
Fee: \$100 M / \$130 N

Football Camp (Gr. 3-8)
June 29 - July 1, 9:00-11:00am
Fee: \$60 M / \$90 N

SWIM LESSONS

T/W/Th for 2 wks - \$45 M / \$75 N
Session 1: June 2-11 (AM or PM)
Session 2: June 23 - July 2 (AM or PM)
Session 3: July 14-23 (AM or PM)
Session 4: August 4-13 (PM only)
Session 5: Aug. 25 - Sept. 3 (PM only)
****NEW** DIVING CAMP: July 28-30**

GYMNASTICS

Session 2: June 15 - July 11
Classes announced: May 22
Registration opens: June 8

Session 3: July 20 - Aug. 15
Classes announced: June 29
Registration opens: July 13

Check out our website for more information -
www.norfolkymca.org
402-371-9770

NORFOLK FAMILY YMCA

8 GAMES TO TRY AT THE NEXT BACKYARD BASH

Games can enhance any outdoor function. Whether at the beach or in one's backyard, activities can keep guests entertained in between the food and other refreshments. And the good news is that most games designed for these types of functions are appropriate for players across a wide range of ages.

The following are eight games that can add to the excitement of any outdoor gathering.

1. Ladder toss: Also known as ladder golf, this game requires players to toss string-attached balls onto a ladder-shaped target. Points are awarded depending on which rung the ball lands on.

2. Kubb: Pronounced "KOOB," this Swedish lawn game believed to have originated during the era of the Vikings and is best described as a blend of bowling and

horseshoes. Two teams compete to knock over their opponents' wooden blocks by throwing batons.³ **Cornhole:** Many people have played cornhole, which involves tossing bean bags at the cornhole board. The objective is to get the bag into the hole or on the board to score points. The game can be played as singles or doubles. The first team to reach 21 points wins.

4. Spikeball™: Also called Roundnet, this two-on-two sport is played by hitting a ball off a net with the goal of preventing the opposing team from returning the ball within three touches.

5. Ring toss: This is another game that tests hand-eye coordination. Players take turns tossing the rings onto the target pegs. Each peg is worth a different number of points. The first player to reach the agreed-upon amount of points wins.

6. Connect four in a row: Giant versions of familiar tabletop games also are available for yard use. With this game, players need to get four chips in a row, either up and down or diagonal.

7. Kan Jam®: Similar to cornhole or horseshoes, Kan Jam® features two teams of two that alternate between throwing a frisbee and trying to deflect it.

The goal is to get the frisbee into the can.

8. Rollers: Goals are placed 25 feet apart and then players roll wooden discs to try to get closest to the goal. Each side of the disc has a different number to determine the point value.

Backyard events can be enhanced with some game play. There are plenty of fun options for your next gathering.



Explore Someplace New

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- Cowboy Trail - Norfolk Connector
- Maple Creek Recreation Area
- Maskenthine Lake Recreation Area
- Pilger Recreation Area
- Willow Creek State Recreation Area



NRD RECREATION EXPLORATION

The NRD recreation exploration challenges participants to explore as many NRD recreation areas as they can between March 1, 2026 & September 18, 2026.

Join in on the fun this summer!



STARS, STROLLS & SMORES

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Wednesday, June 3rd

Wednesday, July 1st

Wednesday, July 29th

visit our website to see a complete list of locations and activities



POOL SAFETY STRATEGIES TO KEEP IN MIND THIS SUMMER

Pools are great spots to beat the heat and enjoy some exercise. They're also ideal spots for children to socialize with their friends away from screens.

As inviting as pools can be, it is important that swimmers recognize that safety is paramount, particularly for those who have the benefit of backyard pools. The organization Stop Drowning Now indicates that an average of 3,500 to 4,000 people drown each year in the United States, with 10 drownings occurring each day. In addition, 6,500 non-fatal injuries are treated in hospital emergency departments each year, with a significant percentage of these incidents involving children under the age of 15 injured in residential pools.

Pools are fun spaces that should not elicit fear. These swimming pool safety tips can help safeguard swimmers of all ages.

Install barriers

Barriers like tall, self-latching fences and gates (with vertical panels not easily scaled) can deter unmonitored entry into a pool area. Such safety

precautions are mandatory in many towns and cities, even if there is a separate fence around the perimeter of the yard. Additional safety precautions can include special ladders that roll down or lock for above-ground pools, and alarms that sound if someone opens a pool gate without homeowners' knowledge.

Close supervision

Lifeguards are stationed at public pools to keep careful watch of swimmers. The role of lifeguard at pools on private properties must be filled by responsible adults. Children should never be allowed to swim without someone monitoring the water at all times. Swimmers should be asked to exit the pool in the event the adult monitoring the pool needs to head indoors for a minute or if the adult's attention is pulled elsewhere while outside. When hosting a pool party, hosts can consider hiring a lifeguard to watch the pool so they can handle hosting duties elsewhere.

Learn to swim

Although it's possible to drown in mere inches of water, the



likelihood of drowning is lower for experienced and skilled swimmers. Enroll children in swim lessons so they can learn the proper techniques. Until kids' swimming skills are strong, it may be advisable for them to wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket when in the water. Inflatable water wings and other devices are not guaranteed lifesaving devices.

Keep the pool clean

A pool should be properly maintained and sanitized to remain a safe space. The primary pool sanitizers include chlorine and bromine, which help prevent algae and bacterial growth. Maintaining a proper pH in the water increases swimmer comfort and helps the sanitizer work optimally.

Dive carefully

Swimmers should always enter the pool feet-first, unless there is a diving board and a safe diving depth. The American National Standards Institute says the minimum depth of a diving board in a swimming pool is 7.5 feet, but some municipalities have their own recommendations. A depth of nine feet often is recommended for safer diving.

Walk, don't run

It's tempting to run around the perimeter of an inground pool, especially when kids are having fun. But wet surfaces become slippery, and it's easy to slip and fall, risking injury or falling into the pool water.

Swimming pool safety is vital to keep everyone out of harm's way.

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GETTING KIDS BACK INTO FREE PLAY

One of the endearing components of the Netflix series "Stranger Things," which reached its conclusion at the close of 2025, is how the show harkened viewers back to the unencumbered days of being a kid in the 1980s — that is, until those kids had to fight for their survival against otherworldly foes. Demogorgons and mind

flayers aside, the Hawkins kids would hop on their bikes and traverse their town, or engage their imaginations during game play in a wood-paneled basement. Baby Boomers, Generation Xers and even Millennials can likely recall youthful days when they had plenty of free time on their hands to pursue various adventures.

Fast forward to 2026,



and today's children lead much more structured lives. With the rise of "helicopter parenting" and "tiger parenting," children find themselves continuously engaged with academics, structured sports teams, music lessons, and choreographed play dates, largely initiated by the adults in their lives. "Free play," defined as child-initiated, unstructured activity, has largely been phased out.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest that free play is not simply a break from learning, but the "primary vehicle through which children develop the brain architecture necessary for adult success." Free play should be encouraged and not lambasted. Here's a look at how free play is imperative for healthy kids.

Improves executive functioning: Research published in The Journal of Pediatrics says children who have more time for unstructured play have better self-regulation and executive function. These elements can predict academic success better than IQ, say health experts.

• Greater brain development:

Researchers at Baylor College of Medicine have found that children who don't play much develop brains 20 to 30 percent smaller than is normal for their age.

Stress reduction: In their clinical report, "The Power of Play," the AAP suggests that when play and safe, stable, nurturing relationships are missing in a child's life, stress hormones can elevate to harmful levels. Play is so essential to kids that the AAP suggests pediatricians recommend more of it at each child well visit.

Promotes conflict resolution: Children who engage in free play learn on their own how to keep the game going through compromise, rather than relying on a parent or referee.

Free play is an important component of a child's well-being, and one that is not stressed nearly as much as it should be for good health and future success. Kids can enjoy self-directed play that is nature-based and unplugged from digital distraction



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- Sep. 5-May 30: Thu-Sat 8:00am-2:00pm
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- Mon-Fri 7:30am-5:00pm, Sat 8:00am-12:00pm
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- Open Daily at 11:00am
- [Simple Solutions](#) • 402.273.4395 • Mon-Fri 9:00am-5:00pm •
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- Fri-Sat 10:00am-3:00pm or call for assistance

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Long Pine Days: June 5-6

Fall Craft/Vendor Fair & Car Show: October 10



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GREAT ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS COME THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

The arrival of summer is a momentous day for children. Summer means school is closed and weeks of rest, recreation and fun in the sun are on the schedule.

Although summer may start off with a bang, it may not be too long before kids are uttering the dreaded, "I'm bored," leaving parents and caregivers looking for ways to keep children occupied. Having a list of activities at the ready can help families stay active and engaged during the dog days of summer.

Summertime swimming

Those lucky enough to have a backyard pool have a great source of entertainment right at home. Swimming alone can grow monotonous for kids, so work with friends' parents to devise a schedule to have the kids alternate whose house they visit for swimming sessions. Standard games like water volleyball or diving retrieval games can add some fun, but many times kids are happy to splash and float with friends. Stock a cooler with water, juice and healthy snacks so kids can just hop out of the water and grab a refreshment, rather than leaving a water-logged trail into the kitchen. Those who do not have a pool can consider membership to a township pool, where everyone can mingle with neighbors.

Host a movie night

The dog days of summer tend to be humid, hot and sometimes uncomfortable. Scheduling activities for later in the day makes the most of weather that has cooled off a bit. Purchase or borrow a projector that hooks up to a computer

or tablet, and set up a screen in the yard. Stream a family-friendly movie and prepare ready-made bags of popcorn or cotton candy for the show.

Add water to everything

Favorite backyard games can be enhanced with the use of a little water. For example, instead of tossing bean bags for cornhole, fill up water balloons. Kids who are playing tag or games like capture the flag may have to run through a garden sprinkler to get into their opponent's territory. Kids can put their engineering skills to use by building an obstacle course of hurdles and the like from tires or pool noodles. Poke holes into one pool noodle and feed a garden hose into the end to create a water hazard.

Go on a scavenger hunt

Whether at a beach, park, or even walking the neighborhood, families can have a list of objects that must be found. The first child to find all of the items on the list gets a prize, such as choosing which ice cream shop to visit.

Dance in the rain

Summertime is known for the sudden arrival of storms. When a downpour occurs, have the family head into the garage with the door open to catch the amazing sights of Mother Nature. Take turns briefly running out into the deluge to dance and splash in the rain. Retreat to the indoors when thunder and lightning are close by.

Families have plenty of ways to fill the dog days (and nights) of summer with entertaining games and other activities.



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 SAND VOLLEYBALL Sat. July 25 at 9 a.m.	 KIDS PEDAL PULL Sat. July 25 at 1 p.m.	 FFA RIBFEST Sat. July 25 at 5 p.m. till gone
 BULL RIDING Sat. July 25 at 8:00 p.m. <small>with Mason Michaels in the Beer Garden</small> Extreme Bull Riding Plus Barrel Racing, Jr. Bulls, Mutton Busting	 TEAM ROPING Sun. July 26 at 9 a.m.	 MIDWEST MOTORSPORTS GO CART RACING with Local Classes Sun. July 26 at 5 p.m.

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TIPS TO PLAN A SUMMER ADVENTURE

Few people would deny summer is a season of relaxation. But that familiar laid back vibe does not mean summer also can't be a time for adventure.

The definition of an adventure depends on who does the defining. To some, an adventure may entail relaxing on a boat as it sways back and forth on a serene lake or in a calm ocean. For others, adrenaline levels need to

rise in order for an activity to qualify as an adventure. It's perfectly alright for people to define adventure in their own unique way. However one chooses to define an adventure, the following are some summer adventure planning pointers that can make an upcoming excursion more enjoyable.

• **Choose your destination and route.** Heading off for parts

unknown with no itinerary may seem like the ultimate adventure. However, a lack of planning can quickly derail a getaway. Traffic, fellow tourists, lodging shortages, and other unwanted developments are all likely when vacationers do not plan ahead. By planning an adventure in advance, travelers can choose routes that are less likely to be overcome with traffic, book stays in memorable and comfortable accommodations and steer clear of crowded tourist destinations.

• **Leave yourself some leeway.** Of course, planning ahead does not require planning every second of each day you will be traveling. Leave yourself some wiggle room and free time to head off the beaten path if you so desire. Avoid making dinner reservations for each night you're traveling, as doing so might lead you to prioritize making the reservation over exploring. Instead, build in some days and nights where you can

go at your own pace without having to rush to ensure you make it to a prearranged activity or dinner reservation on time.

• **Pack food and beverages.** Nothing can derail an adventure more quickly than thirst and/or a growling stomach. Going off the grid or enjoying an adventure without a schedule dictating your every moment is easier when you pack food and beverages. Depending on where you're going, the nearest eatery could be far away, which means travelers who don't pack food and beverages are likely to spend more time driving in search of sustenance than they are enjoying an adventure.

• **Make a contingency plan.** Road trips are not as predictable as excursions to resorts that make no secret about all guests can enjoy during their stay. Traffic, large crowds and weather can turn an adventurous road trip into an exercise in managing frustration. A contingency plan that includes



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or contact Culture Director Patience Teboe, pteboe@poncatribene.gov

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a detailed list of alternative activities and destinations can ensure an adventure does not become a nightmare if forces beyond your control present themselves.

• **Ask for everyone's input.** Everyone, even solo travelers, can benefit from additional insight when planning an adventure. Parents can ask their children if there's anything in particular

they want to do during a trip so kids are equally excited about the vacation. Solo travelers can ask friends and family members for advice about potential activities and sights to see during their trip.

Planning a summer adventure can be its own enjoyable experience that heightens travelers' anticipation for an upcoming trip.

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A SUMMER CAMP TIMELINE FOR FAMILIES TO FOLLOW

Midwinter may seem like an odd time for families to begin thinking about summer camp, but parents with a history of arranging summer camp experiences for their children know spots typically fill

up long before the first day of spring.

Many summer camps limit the number of campers they accept, so it pays for families to familiarize themselves with a typical camp timeline so children's summers can be as memorable as possible.

- **January and February:** Families can begin researching summer camps once the holiday season has ended. If that seems early, this timeline reflects the growing demand for summer camps and the competition to secure a spot in a desired camp before it fills up. The American Camp Association estimates that more than 26 million children enroll in summer camp each year. That statistic underscores the demand for summer camp and suggests the competition for spots could be significant. By researching potential options in January, families can identify their camp preferences and then go from there.

camp fees during those weeks when they will be on vacation with their children. If camps won't charge camper fees during weeks when families are on vacation, parents may be able to afford more expensive camps. Parents can use this period to identify fee structures at their preferred camps.

- **March:** Some camps begin registration in March, while others may make paperwork necessary for registration available at this time. If registration begins in March, parents are urged to identify precisely when that

figure to fill up quickly.

- **May/June:** Camp officials will likely reach out sometime during this period to welcome campers and let parents know about any supplies their children will need once camp opens. Some may offer orientation sessions during this period, and families can attend such meetings together so children can get acclimated to the campgrounds prior to the first day of camp. Visiting the site prior to camp opening can be especially helpful for first time campers who may have some anxiety about going to a new place.



Research conducted in January and February can be used to determine budget. The cost of summer camp varies widely, and parents who know how much they can afford to spend on camp can use that budget to whittle down their options. February also is a good time to consider summer travel plans. Some camps charge by the week, which means parents might not have to pay

process begins and exactly what needs to be done to ensure they can register their child. Secure all necessary paperwork prior to registration and ensure it's completed and submitted beforehand if that's a prerequisite for registration. If registration is completed online, confirm the URL in advance of registration day. Visit the website in advance as well. Doing so can allow you to create a user ID and password prior to registration, which is especially important if spots in the camp are limited and

Tens of millions of children make lasting memories at camp every summer. Parents who know the typical summer camp timeline have a better chance of securing a spot at a camp their children will enjoy. Camp Association estimates that more than 26 million children enroll in summer camp each year. That statistic underscores the demand for summer camp and suggests the competition for spots could be significant. By researching potential options in January, families can identify their camp preferences and then go from there. they can register their child. Secure all necessary paperwork prior to registration and ensure it's completed and submitted beforehand if that's a prerequisite for registration. If registration is completed online, confirm the URL in advance of registration day. Visit the website in advance as well. Doing so can allow you to create a user ID and password prior to registration, which is especially important if spots in the camp are limited and figure to fill up quickly.

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HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT FIT FOR SUMMER CAMP

Millions of adults have lots of great memories of summer camp. The right summer camp keeps kids engaged during a time of year when parents may be all too familiar with the phrase, "I'm bored."

than they might out of a sports camp. Some kids also might thrive on a more structured camp, while others may benefit from one that offers a range of activities each day and lets kids choose which ones they want to participate in.

a single session. If that's beyond your budget, then you can narrow your focus to less expensive offerings or consider sending children for fewer weeks or even half days (when camps allow it). While it can seem as though all camps are budget busters, that's not the case. Many local government recreation offices offer affordable summer camps. Local churches also may offer camp options that won't stretch parents thin. The earlier parents begin exploring their options, the more likely they may be to find a camp that won't break the bank.

camp predominantly staffed with local high school students on summer vacation? Even if a camp is staffed exclusively by adults, ask about the safety requirements necessary to be hired. That's especially important at camps where kids will be swimming and engaging in other physical activities that can lead to accident or injury. Even free play outside in summer can be dangerous if temperatures rise and staff members are not trained to spot the signs of dehydration or heat exhaustion.

Finding the right summer camp can be challenging. A range of variables, including budget, availability and accessibility, must be considered before making a decision that's right for each family. As summer camp season approaches, families can consider these tips to narrow down their options for prospective campers.

- Seek recommendations. Family members, friends and neighbors can be great resources when looking for a summer camp. That's especially true for families who have never sent a child to camp before. Ask around about each camp you're considering. Fellow parents may offer insight into the structure of the camp, its atmosphere, the attitude of staff members, and additional information that might be hard to glean from an open house.

- Avoid making it all about cost. Safety should be parents' foremost priority when choosing a summer camp. When exploring options, ask about staff and staff training. Are adults on staff, or is the

Millions create lasting memories at summer camp every year. Finding the right place for kids to spend the summer requires careful consideration of a host of variables.

- Determine your budget. Budget is a notable variable, as some camps may cost thousands of dollars for



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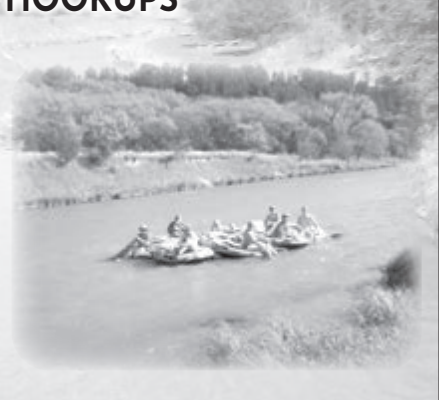
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HOW TO SPEED UP YOUR GOLF GAME

Golf is a challenging game that can sometimes frustrate even the most accomplished players. No two golf courses are the same, and seasoned players know that courses play differently each time. Greens that are accommodating on Saturday might be far more difficult on Sunday, which is part of what makes the game of golf such a fun challenge.

Pace of play may not matter much when a course isn't busy. But courses tend to draw crowds come spring, summer and early fall. During the more busy times of year, the United States Golf Association® offers these tips to golfers looking to improve their pace of play.

- Arrive on time and ready to play. Most courses give players a tee time, which indicates when their round will begin. Confirm the tee time the day before a scheduled round and arrive at the course ready to play. The USGA® urges players to arrive at the first tee early and with their equipment in order. Don't forget to ensure you have essentials like extra

balls, tees and gloves.

- Play from where you're comfortable. Each tee box features separate tees for players of various skill levels. Players who want to improve their pace of play are urged to begin each hole from the tee box where they're most comfortable. Players in the same group can play from separate tees, so if need be, choose to play from the tee nearest the pin so you can make it to the green more quickly. Resolve to spend as little time on the tee as possible without feeling as though you're rushing your tee shot.

- Strategize between shots. Once you have hit off the tee, strategize how you can get to the green as you approach your ball. Planning as you walk or drive can reduce the time you'll spend strategizing between shots, which can improve your pace of play considerably.

- Limit practice swings. Practice swings can help players shoot their best, but if improving pace of play is a goal, limiting practice swings to just one before each shot can help. Practice swings can even be taken while others in your

group are lining up and playing their shots. Just be sure to do so quietly and out of the sight line of your fellow players.

- Work with your fellow players. Follow each player's shot during your round so less time is spent finding each golfer's ball. In addition, fill each other's divots and rake bunkers together to cut time off your round.

- Use the group in front of you as a marker for time. Aspiring to keep up with the group in front of you is a good way to ensure your group is moving along. If that's proving difficult, let other groups behind you play through if they are moving more quickly than you

are. Similarly, if the group in front of you is moving slowly, politely ask to play through.

- Line up your putts while others are putting. Read the green while your fellow group members are putting and line up your shot accordingly so you spend less time on the greens. The USGA recommends leaving clubs on the side of the putting green that is closest to the next tee to save even more time.

There are many ways for golfers of all skill levels to improve pace of play so everyone can have as much fun as possible while getting a round in.



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HOBBIES TO GET SENIORS OUT AND ABOUT

The threat posed by social isolation has been known to medical researchers and health care professionals for years, but the issue gained wider attention during the pandemic. Restrictions on social gatherings during the pandemic opened millions of people's eyes to the ill effects of social isolation, and while that threat proved temporary for the majority of people across the globe, many seniors continue to

live largely isolated lives. According to the Mayo Clinic, depression, anxiety, increased risk of suicide, and various chronic health problems are some of the outcomes associated with loneliness. That's a troubling assessment that becomes even more disconcerting when considering a general decline in socialization as evidenced by the 2021 American Perspectives Survey. Survey participants indicated they have fewer

close friendships than they once did, speak with their friends less often and rely less on friends for personal support. That's challenging for adults of all ages, but it can be especially difficult for aging adults, who may be dealing with the loss of a spouse or other close confidantes they would otherwise rely on when confronting personal problems. Hobbies that promote socialization can help aging adults reestablish friendships and build new ones, paying dividends that can have a profound impact on their overall health. With that in mind, adults who feel as though their social circles are shrinking in mid-life or in retirement can look to these activities as means to rebuilding their social lives.

with like-minded individuals. Golf is not a team sport, but it is typically played in groups of two or four, making it an ideal activity for adults with free time on their hands to get out and about and meet other people. Leagues for softball, bowling and pickleball also provide opportunities to socialize, and many adults are participating in such leagues for that very reason. A CivicScience study released in 2025 found that 49 percent of adults who planned to participate in adult recreational sports leagues were doing so for social interaction and the chance to make friends.

- **Travel:** Travel can provide another means for aging adults to make friends. Group tours to foreign countries, day trips to local attractions arranged by township recreational offices or even overseas trips with friends you've fallen out of touch with can be a great means to build new friendships and reinvigorate old ones, all the while getting you out of the house.

These are just some ways for men and women to get out of the house and socialize with others their age, a worthy endeavor that can be highly beneficial to adults' overall health.

- **Book club:** A book club offers multiple benefits to adults. Book clubs are inherently social and tend to bring like-minded individuals together, which can help build new and lasting friendships that extend beyond weekly discussions. A 2021 study published in the journal Neurology also linked regular reading to a lower risk of developing dementia.

- **Sports:** Sports provide another avenue to socialize





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Council also advises cyclists to ensure that tires are inflated properly and that the bike is equipped with reflectors on the rear and front pedals and spokes.

Be Visible

It can be difficult to see bike riders, particularly at night. That is why people should wear bright clothing or reflective items. Whenever possible, riders should ride during the day. If riding at night, flashing lights and reflective clothing are a must.

Choose The Right Bike

Selecting a bike that fits the rider is key. If it's too big, it can be harder to control. A bicycle shop will have professionals on hand who can guide buyers on bike sizing and help them choose a bike that is appropriate and comfortable.

Choose Bike Lanes

Whenever possible, riders should opt for bike lanes, which improve safety for cyclists

Follow Road Rules

Cyclists must follow the same rules of the road as other vehicles. The NSC reminds riders that they should ride in single file in the direction of traffic. Cyclists should use hand signals when turning and exercise considerable caution at intersections. Before entering traffic, stop and look all around for traffic. Stop signs and other signage are not optional; cyclists should heed the rules of the road to stay safe.

Ride solo

Cyclists should stick to one rider per seat, with both hands on the handlebar. No one should ride on the handlebars or on the frame of the bike.

Travel light

If a rider must carry items, they should carry them in a backpack or strap items to the back of the bike.

The season for cycling is starting to heat up. Riders should review the rules of the road and riding safety tips before pedaling away.

Cycling is a great form of exercise and a wonderful means to enjoying the great outdoors. The organization People for Bikes says a record 112 million Americans rode a bike at least once in 2024. Youth ridership experienced a notable surge, with participation among those between the ages of three and 17 increasing to 56 percent.

make smarter choices to avoid injury.

Helmet

Every bike ride should begin by putting on a helmet. The NHTSA says sizing can vary between manufacturers, so it can take time to fit a helmet properly. But a well-fitting helmet is a necessary step to avoid serious head injuries.

Bike Inspection

It's important to inspect a bike prior to riding. The seat should be adjusted to the proper height and locked into place. All parts should be secure and working properly before riding. The National Safety

While cycling can be an enjoyable activity for all ages, it is not without risk. Thousands of cyclists are injured or killed in the United States every year, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Bicycle safety tips cannot remove all of the risk, but they can help a person



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