

20 Fun Family Activities to Do at Home

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Practicing social distancing doesn't have to mean sitting in front of the TV all day. Here are 20 fun family activities you can do inside and outside of the house.

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[Picnic in the Park](#)

If your family misses picnics in the park, you can bring this summertime activity into your backyard instead! Start by preparing a [traditional picnic lunch](#) like sandwiches, fruit, and potato chips. Load everything into a basket and bring it to your picnic destination, whether it's a blanket on the lawn or a patio table. Your family will get fresh air and a dose of vitamin D!



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Host a Four Square Tournament

This outdoor family activity gets everyone moving! You'll need four players and a large rubber ball. Draw a 12" x 12" square on your driveway. Divide into four squares—A, B, C, and D—and have one player stand in each square. The player in A starts by bouncing the ball in his square, then batting it with open hands into another square. That player must hit the ball into another square. When one player misses or hits the ball out of bounds, he moves to D, the players behind him advance, and you begin again.



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Build a Garden Labyrinth

Outline a path in your backyard using stones, twigs, or unmowed grass. Simple patterns can be found on the Internet or in books. Little kids especially will love following the twists and turns of your creation.

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Plan a Treasure Hunt

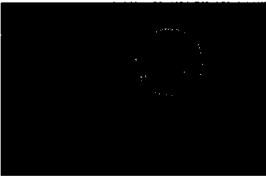
Kids can't resist a scavenger hunt! Mom or Dad can plant little dime-store jewels and treasures in the garden, then draw up a map with directions for kids. (For an ancient look, let some coffee soak into the map to brown it with age; while the paper is wet, rip it around the edges). You can even hide the map somewhere in the house and let the kids find it while making the bed or putting away toys.



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Get Cooking

Don't forget about indoor family activities for cold or rainy days. One idea is baking or cooking together. Kids especially love making pie crusts, biscuits, and pizza because they can squish the dough with their fingers. When the baking is done, sit back and enjoy a bite alongside a refreshing drink.



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Check Out the Stars

To get started on this fun family activity, download a star chart from the internet. Then choose one spot in your yard that affords a clear view of the heavens, and venture outside to watch how the night sky changes each day. As a bonus, getting a little fresh air before bedtime might help your kids sleep!



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Do Magic Tricks

For a unique family activity, look up magic tricks on YouTube and put on a show for little kids. You can also teach an older child some tricks he can perform in front of the whole family.



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Play Capture the Flag

You'll need six or more people and two pieces of fabric in different colors, cut into flags (one for each player). Using flour for the outline, divide your yard into two adjoining courts about 12" x 12" each.

Divide into two teams; each person places a flag on the back line of his court. Starting from their flag line, players dash to the opposite side of the field and try to pick up a flag from the other team. If a player is tagged, he's out and must stand behind the opposing team's line of flags. If he captures a flag, he's safe and can return to his court. The team that captures all of the opposing side's flags first wins.



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Have a Taste Test

Choose an exotic cuisine that your children haven't tried, such as Thai or Brazilian. Find the country on a globe or a map, and read a short encyclopedia or Internet introduction to that nation's culture. Then make a signature dish from that country for lunch or dinner—for example, Pad Thai or Brazilian coxinhas (chicken croquettes).



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Go Camping Inside

Yearning for the great outdoors? Campgrounds may be closed, but you can create a makeshift experience in your living room! Set up blanket forts or tents, tell stories around a "fire" (candles or a lantern), and eat foods like hot dogs and s'mores.



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Brush Up on Tie Dye

Brush up on the basics of tie dye, and teach the creative family activity to your children. They'll love making new shirts, socks, blankets, and pillow cases! [Check out this slideshow for pattern ideas.](#)



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Collect Leaves for Artwork

Take a walk in your backyard or a secluded local park, and have your children collect fallen leaves. Once you get home, lay the leaves on paper and rub the side of a crayon over it, creating a silhouette. You can also paint the leaves and use them as homemade stamps.



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Solve a Puzzle

When everyone works together, completing a puzzle becomes a manageable feat. Choose one that depicts a meaningful scene or location—for example, if you loved your family vacation to New York City, buy a puzzle of the skyline.

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Kick the Can



This outdoor family activity needs at least four people. The child who is "it" starts by kicking the can and counting to 100 while the other players hide. The kicker sets the can upright and shouts, "Ready or not, here I come." Then he looks for the other players. When he finds one, he yells the player's name and races her back to the can, trying to be the first to knock it over. If the kicker fails, the game starts over. If the kicker succeeds, the hider must stand near the can while the kicker searches. Other hiders may try to free captives by kicking the can before being spotted. If they succeed, everyone hides again. The game ends when everyone has been captured.

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Create a Dress-Up Box



On a rainy day, weed out unwanted dresses, hats, shoes, and costume jewelry from your closets. Your kids will love playing dress-up with the items. Mom and Dad can even join the fun in this indoor family activity.

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Play Some Cards



Turn off the TV and teach your child a classic card game like gin rummy, hearts, or Uno. Adapt the rules for younger kids, and you have an entertaining indoor family activity.



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[Practice your bowling skills](#)

Practice your bowling skills with a makeshift alley. All you need are some bottles or cans and a semi-heavy ball. This family activity will improve your child's skills, so he'll be a pro once the lanes open up again!



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Conduct a Science Experiment

You can find plenty of educational science experiments online; [check out this article for six fun ideas](#). Your kids will be entertained while learning about important scientific principles.



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Draw a Chalk Family

This outside family activity requires you to lay on the driveway. Kids can trace everyone's body using sidewalk chalk, then fill in the silhouette with different colors. You'll end up with a unique life-sized family portrait.



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Watch Old Movies

On rainy or dreary days, it's perfectly fine to watch a little television. But consider ditching the modern cartoons for classic movies. Children will enjoy *Baby Take a Bow*, with Shirley Temple; *Top Hat*, with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire; *Young Tom Edison*, with Mickey Rooney; *National Velvet*, with Elizabeth Taylor; and anything that stars Laurel and Hardy. You can also make homemade popcorn or bring out the sweet treats.