

Summer Recreation **GUIDE**



Plan a Perfect Vacation

Planning a summer vacation can be stressful as you face the tasks of booking a place to stay, securing transportation and finding fun things to do. You can alleviate some of the stress by making these arrangements several months before you plan to leave. Vacation is the time to leave stress behind.

Travel agencies are great for streamlining a lot of the logistics. With a desired vacation date in mind, talk to your local agent about taking the burden of vacation planning off your shoulders.

WHEN AND WHERE

Your choice of destination might affect the timing of your trip, so choose this first. Do your research to find out when a potential vacation spot experiences its busiest tourism season. Long lines and big crowds may not be ideal when you're looking to relax.

Finding time for a vacation can be just as hard as planning your trip. Busy work schedules, school and budgets can make it difficult to set aside a few days to get away. Decide on a time period that works for you and your vacation partners.

If you are planning to vacation around a specific event, such as a sporting event or concert, be sure to book your tickets in advance. Tickets from second-hand vendors can come at a much higher price for a sold-out event.

SET A BUDGET

Begin building a savings account meant for vacation expenses long before your trip. Setting aside extra money can give your experi-

ence a big boost as you won't need to worry about pinching pennies. Make sure to be honest about the budget you can manage for a vacation. You don't want to come home and worry about making the

bills.

Determine how much of your budget will go toward dining out, rooming costs, transportation and entertainment, and then plan accordingly.

CREATE AN ITINERARY

Creating a list of things to do will keep your vacation organized and give you an opportunity to relax. Instead of finding ways to entering yourself once you get to your destination,

research the area beforehand. Make a list of restaurants you want to try and sights to see.

Don't be afraid to stray away from your itinerary. You might find exciting new opportunities on your journey.



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Fishing Tips

Whether you're on the banks of a local pond or boating in the ocean, fishing affords you a way to enjoy the great outdoors and fill your freezers at the same time. The perfect mixture of relaxation and excitement makes fishing a great summertime activity. There are a few things you should know before heading out on the lake.

Most states require adults to purchase a fishing license before legally casting a line. Money earned from these licenses typically goes to supporting the fish and wildlife in the area. Make sure to research individual states' fishing laws before you plan an out-of-state trip.

FINDING A HOT SPOT

Finding a location where the fish are biting is usually the hardest part of fishing. It can be even more difficult if you are unfamiliar with a lake. Do your research before heading out.

A good way to become accustomed to a region's fishing environment is to contact an area's chamber of commerce. There you can find information about which fish are common, and you can choose bait and gear accordingly.

Now that you know which kind of fish you will be catching, network with the locals to find out where they are biting. The salesperson at the local bait shop will likely have great advice about where others are having luck. You also can book a professional guide to show you the ropes.

LIVE VS. ARTIFICIAL BAIT

An argument that can be heard at nearly every bait



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shop in America is the choice between live and artificial bait. Both types have positive features that can benefit any fisherman.

Live bait is a popular choice due to its availability. You can usually find great bait options such as worms, crickets or grasshoppers by simply

exploring your backyard. A bait shop also can provide you with other popular baits such as minnows or shad.

Artificial lures are effective but require a little more skill to use. Knowing how to make your lure look appealing to fish can be challenging. Different lures are designed to

travel to three different zones: the surface, subsurface and bottom. Each zone offers different opportunities in size and type of fish these lures will attract.

CATCH AND RELEASE

Releasing fish comes with the responsibility of ensuring

the safety of both you and the fish.

Avoid fishing from tall bridges. You should be able to gently release the fish back into the water.

Set the hook quickly. If you give a fish time, it may swallow the hook, which can be deadly.

Summer Safety

Summertime means family vacations, spending time outdoors and grilling. Don't forget to keep yourself safe while you are enjoying the warm temperatures.

Planning for safety is just as important as planning fun activities outdoors. Insect repellents, sunscreen and plenty of water should always be readily available before you head outside. Make a travel kit containing protective tools.

STAYING SAFE IN THE SUN

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sunburns can increase your risk of skin cancer. Make sure to take proper precautions when exposed to the sun for long periods of the time. The CDC recommends taking the following steps:

- If you are unable to find shade, wearing a wide-brim hat is an efficient way to protect your face, head, ears and neck;
- Periodically apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 that features both UVA and UVB protection;
- Drink plenty of water to keep yourself hydrated in hot temperatures; and
- Wait until cooler parts of the day to perform strenuous activities. Exerting high amounts of energy may cause



heat stroke during high temperatures.

PROPER GRILLING

During the summer, people tend to grill outdoors rather than heating up their home by using the oven. Using a grill comes with different obstacles than using an indoor cooking method. Keep in mind these important safety tips before serving.

Preheating your grill to the

proper temperature is crucial. If you are using charcoal, pre-heat your coals for at least 20 to 30 minutes before applying meat. A temperature gauge can be a huge help in determining proper levels.

Once your grill is sufficiently heated, clean the grate with a steel brush. The hot temperatures will burn off dangerous bacteria.

A meat thermometer is another tool you need to safely

grill. Ensuring your food has reached the recommended internal temperature will keep you and your family safe from serious illness.

SWIMMING SAFELY

Planning to hit the beach or pool? Safety should be your top concern, especially for inexperienced swimmers.

Avoid using air-filled swimming aids for your children. Stick to life jackets, especially

in deeper waters. Never take your eyes off young children while they are swimming. Make sure they are always within arm's reach just in case they need assistance.

Other tips include taking a shower and always washing your hands after using the restroom before you get in the pool. Bacteria can spread quickly in the water, so do your part to keep the water as sanitary as possible.

Renting an RV

Road trips are much more comfortable in a large recreational vehicle. A vehicle of this magnitude can be an expensive investment, especially if you only plan to use it for summer vacation. Learn the ins and outs of renting an RV so your family can view the country on the highway.

There are many factors to consider when choosing an RV to rent. Space, size and how comfortable you are driving a vehicle of this size are just a few. Be sure to have your local RV salesperson show you how to operate all the functions of a recreational vehicle.

SIZE

The size of your RV depends greatly on the number of travelers. Some states require a commercial driver's license to operate larger vehicles. Be sure to check the state laws for your travel route.

Here is some information from The National RV Dealers Association about a few of the common types of RVs you will find for rent.

- **Class A:** These vehicles can range from 24 to 40 feet. They typically feature a kitchen, bathroom, sleeping areas, heating and air conditioning. You can comfortably fit two to seven people in this size vehicle.

- **Class B:** At less than 25 feet long and about as wide as a pick-up truck, these vehicles make navigating through cities easier than with a Class A. Operation costs are lower, as these RVs get better fuel mileage than other classes. You can fit two to four people in some models and will have access to a small kitchen sink and bath-



room.

- **Class C:** This is a mini-motorhome typically built on a truck chassis that features sleeping bunks above the cab. Models range from 20 to 31 feet in length and can accom-

modate two to six people.

RENTING FROM PROFESSIONALS

Dealing with professional dealers is your best bet when renting an RV. They will have

taken the proper steps to ensure the vehicle is operating safely.

You also will be purchasing a level of technical support. For instance, if you have trouble working a certain appli-

ance, there will likely be a hotline for you to call. One of the dealer's technicians can walk you through troubleshooting steps to make sure your RV trip continues to sail along smoothly.

Boating Safety

Spending a day out on the lake is a great way for people to unwind and enjoy the sun. Whether you're using your boat for fishing, tubing or joyriding, there are risks and rules present while on the water.

NAVIGATION RULES

Boaters refer to basic laws of water navigation as "The Rules of the Road." These rules were created to decrease the number of accidents while boating and can be beneficial if followed.

One basic rule is to have a lookout on board. This designated watcher is responsible for looking for dangerous situations in all directions.

Except for certain areas, the water doesn't use speed-limit signs. A boater is responsible for determining a safe speed to travel. Visibility, traffic and how well your boat maneuvers should all be factors when considering speed.

BOATING ACCIDENT STATISTICS

The United States Coast Guard reported a total of 4,158 boating accidents occurred in 2015. Of these accidents, 626 deaths occurred and more than 2,600 people were injured. Keep the following startling statistics from the Coast Guard's 2015 boating accident report in mind the next time you hit the water.

- Alcohol is a huge factor in fatal boating accidents. It was the leading contributor to 17 percent of boating deaths.

- In cases with a known cause of death, 76 percent of deaths were



caused by drowning. Eighty-five percent of these victims were not wearing a proper life jacket.

- Drivers who did not participate in safety instruction classes contributed to 71 percent of all 2015 boating deaths.

- A total of 22 children under the age of 13 died while boating. Over half were not wearing life jackets.

REQUIRED ITEMS

There are several items to have on hand to keep yourself safe and obey federal regulations. To ensure your equipment is up to safety standards, make sure they are certified to meet U.S. Coast Guard specifications.

All recreational boats are required to carry at least one life jacket for each person on board. These jackets should

be properly fitted for the intended user and in good condition. Create a safe space on your boat to store these jackets when you're not on the water.

Another item required by the U.S. Coast Guard is a fire extinguisher. They are necessary due to fire hazards created by a boat's engine or a faulty fuel system. The required extinguishers for boating are classified as Type B.

Start a Softball League

Staying active in summer is important, and spending your time on a baseball diamond is a great way to keep in shape.

Not only will you be getting beneficial exercise but joining a softball league also is a great way to promote local businesses and raise funds for charities.

Softball engages promotes muscle development, flexibility and high levels of cardiovascular strength conditioning.

Given this amount of physical exertion, it is important to properly warm yourself up before a game. Spend some time stretching and jogging to prevent injuries while playing.

CREATE A LEAGUE IN YOUR AREA

If there isn't already an adult softball league present in your area, it can be easy to get one started. Social media is a great way to reach many people without taking up a lot of your valuable time. Create posts on popular pages in your local community to measure a level of interest from your peers.

Get local businesses involved by asking for their sponsorship. A softball league can gain a lot of attention from the athletes and spectators. Inquire with your local bars, grocery stores or car dealerships about sponsoring uniforms or equipment. Businesses will benefit from their names being involved with a fun event for the community.

MAKE IT ABOUT CHARITY

Established leagues should

hold fundraisers for a charity or a local family in need. Create a competitive tournament involving different teams in your area.

Get the community excited by asking local radio stations to advertise, posting flyers in high-traffic areas and creating eye-catching social media posts.

Make sure the community knows which charity their donations will benefit.

Food always draws people in, especially on beautiful sunny days in the park. Talk to local food vendors about donating easy-to-prepare items such as hot dogs or hamburgers. A community BBQ is a great way to get people together for a good cause.

MAKING NEW FRIENDS

Adults sometimes fall into a routine that eliminates chances of making new friends. With busy lives focusing on our families and careers, it can be hard to meet new people.

An adult softball league will give you the opportunity to be around like-minded people and develop relationships. Getting to know members of your league will be easy through teamwork and communication on and off the diamond. You might be surprised by the opportunities that can develop with local networking.



Pick-Your-Own Farms

There is no fresher way to get your produce than picking it off a tree yourself. Many farms around the country offer the ability to do just that. This summer, take your family to a pick-your-own farm to find discounted fruits and enjoy an amazing experience.

Purchasing your produce at a PYO farm not only saves you money but benefits the local economy. Supporting your local farmers is a great way to ensure these farms will be around when your children are old enough to take their own families on this unique summer adventure.

CREATE A FAMILY TRADITION

Finding fun activities during the summertime can be expensive for families. A visit to a PYO farm is an affordable way to get everyone excited. They provide a great family-friendly atmosphere that children will beg to revisit several times a year.

Giving your children the opportunity to eat their fruit right from the source is a great way to teach them about nature. They will quickly understand where their food comes from. Teach them to be respectful when they are choosing their delicious apple right from the tree. Gently twisting the apple rather than pulling will keep the tree's integrity intact.

Most farms also have fun activities for children. Don't be surprised if you come home with pictures and memories of your family enjoying a hayride or petting zoo. A PYO farm is a whole-



some tradition to incorporate into your family's busy life.

FINDING A FARM

You might be surprised how easy it is to find a PYO farm in your area. There are several ways you can locate one near-

by.

Your local government's agricultural department typically lists a map on its website of local PYO farms. They will likely have a chart showing which fruits are available during certain months. It's a

great tool to pick the perfect time to visit based on your family's tastes.

Word of mouth is another great source of information. Ask friends and colleagues if they have visited a farm and their thoughts on their trip.

Taking a road trip this summer? While planning your route, find a PYO farm on the way. Your family (and legs) will love spending the afternoon enjoying delicious fruits and taking a break from the car.