



10 Ideas to make walking with kids more fun!

Whilst we are still in lockdown, and some of us are home-schooling, going on walks with the kids can be an excellent way of getting exercise and letting off steam. But with a few simple ideas, the walks can be made more fun, as suggested below.

Exercise options are limited at the moment so your family walks might be feeling a bit like Groundhog Day! We've come up with 10 ideas to help make getting some much needed fresh air and exercise a little bit more fun...

Our first tip is to try and add some variety to your walking route so you are not doing the same old circuit again and again. If possible try and change your route as much as you can to try and see new things. Play some of the games below whilst walking along or have an I spy list so you have something to look out for. That always seems to make sure little legs don't get as tired.

Please put safety first on your family walks and keep at least 2 metres apart from other people when you are out at all times. Full safety advice and Government guidelines are shown at the end of this post.

Please take time to read and follow the guidelines to keep your family and everyone else safe.

1. Play a game

This idea is pretty similar to how you might pass time on a long car journey. Try and think of different games you can play together whilst walking along. Here are a few suggestions:

- I spy – needs no explanation!
- Going on a picnic – one person says an item you'd take on a picnic. The next person then repeats that item and adds a new one to the list. It carries on until someone forgets the whole list!
- Alphabet hunt – look for the letters of the alphabet in order on road and street signs
- Counting game – count 10 cars, 10 trees, 10 dogs...you get the idea!

- Create a story together – each person takes it in turns to say make up a story by saying one line at a time
- Think of an animal – the rest of your family has to guess what animal you are by asking you questions that you can only say yes or no to!
- Ghost – a good spelling game for older kids. The challenge is to add letters to form a word but not be the one that completes the word. Start with a random letter, then each player takes turns adding new letters.

2. Make your own 'I spy' list

Make up your own simple 'I spy' lists to take out on your walk and tick off. You can do a new list each time you go out. You can include anything from road signs to nature! We've listed some ideas below:

- Tick off different types of vehicles
- Tick off different road signs
- Tick off numbers in sets
- Tick off and identify different types of trees or flowers
- Tick off a list of things you know you'll see but your children might not have noticed...letterbox, manhole cover, bus stop, park bench etc

3. Go looking for bugs

If you have a magnifying glass, why keep your eyes on the ground and go looking for some bugs in your street. Just remember not to touch or pick anything up. Just look at the insects if you are out in public. If you want to do some real bug hunting, and if you have a garden, then that is the safest place for a full bug hunt.

4. Take some photographs

Letting your child take some photos can add some variety to your daily walk and they will probably love being in charge of the camera. Try writing a list before you go out of things to photograph. It's also a good way to 'collect' the items on your 'I spy' lists.

You could set a theme for the photos you take on your walk and print them off when you get home to turn into a collage.

Of course, you also get to enjoy 'editing' 3 million photos from your camera/phone when you get home. 😊

5. Turn your walk into an obstacle course

Ok, so it's not going to be as fun as a trip to the park, but why not try balancing on any lines you see, not standing on the cracks or jumping over any covers in the pavements. Please engage in this activity responsibly, and remember to keep at least 2 metres apart from others not in your family at all times.

6. Play what does the sign mean?

As a lot of us are simply walking around our local neighbourhoods at the moment there are probably plenty of road and street signs to see. Ask your child to read the signs or ask them what they think they mean.

7. Design a trail

You could design your own trail for your children around your local streets. Decide on a simple circular route and write down basic directions and clues for them to solve. The clues can be based on street signs, road signs or shop names, even manhole covers – there are plenty of words out there when you start looking. The answer to the clue should reveal one letter and then all the answers (letters) make up an anagram your child needs to work out at the end.

Another trend is Strava Art... what pictures can you design on your Strava app?

8. Beat your step count

Why not try to beat your previous day's step count...another lap around the block anyone? 😊

Or you could do the same walk a few times and see if you can beat your time! Might get everyone moving along to try and shave a few seconds off your personal best!

9. Map reading

Give your child a map (either print off a map of your local area or use your phone). You can teach your child how to read the map, identify north and south, and try to navigate. Maybe you can encourage your child to plan a route or draw a map of your route before you head out.

You could also use a mapping app on your phone and show your child how to use it.

Geocaching is a something that's getting more popular in Lockdown... which also means that more geocaches are popping up!

10. Complete a rainbow hunt

See if your child can find all the colours of the rainbow in nature whilst out on your walk. Before you go, they could make their own sheet with the colours of the rainbow on with space next to each one to write down what they've found.

Hopefully, this one is quite easy in spring with plenty of colourful plants and trees around.

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