

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL WAYS TO GET THROUGH THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

For those spending an extended period at home during the lockdown, time may drag, but fear not – there are lots of activities that can still be done. From learning a language or writing a book, to tidying your home or fixing the shelves you always meant to put up. Below are some of the wackier ideas.....

The lockdown is allowing us to get closer to celebrities than ever before. For example, Arnold Schwarzenegger shared a video of him feeding his miniature horses indoors. Photograph: YouTube

As the coronavirus crisis deepens and the advice is to stay at home, people are becoming increasingly creative about how to cope. Here are just some of the ways people are trying to deal with social distancing.

- The Houseparty video messaging app, which basically allows you to throw parties with your friends, is becoming hugely popular again.

Launched in 2016 downloads are rocketing. The app allows you to video call up to eight people and do something important, like play Pictionary. Or have a virtual dinner party where everyone does the cooking.

- You can't go to your local for the pub quiz, so Edinburgh-based [Goose's Quizzes](#) are staging nightly pub quizzes at 7pm. Just form a virtual team, download the form, answer the questions and the winner will be announced the next day. Why not have a drink too?

Organisers have asked teams to be inventive with names. There's too much "QuaranTinaTurner" and "Quizteam Aguilera", they say. And obviously don't cheat – give Google a break!

- The lockdown is allowing us to get closer to celebrities than ever before. The rich and famous too are staying at home and giving us a glimpse in to their world.

[Broadway diva Patti Lupone](#) for example has given a tour of her surprising basement, showing off her juke box, one-armed bandit and pinball machine. Ellen DeGeneres complains her table isn't big enough for a 4,000 piece jigsaw. [Arnold Schwarzenegger feeds his miniature horses indoors.](#)

[Over at Patrick Stewart's house the actor is](#), wonderfully, reading Shakespeare's sonnets. On Twitter he explains: "When I was a child in the 1940s, my mother would cut up slices of fruit for me (there wasn't much) and as she put it in front of me she would say: 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away.' How about: 'A sonnet a day keeps the doctor away?' So...here we go: Sonnet 1."

Just 153 to go.

- The Chinese-American writer [Yiyun Li](#), winner of the Guardian First Book Award, has started a free virtual book club in which she invites everyone to read and discuss Tolstoy's War and Peace together.

- What is the point of watching a movie if you're not dressed up as a character? The Irish comedian [Alison Spittle](#) is hosting coveideo parties where everyone watches the same film on Netflix at 9pm. The dress code for Groundhog Day was "forever winter".

For Hook it was a more challenging “child killing sea captain but make it fashion”.

- It’s not weird but it could well be wonderful. London’s Institute of Contemporary Arts is encouraging people to listen to some of the 900 talks and discussions which were staged at the ICA between 1982 and 1993.

They are available on the [British Library’s Sounds website](#) and include Ken Campbell (fondly described in his Guardian obituary as “one of the strangest people in Britain”) interviewing Derek Jarman; a rare chance to hear the playwright Caryl Phillips in conversation, notably with Graham Swift; and the surprising opportunity to hear Jonathan Aitken and Enoch Powell give their views on secrecy and the state.

- Learn to salsa, cha cha cha or waltz. [Step by Step dance school in Northampton](#) began live streaming nightly virtual dance classes on Saturday night and they soon proved a hit.

On the first night dance director Andrzej Mialkowski was joined by 376 online viewers. Two hours later, after the video had been uploaded on to Facebook, it had been viewed 6,000 times.

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<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/23/weird-and-wonderful-ways-to-get-through-the-covid-19-lockdown>

With an eye to slightly more conventional ideas, I can recommend a couple of websites for those interested in books and literature:

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