

25 Ways to Spend “Whatever” Time With Your Family



1. **Dine around the table** — Many families are so busy they are eating in shifts or in front of the television. If that's you, ask everyone to set aside one evening for dinner at home around the table. You may want to not allow cell phones at the table, so everyone is fully present.
2. **Read a book** — Pick an old favorite or a new book! Read a chapter book to the littles (this gives you lots of opportunity for reading). Studies show that if a child grows up in a home with 100+ books, they have a 90% probability of graduating. [And She Said Breathe](#) teaches many different breathing strategies for combating those daily stressors in life. (They work for adults, too).
3. **Turn off the television** — I have some shows that I watch with my kids habitually and that's one way of spending time together, but little interaction happens. Consider turning off the television and having some conversation.
4. **Put technology away for the evening (yes, even phones)** — Be present with your family! Technology gets in the way and often leaves family members feeling like they aren't a priority. [Negative Effects of Technology](#) article
5. **Plan short adventures** — Finding a large block of time for a big vacation may not be realistic. However, a little day-long adventure to a neighboring town, larger city, or landmark can be a pleasant diversion to take with one or more family members.
6. **Go through old pictures** — It's amazing how fun and how many wonderful stories get told if someone just pulls out an old picture album or box of pictures. Baby books are super fun for the littles to go back and look through memories.
7. **Visit a relative** — When I was a child most of our vacations were just going to see family out of state. These were grand adventures. When was the last time you visited an aunt, uncle, or even just a dear friend you haven't seen in a while? Take a family member or the whole family and go.
8. **Have a family date night** — Ask everyone to reserve an evening so you can have dinner and a movie or hit a community event like a play.
9. **Play a board or card game** — Do this at home or even as an outing — many tap houses have games like Cornhole for families to play.

- 10. Cook together** – If you're the cook, one night include everyone in on the action. Divide up the chopping, prepping, cooking, and setting of the table.
- 11. Learning something together** – You could take a class like cooking, painting, or bird watching or free community events. Find something none of you has ever done and try it.
- 12. Enjoy breakfast together** – If you are normally rushing out the door, ask everyone to get up a few minutes early just one morning and have breakfast together before leaving. Or, get up early and take the whole family out to breakfast.
- 13. Exercise together** – Invite your family on a run, to the gym, or to be a part of an exercise class. Sign up as a family for a local race benefiting your favorite charity.
- 14. Volunteer together** – Participate in local Spring clean ups or for your local food bank. Acts of service remind us to be grateful for what we have.
- 15. Go camping** – This doesn't have to be a big trip. A simple one or two night excursion in a tent, camper, or cabin is enough to unplug and enjoy nature.
- 16. Take a hike** – Get the *All Trails* app and you may be surprised by what you find. Grab a water bottle and maybe even a sack lunch and go have a mini-adventure.
- 17. Go to a museum** – Playing tourist in your home town can be a revealing adventure. People oftentimes don't visit attractions they live near except when they have company.
P.S. Your local library sometimes has free tickets available.
- 18. Go to a movie** – Rather than renting a video, load up the car and hit the theater. Did you know there are still even a few drive-in theaters around? P.S. Matinees are cheaper for the family.
- 19. Play outside** – Frisbee golf, putt putt golf, or even just tossing a frisbee or football around can be very refreshing. You can also purchase a number of inexpensive lawn games like ladder ball or croquet. Or... old school play like tag, hide and seek, four square, or playing in the sprinkler and having a water balloon fight.
- 20. Craft it! Make something beautiful together** – Head to your local paint your own pottery shop. If you aren't sure what to do, grab the family and go to an arts and crafts store and pick out a project together.
- 21. Have a picnic in a park (or even in your own backyard)** — This can be as simple as a sack lunch and a blanket. Either way, an outdoor meal in nature is sure to be a hit.
- 22. Attend a sporting event together** – Head to your local college football, basketball, hockey, or baseball game. Even a high school track meet or little league game is a great way to spend an afternoon or evening.
- 23. Put a puzzle together** – Just open a puzzle up and start working on it. You'll be amazed at how quickly people gravitate toward helping. Take a picture or mount the puzzle when you've finished.
- 24. Mindfulness activities** – Take some time to do yoga, meditate, mindfully listen, or even do some breathwork as a family. Try the "3 Breath Hug" from [And She Said Breathe](#).
- 25. Have a sleepover** – one night move all of the furniture out of the way and throw sleeping bags on the floor and have a good old fashioned sleepover together. You might even want to make tent forts to sleep in.