



# Family Bike Ride Recommendations

Take the family out on some of our great nearby biking paths. To make your planning easier, REI employees have selected some of their favorites below.

## Be sure to bring these necessities along on your ride:

- Helmet
- Drinking water
- Lunch or snacks
- Map and route directions
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- First-aid kit
- Tire mini-pump or CO2
- Spare tube or patch kit
- Tire levers



For a complete cycling checklist, visit [Expert Advice](#) on REI.com.

## Here Are Five of Our Favorite Kid-Friendly Local Bike Rides

### Boise Dams Tour

Terrain: **Paved path**

Distance: **4.6 miles roundtrip; no elevation gain**

**Why This Ride:** This laid-back ride offers great views of the Boise River, and plenty of fun distractions along the way.

**Ride Description:** Begin your adventure at the Boise River Diversion Dam. Completed in 1909, it diverted water into the New York Canal and provided irrigation for the entire valley. (Check out the historical markers along the path for more information.) Follow the river east from the Diversion Dam to Discovery State Park and Sandy Point Beach, where you can dip your toes in the water and enjoy a picnic on the sandy beach or grassy areas above the beach. From here you can see Lucky Peak Dam, a key component in providing the Treasure Valley with water for drinking and irrigation. When you're ready to go, return to the Diversion Dam along the same path.

**Driving Directions:** From Downtown Boise take E. Warm Springs Avenue east to Highway 21. Turn left on Highway 21. Continue on Highway 21 0.3 miles to Diversion Dam. There is free parking in the dirt parking lot on the north side of the highway across from Diversion Dam.

**Tips:** Bring your swimsuit and take a dip at Sandy Point Beach, or shorten your ride by stopping at Discovery State Park and enjoying a picnic under the shade of the trees. There are restrooms available at Discovery State Park and Sandy Point Beach.

### Boise Museum Loop

Terrain: **Paved path**

Distance: **Approximately a 2.5-mile loop; no elevation gain.**

**Why This Ride:** You can get to some of Boise's most interesting attractions—including Zoo Boise, Boise Art Museum and MK Nature Center—on your bike!

**Ride Description:** Begin your adventure at the Boise Art Museum cycling east on the Boise River Greenbelt, riding along the river. Continue on through Julia Davis Park. Stay left at the fork in the path to ride past the Morrison-Knudsen Nature Center on your left and past Municipal Park (one of Boise's oldest parks). Continue along the greenbelt bearing right past Municipal Park. Bear right at the next two forks to cross the river at the Orange Bridge. Ride back on the south side of the Boise River to the Boise State University campus and cross the river at the bridge to Julia Davis Park. After crossing the bridge, bear left to go past Zoo Boise and then return to the Boise Art Museum.

**Driving Directions:** From Downtown Boise take 9th Street south to West Battery Street. Turn left on West Battery Street. Cross Capitol Boulevard to West Julia Davis Drive. The Boise Art Museum is on the right, immediately after you cross Capitol Boulevard. There is free parking available at multiple locations in Julia Davis Park.

**Tips:** For a cool sidetrip once you're back at the Boise Art Museum, continue west through the tunnel under Capitol Boulevard to the Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial on the north side of the greenbelt. Public restrooms are available in Julia Davis Park, as well as in Municipal Park and the MK Nature Center.

## Oregon Trail Reserve

Terrain: **Unpaved path**

Distance: **4-mile loop, with 440 feet of elevation gain**

**Why This Ride:** Enjoy an easy ride, with ample wildlife viewing opportunities, on this historical trail.

**Ride Description:** Part of the Ridge-to-Rivers trail system, this easy 4-mile loop around the 66-acre Oregon Trail Reserve is not only a great ride, it's a trip back to a time when wagons were the primary form of transportation. You can still see the original wagon ruts of this early "highway" in certain areas along the loop. And you'll take in expansive views of Boise and the surrounding mountains in the distance.

**Driving Directions:** From downtown Boise, take E. Warm Springs Avenue east to Highway 21. Turn right on Highway 21 and cross the bridge. Turn right on East Lake Forest Drive. There's free parking in the lot at the end of East Lake Forest Drive.

**Tips:** Make sure to stop as you ride to read the Oregon Trail interpretive signs which recount the fascinating history of this important trail built in the mid-nineteenth century. There are restrooms in the parking area.

## Owl's Roost Mountain Bike Loop

Terrain: **Unpaved trail**

Distance: **2-mile loop, with 150 feet of elevation gain.**

**Why This Ride:** An easy beginner's trail for a singletrack mountain-biking adventure.

**Ride Description:** Access the trailhead northeast of the Camel's Back Park parking lot, just past the tennis courts. Ride around the backside of Camel's Back Hill and take a right around the east side of the ponds. Proceed north on the trail. Cross 8th Street, watching for traffic, to the Owl's Roost Trail. At the first fork in the trail, bear right. Ride up a short hill through an aspen grove and stay to the right through a sagebrush field. At the "T" in the trail take a left. Cross 8th Street, again watching for traffic, and bear right a short way on 8th Street and then left up the hill through the gate. Continue on the trail back to Camel's Back Park.

**Driving Directions:** From downtown Boise take 13th Street north through Hyde Park, a historic neighborhood. Continue on N. 13th Street to West Heron Street. Turn right on West Heron Street. Camel's Back Park is on the left, and free parking is available in the lot.

**Tips:** Stop at Goody's—an old-fashioned soda fountain and candy store—in Hyde Park for a post-ride treat. There are restrooms at Camel's Back Park.

## Swan Falls Dam and Wees Bar Petroglyphs

Terrain: **Doubletrack and some singletrack**

Distance: **12.2 miles roundtrip, with about 300 feet of elevation gain**

**Why This Ride:** Not only can you see petroglyphs on the boulders at Wees Bar, there's a good chance you'll spot some of the more than 200 pairs of nesting birds of prey in the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area along the way.

**Ride Description:** Cross the Swan Falls Dam. Turn left in the parking area by the dam's south bank and take the sandy singletrack upriver. Turn right sharply where the doubletrack joins the trail, riding up the short steep hill. Turn right on the major doubletrack road and turn right again heading downhill to the bench above the Snake River and into the old homestead. Bear left at the next junction, going uphill around a small butte and then through a narrow slot in the gate, continuing west. At Wees Bar, where the trail becomes indistinct, begin your hunt for petroglyphs and Native American inscriptions on the rocks. Return the same way for an out-and-back ride.

**Driving Directions:** From Boise take I-84 west to Exit 44. Drive south to Kuna on County Road 69. Turn left at the sign for Swan Falls Dam and the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. Drive south for 19 miles to the Swan Falls Dam. Free public parking is provided adjacent to the dam.

**Tips:** Bring along a bird book and binoculars and keep your eyes peeled for golden eagles, prairie falcons and red-tailed hawks soaring above you. There are restrooms at the Swan Falls Dam parking lot.



REI's PEAK program uses a fun presentation filled with hands-on activities and games to teach kids ages 6 through 12 about taking care of the outdoors.

Ask an REI team member about scheduling a free PEAK presentation for your classroom or youth group, or visit [www.rei.com/PEAK](http://www.rei.com/PEAK) for more information.



**First Saturday in June** The American Hiking Society's National Trails Day, sponsored by REI, is a nationwide celebration of trails. Celebrate with your family by taking a hike, or volunteering for a trail clean-up project. Ask an REI team member about how to get involved, or visit [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com) for more information.