



# Family Hike Recommendations

There are some great nearby hiking trails just waiting to be explored! To get your family started on the right foot, REI employees have selected some of their favorites below.

## Be sure to bring these necessities along in your daypack:

- Drinking water
- Lunch or snacks
- Extra clothing layers
- Map and compass
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- First-aid kit
- Insect repellent
- Whistle
- Headlamp or flashlight



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

## Here Are Five of Our Favorite Kid-Friendly Local Hikes

### Hike One: **Brighton Recreation Area**

Rating: **Easy to moderate**

Distance: **2 miles roundtrip (Kahchin Trail), or 5 miles roundtrip (Penosha Trail), some gentle elevation gains.**

**Why this hike:** These are two nice and scenic beginner trails in a mixed-terrain setting.

**Hike Description:** The Penosha Trail (which is Chippewa for “long”) is a rolling five-mile trail that passes through oak forests, dense shrubs and marshy wetlands. At the center of the Penosha Trail is the Kahchin Trail (Chippewa for “short”), a two-mile loop that passes abandoned farm fields, with stone fences that date back to the 1800s.

**Driving Directions:** Take I-96 west, just past Highway 23, to the Grand River exit (Exit 145). Head south to Brighton Road and where you’ll turn right (west). Continue past downtown Brighton for about three miles until you reach Chilson Road. Go south on Chilson Road to enter the park. There is parking on site, requiring a \$4 daily fee or a state parks pass.

**Tips:** Other activities at Brighton include mountain biking, fishing, horseback riding and camping. There is a restroom at the trailhead.

### Hike Two: **Pinckney Crooked Lake Trail**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **5.1 miles, no elevation gain.**

**Why this hike:** This easy, level trail offers a panoramic view of Crooked Lake and the surrounding area.

**Hike description:** The Pinckney Crooked Lake Trail starts behind a wooden map board located at the northeast end of Silver Lake’s northern parking lot. Head northwest onto the boardwalk and continue to follow signs that mark the trail. Take in the beautiful lake views and in the fall, come for the striking foliage. There are many places to stop along the way, so bring a picnic lunch. Be aware that mountain bikers share this trail.

**Driving Directions:** The park’s headquarters are located at the Silver Lake day use facility about 15 miles northwest of Ann Arbor. From US-23, head west on North Territorial approximately 10 miles to Dexter-Townhall Road. Turn north and continue for 12 miles. Turn left at Silver Lake Road.

From I-94, head north on M52 for six miles to North Territorial Road. Head east (right) to Dexter-Townhall Road. Turn north for 1.2 miles, then turn left into the park.

**Tips:** A day or annual vehicle pass is required to use the trail.

Hike Three: **Lloyd A. Stage Nature Center**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **1.75 miles of trails, no elevation game.**

**Why this hike:** This easy series of interconnected trails and loops offers a nice glimpse of Southeastern Michigan ecology and the area's natural wonders.

**Hike Description:** Start your hike from the nature center trailhead. There are four well-marked trails to explore as you go. The north branch of the Rouge River meanders through cattail marshes, sedge meadows and wet forests of elms, willow and cottonwood. These natural communities are home to a variety of mammals such as white-tailed deer, muskrats, foxes, weasels, raccoons, squirrels, cottontail rabbits, woodchucks and more. The Sugar Maple Loop features self-guiding trail markers along its route. Other trails feature only direction markers. The wildflower garden near the trailhead offers a close-up look at many species of wildflowers found throughout the center. Two observation towers, benches and boardwalks help enhance your wildlife viewing experience.

**Driving Directions:** The Stage Nature Center is located in Troy. Take I-75 to the Coolidge Highway exit, then go north a short distance to 6685 Coolidge Highway, and turn left into the park. Park in the nature center parking lot.

**Tips:** There is a restroom at the trailhead.

Hike Four: **Maybury State Park**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **6 miles of trails, minimal elevation gain.**

**Why this hike:** It's a rare opportunity to hike in open meadows and mature forests in a setting that's so close to a major metropolitan area.

**Hike Description:** From the visitor center you can hop on a variety of different kinds of trails: mountain biking, paved biking, horseback riding and, of course, hiking. The hiking trails feature two major loops that traverse rolling hills as they pass through both wooded areas and wildflower-filled meadows that are home to abundant wildlife. The easy-going trails aren't too challenging, and they offer a terrific way to get some hiking experience without having to travel too far.

**Driving Directions:** The main entrance is just west of Northville on Eight Mile Road, about five miles west of I-275. There is parking on site, requiring a \$4 daily fee or a state parks pass.

**Tips:** Pay a visit to Maybury Living Farm, where children can experience life on a turn-of-the-century working farm. There is a restroom at the trailhead.

Hike Five: **Stony Creek Nature Center Trails**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **Up to 6 miles of trails, minimal elevation gain.**

**Why this hike:** Experience a great combination of beautiful, diverse scenery and abundant wildlife in the six miles of trails around the Stony Creek Nature Center.

**Hike Description:** This well-marked trail system leaves from the nature center and takes you past Stony Creek and Reflection Pond and into dense woods, broad fields, forest edges and small wetlands. The diverse terrain was formed ages ago by glaciers and provides a great backdrop for a fun day of hiking. Keep your eyes peeled for deer, wild turkeys and other birds as you traverse the trail. It's a half mile to the Reflection Pond, 1.5 miles to Landscape and 2.5 miles to Habitat, so you can tailor your hike to be as long or as short as you'd like.

**Driving Directions:** From I-696, take Van Dyke Avenue north to 26 Mile Road. Go west on 26 Mile. Turn left on the Stony Creek Park exit ramp and then go right into the circular drive. Turn right into the nature center. There is parking in the nature center lot (fee required, or use your Metroparks pass).

**Tips:** See live snakes, turtles and fish, along with seasonal exhibits, at the nature center. There is a restroom at the trailhead.



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.