



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: **El Dorado Nature Center, Long Beach**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **2 miles roundtrip, no elevation gain.**

Why this hike: It's the perfect family getaway into nature—right in the middle of urban Long Beach.

Hike Description: Start (or end) your day with a serene walk on lush, green, forested trails. Don't be surprised if you come across turtles swimming in the two lakes within the center. Kids might also spot a blue heron fishing for dinner, or a hawk soaring high above their heads. The abundant wildlife includes lots of four-legged critters too, like foxes, weasels, opossums and skunks. The trail meanders through meadows and woodland, along a stream and past the lakes. To make a day of it, you can go across the street to El Dorado Regional Park. There are bike trails, lakes for fishing, playgrounds and a miniature train for kids to ride. And tons of great picnic spots.

Driving Directions: From I-405 (San Diego Freeway) in Long Beach, exit at Studebaker Road. Turn north on Studebaker, then right onto E. Spring Street and proceed to the nature center's parking lot. Parking is \$4 on weekdays, \$6 on weekends.

Tips: The nature center has an interactive museum that gives kids fun, hands-on learning experiences. Special programs are available, including Family Nightlife Walks that are led by a naturalist. Call the nature center at 562-570-1745 for details. Closed on Mondays.

Hike Two: **Fern Dell (Griffith Park)**

Rating: **Easy to moderate**

Distance: **2.5 to 3 miles roundtrip, minimal to moderate elevation gain.**

Why this hike: This hike offers views of lush vegetation and a great picnic site by a brook where you can relax with your family.

Hike Description: At the east end of the observatory building take Fire Road # 21 for a quick walk to a four-way junction. Here you will turn right and continue down the face of the observatory to another junction where you will bear left. From here it is an easy hike to Fern Dell. Kids will love identifying all the plants and trees, including the costal redwoods. Everyone can relax and play in the picnic area near a beautiful brook.

Driving Directions: Griffith Park lies just west of the Golden State Freeway (I-5), roughly between Los Feliz Boulevard to the south and the Ventura Freeway (SR 134) to the north. Freeway off-ramps leading to the park from I-5 are Los Feliz Boulevard, Griffith Park and Zoo Drive. From SR 134 eastbound take either the Forest Lawn Drive or Victory Boulevard off-ramps. From SR 134 westbound, take Zoo Drive or Forest Lawn Drive. After leaving the freeway follow the signs into the park. Drive to Griffith Park Observatory.

Tips: Griffith Park has a lot to offer. Make a day of it and enjoy the observatory, Travel Town Museum, L.A. Zoo and more!

Hike Three: **Grasslands Trail to Rock Pool, Malibu Creek State Park**

Rating: **Easy to moderate**

Distance: **3 miles roundtrip, 150 feet elevation gain.**

Why this hike: Nestled in the Santa Monica Mountains, this is a great beginner hike for families, with beautiful canyon views to the east and west of the park.

Hike Description: The Grasslands trailhead, off Mulholland Highway, is just northwest of the park entrance. The trail has a pleasant start to get your hiking legs warmed up. At about 0.25 miles, you climb slightly to views of the park's campground to the east, and the stream to the west. From here the trail descends, bringing you to Crags Road, which follows the stream to a fork in the road. Look for the Rock Pool trail marker. Just past the second portable lavatory, you can usually watch people rock climbing on the popular "Planet of the Apes Wall." Follow the trail the rest of the way to Rock Pool. It's a favorite spot for kids of all ages.

Driving Directions: From the Ventura Freeway (Highway 101), take the Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road exit and drive south about four miles. Turn right on Mulholland Highway. The Grassland trailhead is 0.2 miles on the left. Or you can continue on Las Virgenes past Mulholland Highway for 0.25 miles to the entrance of Malibu Creek State Park. You can park free on either side of Mulholland Highway. (Be careful when crossing the road.) Parking within Malibu Creek State Park is \$8.

Tips: There are many great family hikes in the park. You can buy a park map for \$1 at the entrance that highlights points of interest. REI also sells a waterproof topo map that details all the park's trails, including their mileage. There are no restrooms at the trailhead, but trailside portable lavatories are at 0.7 miles and 1.2 miles.

Hike Four: **Abalone Cove Shoreline Park, Rancho Palos Verdes**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **2 to 6 miles roundtrip, 1,443 feet elevation gain, 1,248 feet elevation loss, 195 feet net elevation change.**

Why this hike: The 80-acre Abalone Cove Shoreline Park and Ecological Preserve is a federal reserve where grassy, 180-foot bluffs provide easy access to the rocky shoreline.

Hike Description: The trailhead is located at the southeast corner of the parking lot. Take the south path down to the three-way trailhead, turn left on the paved road and take an immediate right onto Sandy Beach Trail. Head south along the beach and keep an eye out for red-tailed hawks and American kestrels flying overhead. On clear days you'll find spectacular views of Catalina Island. Continue south to reach a scenic spot at the west side of Portuguese Point where sea lions may be seen bathing in the sun. Rock beds along the shoreline offer some of the best opportunities to view tide pools and sea creatures while enjoying the Pacific breeze.

Driving Directions: From the San Diego Freeway (405) exit at Hawthorne Boulevard go south for approximately 15 miles. Turn left onto Palos Verdes Drive West and continue to the park entrance on your right (5970 Palos Verdes Drive South). If you get to the Wayfarer's Chapel, you just missed it. Parking is \$5 per car.

Tips: Plan to go at low tide to see crabs, sea stars, anemones and sea hares. Wear comfortable, sturdy footwear for traction on the rocky shoreline. Avoid Smuggler's Cove at the end of the trail as it is an adult-only beach.

Hike Five: **Eagle Rock at Topanga State Park**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **2 to 6.5 miles roundtrip, 800 feet elevation gain.**

Why this hike: Of all the great hikes in Topanga State Park, the views from Eagle Rock offer the greatest return for a minimal investment of energy.

Hike Description: Topanga Canyon State Park is full of Native American cultural history, diverse geology, open grasslands, oak woodlands and great views. The trailhead for Eagle Rock is at the end of the parking lot in Trippet Ranch. From the lot, follow the trail east where you'll come to a junction. Bear left, going northeast along Eagle Springs Fire Road. Climbing steadily, you'll reach another junction where you'll bear left, with a short side hike up to the top of Eagle Rock. Kids love the sense of accomplishment. And the amazing views. You can return the way you came (the shortest route) or, when you get back to the junction near Eagle Rock, turn right on the Musch Trail, which will also return you to Trippet Ranch and the parking lot. Other trails are also available. Be sure to get a map at the ranger station.

Driving Directions: From the Ventura Freeway (Highway 101), exit at Topanga Canyon Boulevard and go south. Proceed over the crest of the mountains, then go about three more miles to Entrada Road. Turn left on Entrada and follow it to the campground parking lot. From Pacific Coast Highway, turn north onto Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Drive slowly through town, past the post office. Turn right onto Entrada Road and follow it to the campground parking lot. Parking is \$5.

Tips: Trippet Ranch is the headquarters for the state park. Be sure to check out the nature center. There are restrooms at the trailhead. Post-hike hangouts include the Inn at the Seventh Ray for organic goodies, including desserts. And Froggy's, which has fresh fish tacos.



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 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 for more information.