



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 Three: **Indian Rock Urban Hike, Berkeley**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **2 miles roundtrip, minimal elevation gain**

Why This Hike: It's an urban adventure through some of Berkeley's coolest parks.

Hike Description: Begin on Indian Rock Path, at Solano Ave. and The Alameda. Your first stop is Indian Rock itself. Steps carved into the giant rock let you walk to the top and enjoy incredible views. Carefully climb back down and let the kids frolic in Indian Rock Park. Then go right on Indian Rock Ave. down to Mortar Rock Park. As you enter the park, bear right and climb stone steps to reach the volcanic rock. Look for little craters in the lower stones that were made by native Ohlone women hundreds of years ago as they pounded acorns into meal. Moving down San Diego Rd., look left for trails leading to John Hinkel Park. Blackberry Creek rambles through this park, and it's a fun one to explore. Climb the steps next to the creek to return to San Diego Rd., and continue to Southampton Ave. Look left for a sign marking Tunbridge Lane. Head west to enjoy beautiful views and gardens on your way to Arlington Ave. Carefully cross Arlington and head right to Thousand Oaks Blvd. Turn left and walk one block to Great Stoneface Park. This park has a sprawling lawn and giant boulder whose surface you can search to find all the faces in it. On the west side of the park, look for Yosemite Rd. Across the street there's a sign for the Indian Trail. Descend this beautiful trail down to The Alameda. Head left past Capistrano Ave. to the Yosemite Steps, and take these down to Contra Costa Ave. Turn right on Contra Costa and check out the 500-year-old oak in front of house at 828. Then it's back to Indian Rock Path, and return to your car.

Driving Directions: From I-80 in Berkeley, take the University Ave. exit east to Martin Luther King Way. Turn left on The Alameda to Solano Ave. There is metered parking along Solano. The residential streets surrounding the area have free parking.

Hike Four: **Little Yosemite at Sunol Regional Wilderness**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **3 miles via Canyon View Trail, 400' elevation gain; or 4 miles via Camp Ohlone Trail, minimal elevation gain**

Why This Hike: The highlight of this out-and-back hike, Little Yosemite, is a scenic, boulder-strewn gorge created by Alameda Creek.

Hike Description: If you're tackling this hike in summer, go in the morning or the evening to avoid the mid-day East Bay heat. Begin at the wooden bridge near the visitor center and, after crossing Alameda Creek, turn right onto Canyon View Trail. You'll pass a couple of junctions before the trail begins to climb steeply for a bit. Let your children take a breather as necessary and check out the views of three local summits: Mission Peak, Mount Allison and Monument Peak. After passing through a cattle grate, the trail opens up onto a ridgeline, where you'll spot several impressive rock outcroppings. Continuing along, the trail traverses the edge of the hillside and eventually rounds the end of the ridge, dropping steeply to the Camp Ohlone Road, where you'll turn right and find access into Little Yosemite gorge. If you have time to linger, bring a picnic and spend some time admiring the amazing rock formations, which are reminiscent of those found in the Sierra Nevada—hence the area's name. Climb back up to the Camp Ohlone Road and turn left to head back to the visitor center and complete the 3-mile loop.

Driving Directions: From I-680 east of Fremont, take the Calaveras Road exit and head south. At about four miles, turn left onto Geary Road (keep an eye out for the sign) and follow it into the park and to the visitor center. There is a \$5 parking fee when the visitor center kiosk is staffed (seasonal).

Tips: Birdwatching is good along Alameda Creek, where in a single morning it's possible to spot up to 40 species—the acorn woodpecker, black phoebe, titmouse, turkey vulture and yellow-billed magpie are commonly sighted. A bird list is available at the visitor center. There is a restroom at the trailhead.

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Hike Five: **Redwood Forest Loop at Joaquin Miller Park**

Rating: **Easy to moderate**

Distance: **3.6 miles roundtrip, 500' elevation gain**

Why This Hike: Children will marvel at the giant coast redwoods and excellent views of the bay on this multi-terrain loop. This shady grove of second-growth trees is a great place to escape the summer heat.

Hike Description: To get to the trailhead, walk past the ranger station (be sure to grab a trail map!) back toward the park entrance. Pass through the gate toward the beautiful grassy Upper Meadow and turn left at the junction for Sunset Trail. Keep the small creek on your left as you continue straight and the trail narrows to single-track. Turn right at Cinderella Trail and dig in for the steepest climb of the loop. At 1.5 miles into the hike, turn sharply right onto the Sequoia-Bayview Trail. Then turn right at the first junction marked by a trail post, continue straight for another 100 yards to a T-junction and turn right to continue on the Sequoia-Bayview Trail. Pass the sign that says "Nature Trail Continues" and take the Sequoia-Bayview Trail to the left at the next junction. Here you'll enter into one of the very cool and shady stands of redwoods. Once here, continue on level ground, passing several junctions, until you reach a clearing with those bay views the trail name promised. At about the 3.0-mile point, turn right on Sunset Trail for the trip down to the trailhead, passing through one of the great grassy meadows you saw at the beginning.

Driving Directions: From Hwy. 13 in Oakland, take the Joaquin Miller Rd./Lincoln Ave. exit and head east. Lincoln turns into Joaquin Miller Rd., so stay on that as you travel uphill. Turn left onto Sanborn Drive, which is the park entrance. There is a small parking lot at the ranger station. If that's full, continue on Sanborn and follow the parking signs.

Tips: Woodminster Amphitheater, the park's "cathedral in the woods," presents family-oriented musicals and shows in the 2,000-seat facility. 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 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.