



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: **Moenkopi Trail**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **1.9 miles roundtrip, 175' elevation gain**

Why This Hike: I like to start in the visitor center to get a map and look at the new exhibits. Outside are telescopes and desert tortoise habitats. The trail is easy and offers lots of educational opportunities.

Hike Description: Located in the Red Rock National Conservation Area, the well-established Moenkopi Trail starts behind the picnic pavilion, next to the tortoise habitat. The trail is easy to follow, but it has several junctions. So it's a great place to teach kids basic map navigation. I suggest sharing the map and having kids check it often to make sure you're "on trail" (there's little chance of getting lost). As you walk away from the visitor center, you'll see evidence of a brush fire to your right. It's another great chance to engage your kids, talking with them about the positive and negative effects of fire in the desert. Interpretive signs along the trail also enhance the learning experience. From the trail, you'll have gorgeous views of the entire recreation area and its many unusual sandstone formations.

Driving Directions: From Las Vegas, drive west on Charleston Boulevard. Turn right onto the Scenic Loop Drive and pay the \$5 fee at the entrance booth to the Red Rock National Conservation Area. (A \$20 annual pass or a National Parks Pass is also accepted.) Park near the visitor center.

Tips: Pick up a delicious boxed lunch at Jason's Deli (W. Charleston and Ft. Apache) on your way. There's a nice picnic pavilion to the east of the visitor center. After your hike, take a slow drive on the 14-mile scenic loop to enjoy up-close views of the area.

Hike Two: **Corn Creek Nature Trail**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **1 mile roundtrip, no elevation gain**

Why This Hike: Short, easy loop trails lead by three ponds that attract lots of birds and other wildlife.

Hike Description: Three small pools fed by natural springs create a true desert oasis at this peaceful spot in the Desert National Wildlife Range. The water and trees attract a large number of local and migratory birds, as well as larger animals. Deer, bobcat and coyote are seen in the area. From the restrooms and information displays, follow the trail north past the three pools. Various loops can be followed, all eventually leading back to the parking area. Along the way you'll see historic ranch buildings that are now used by DNWR personnel. In fact, people lived at these springs as long as 10,000 years ago. Fossils indicate that far more ancient residents included mammoths, giant ground sloths, camels, lions, horses and bison.

Driving Directions: From Henderson, go north on Hwy. 95, approximately 23 miles outside of Las Vegas. You'll see a small sign for the Desert National Wildlife Range on the right side of the highway. Turn right onto a dirt road and after about 2 miles you'll come to the Corn Creek Field Station. Park here and sign in at the register (it helps the refuge with funding). Parking is free.

Tips: Bring a camera and binoculars to fully enjoy all the animals that visit the springs. In the summer, go early in the day, and bring lots of water. Just up the road from the field station is a nice picnic spot with a natural spring and a picnic table. If you drive a little further up the road, you'll find a yucca forest, Indian agave roasting pits, and a narrow canyon you can drive through that has caves you can explore.

Hike Three: **Bluffs Trail**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **2 miles roundtrip, 93' elevation gain**

Why This Hike: It's easily accessible, clearly marked and offers great scenery.

Hike Description: This easy, rock-bordered trail leads you from the mouth of Las Vegas Bay up the Las Vegas Wash. It ends at the top of a rise with panoramic views of the desert. Along the way, several small up and down sections give your legs just the right amount of workout without being a labor. The trail is exposed, and there's no water, so be sure to go early in the day if it's warm. And always carry plenty of extra water. Park rangers lead field trips on this trail, so that's another great educational option to explore. Dogs are allowed, but be sure to keep Fido on a leash.

Driving Directions: From Henderson, go east on Lake Mead Drive. Pass Lake Las Vegas and proceed to the Lake Mead fee station. Travel about 2 miles and turn left into the Las Vegas Bay area. Make another left at the signs for the campground. Park at the campground kiosk. The trailhead is at the north (left) outer edge, between spaces 72 and 74. Pass by the amphitheater to the trail. Entrance/parking is \$5 per vehicle.

Tips: Look for the rock "monuments" other visitors have made at the outcrop near the turnaround point. For overnight trips, there's camping available at the trailhead.

Hike Four: **Lost Creek Children's Discovery Trail**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **0.7 miles roundtrip, minimal elevation gain**

Why This Hike: Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area is one of the most beautiful desert landscapes in the Southwest (no brag, just fact). Also, the numerous springs in the area and the protective shelter of the Spring Mountains make the trail surprisingly lush.

Hike Description: The Children's Discovery Trail is a great place to introduce young kids to the hidden richness of desert lifecycles. The trail features rock shelters, petroglyphs and Native American roasting pits. It also shows them the effects of wind and water erosion, and points out native plant and animal species. From the Lost Creek parking area, take the trail to the right. The Willow Springs Loop intersects this trail and shares it until it splits off at Site #3. Continue on this loop until just beyond Site #5, where another path heads uphill to a seasonal waterfall. Return by backtracking. You can book free interpretive hikes in advance from the Red Rock Interpretive Association.

Driving Directions: From Las Vegas, take Charleston Boulevard west until you leave the city limits. Drive for about 5 miles and turn right into the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area (there'll be a sign on the left side of the road carved into a large boulder). Entrance fee is \$5 per vehicle. A recreation map is included in the fee.

Tips: Call the Red Rock Interpretive Association (702-515-5367) for more information about hikes and other fun, free and informative programs. Stop at the overlook on your way to the trailhead. It's the highest point of the 14-mile scenic loop and overlooks the entire Red Rock valley. Bring your camera—it's a wonderful place for a family photo!

Hike Five: **Anniversary Narrows at Lake Mead National Recreation Area**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **approx. 4 miles roundtrip, 100'–200' elevation gain**

Why This Hike: It's relatively easy and has lots of interesting details like an old mine, beautiful rock formations and an amazing slot canyon.

Hike Description: From the parking area, head northwest along the left fork of the dirt road. After about 1.5 miles, head down into the Lovell Wash. About 200–300 yards past the tunnels you'll enter Anniversary Narrows. It's an unusual slot canyon with 100' walls that are only about 5' apart in places. After the Narrows, the wash widens significantly while offering great picnic spots and lots of side seams to explore. But if you explore the side seams, I suggest placing easily spotted cairns (small piles of rocks) to mark your trail. When you're ready to return to your car, simply retrace your steps.

Driving Directions: Enter the Lake Mead National Recreation Area from Lake Mead Blvd. (north) or Lake Mead Drive (south). At the entrance booth, pick up a free map from the ranger. From the north, Lake Mead Blvd. dead-ends on North Shore Road. Turn left (east) and go for about 13 miles to Callville Wash North Road. Turn left (north) onto the dirt road.

From the south, pass the entrance booth and after 0.25 miles, turn left (north) onto North Shore Road. Drive about 16 miles and look for the Callville Wash North Road. Turn left (north) onto the dirt road.

Depending on the road conditions and the type of car you drive (4WD, high clearance), you can drive on the dirt road across Callville Wash for about 0.5 miles and then park off the road. Entrance fee to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area is \$5 per vehicle unless you have a National Parks Pass.

Tips: Have your kids watch for horny toads—I've seen two of them while on this trail!



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.