



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: **Belleplaine Circular Trail**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **4.9 miles roundtrip, minimal elevation gain**

Why This Hike: It offers a nice walk in the woods, with a good chance of seeing wildlife, including white-tailed deer and red foxes.

Hike Description: From the interpretive center, go toward the group camping sites and turn left at the recycling area. Look for a tree on the right with a white blaze. Enter the woods here. After about one mile, you'll cross a short boardwalk and reach a paved road. Turn right here and go until you come to the gravel Tom Field Road where you turn left. Continue to follow the white blazes as they lead you to East Creek Lake, and through a cedar swamp (kids may see red-bellied turtles and various frogs taking a bit of sun). The sandy trail is fairly flat throughout, but it's soft in some spots, so your legs will get more of a workout than you might expect.

Driving Directions: This hike is located in northern Cape May County. From the town of Woodbine, take CR 550 west toward Belleplaine. Turn left on Henkin-Sifkin Road. Turn right at the entrance to the Belleplaine State Forest camping area. Park to the left of the interpretive center, opposite Lake Nummy. Entrance/parking is \$5 per vehicle on weekdays, \$10 on weekends (Memorial Day–Labor Day).

Tips: Wear long-sleeves and pants to guard against little critters like mosquitoes, chiggers and ticks. Bring your swimsuits and towels and take a dip in Lake Nummy.

Hike Two: **D&R Canal State Park, Bull's Island to Lambertville**

Rating: **Easy to moderate, depending on length**

Distance: **Up to 14 miles roundtrip, 20' elevation gain**

Why This Hike: It's a smooth, even trail that lets you walk for as long or as short a distance as you like.

Hike Description: This is the middle section of the Delaware and Raritan Feeder Canal Trail. It runs along an old rail line that's been converted to a bike and pedestrian path. Because of the wide, smooth surface and minimal grade, it's suitable for even the youngest adventurers who do their exploring within the confines of a stroller. Yet the trail is long enough to challenge older kids who want to feel like they've pushed it a bit. This is a great place to watch birds. And kids can also encounter some cool historical sites, including the Prallsville Mills, where some of the buildings date back to the 18th century.

Driving Directions: This hike is located along the Delaware River north of Trenton. Take Rte. 29 north to the parking area at the Bull's Island Recreational Area, which is three miles north of Stockton and the intersection with Rte. 523. Parking is free.

Tips: Fishing is allowed in the canal, so bring your tackle (and license), if you're so inclined. Dogs are allowed, so bring Fido (and his leash), too. There are restrooms at the trailhead.

Hike Three: **Van Campens Glen Loop**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **5.1 miles roundtrip, 678' elevation gain**

Why This Hike: It's moderately difficult, so it offers some challenge to young hikers. But it offers wonderful scenery and a good chance of seeing deer.

Hike Description: From the parking lot, cross the road and take the Orchard Trail into the woods. You'll climb gradually for 0.5 miles, through farmland that's slowly returning to forest. At the top of the hill, turn left on Upper Hamilton Ridge Road. The going is easy here, descending gently for about 2 miles. When you get to a "T" intersection, turn left. Then, after 0.2 miles, turn left again onto a paved section of the Old Mine Road. In a short distance, turn right into the Van Campens Glen parking lot. From here, the yellow-blazed Van Campens Trail climbs steeply above Lower Van Campens Falls. Later, you'll cross the brook on stepping stones (give kids a hand) and reach the beautiful Upper Van Campens Falls. The yellow trail ends as you cross the brook on a wooden bridge, where you'll pick up the gravel Millbrook-Watergate Trail. Follow this back to Millbrook.

Driving Directions: From I-80 west, take the last exit in New Jersey before crossing the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. Turn right and travel north for about 12 miles to Millbrook Village. The village parking lot is at the intersection of two roads. Parking is free.

Tips: Hike early in the day so there's time to tour Millbrook Village afterward. On summer weekends, volunteers demonstrate weaving, blacksmithing, woodworking and milling. The town buildings are open Wednesday–Sunday (April–October).

Hike Four: **D&R Canal State Park, Lambertville to Washington Crossing Bridge**

Rating: **Easy to moderate, depending on length**

Distance: **Up to 13 miles roundtrip, 25' elevation gain**

Why This Hike: It's an easy walk, and the southern end takes you to the site of Washington's historic crossing of the Delaware River.

Hike Description: Another section of the 70-mile D&R Canal State Park's trail system, this walk continues (see hike two) to follow the Feeder Canal that was built in the 1830s. As kids enjoy the easy trek, they might be interested to hear that the canal was dug mostly by hand, and took four years to complete. (Anyone who's ever tried to dig a fort will be impressed.) Young anglers will be happy to know that the Park Service keeps the canal stocked with trout. More than 160 species of birds have been seen in the park, so bring your binoculars and camera. If Fido wants to come too, be sure to bring his leash.

Driving Directions: This hike is located along the Delaware River north of Trenton. Take Rte. 29 north to Lambertville, where you can park at Mountain River Outfitters on Mt. Hope Street, just off Ret. 29. Parking is free.

Tips: There are picnic areas at Lambertville Lock and Washington Crossing, so pack a lunch and enjoy the day. There are restrooms at the trailhead.

Hike Five: **Wenonah Trail**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **4.5 miles roundtrip, 100' elevation gain**

Why This Hike: It's not too difficult for kids, and it's very accessible from Philadelphia.

Hike Description: This hike begins on the Break Back Run Trail (the trailhead is across Ogden Road from the parking lot). This trail is quite hilly (and slippery, if wet), so you might get a little workout here. Before long, you'll come to the Clay Hill Trail, which is much more level. Wildlife seen in the woods includes deer, red fox, red-tailed hawks, wild turkey and numerous amphibians. On the George Eldridge Trail, you'll cross several streams on wooden bridges and come to the Langston's Lake Trail. This leads to the Japanese tea house and your turnaround point. But before you start back, take a dip in the lake.

Driving Directions: From Philadelphia, take I-295 south to the Woodbury exit. Follow Rte. 45 south through Woodbury for approximately five miles. Make a left at the stop sign near Taco Bell, and go through the traffic light to cross Rte. 45. At the next light, make another left onto Ogden Road and proceed one mile. At the next stop sign, make another left into the Wenonah Lake parking lot.

Tips: The Japanese tea house at the north end of the lake is a good spot for a picnic. Be sure to check the kids and Fido for ticks before you head home.



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.