



Progressive Picnic in the Park

Let's have a progressive picnic at the park! A progressive picnic is a type of scavenger hunt to enjoy your picnic meal. It is also a fantastic way to get to know parks in the area while being active outdoors.

Items needed:

- Small cards or pieces of paper for numbers
- Pictures of locations you might find in a park (such as a picture of a slide, pond, monkey bars, etc.) - if you prefer, you can use words instead of pictures
- Two re-sealable plastic bags
- Food for your picnic
- Five paper bags to put food in for your picnic, labeled 1-5
- Hand sanitizer or sanitizing wipes to keep hands clean as you move around the park
- A cooler with ice, gel packs or frozen juice boxes to keep food cold and safe – a wagon or cooler with wheels may be helpful to haul items around the park



Start by:

- Decide what food or drinks will be included in your picnic. Ideas include sandwiches, cut-up fruit and vegetables, cheese sticks or fun drinks (fruit-flavored water, 100% fruit juice, low-fat milk). Try to include items from each of the five [MyPlate](#) food groups (grains, fruits, vegetables, protein, and dairy).
- Place one serving of each food or drink in the paper bags for each person who will be attending the picnic. For example, if three people were attending the picnic, put three oranges in one of the paper bags.
- In one of the re-sealable bags, place the pictures of the locations in the park.
- In the other re-sealable bag, put the cards numbered 1-5.



At the park:

- Have one person draw a park picture or word out of the re-sealable bag. This is your first destination. When you arrive at that destination, draw a number out of the other re-sealable bag.
- Select the paper bag that matches the number. This is the first food of your picnic.
- After eating the contents of that paper bag, spend time playing at that location.
- Make sure to dispose of wrappings, peelings, and trash before moving on to a new location.
- Repeat selecting the location and then selecting the number of the paper bag with your next food item until all five locations/foods have been selected and eaten.
- The final stop could be a special treat at home or on the way home, such as a frozen fruit pop, or fruit smoothie. Check out food.unl.edu for recipe ideas. Make the anticipation of going home just as fun.

This can be done as part of a road trip to make the trip go faster. Progressive picnics are amazing fun!

For more information check out more Family Fun on the Run Newsletters: <http://go.unl.edu/familyfun>.

Pat Jones originally authored this article. It was updated in 2025.