

Take a Hike

November 17th is Take a Hike Day, but any day can be a wonderful day for a hike! Hiking can be defined as walking from a lower to higher elevation, usually by way of outdoor trails or paths. Nebraska's varied terrain offers infinite hiking opportunities for families.

Tips for Longer Hikes:

1. **Be prepared! Bring:**

- Water
- A first-aid kit, sunscreen, and insect repellent (remember to check for ticks after being outdoors)
- Extra pairs of socks and mittens (if there is a chance of getting wet)
- On-the-go snacks like fresh or dried fruit, pouches of unsweetened applesauce, trail mix, and granola bars work well. Here are ideas for additional nutritious snacks:

<https://go.unl.edu/proteinbars>

2. **Dress for the conditions!** Wear weather-appropriate shoes or boots (waterproof is best). Layering clothing can be helpful:

<https://go.unl.edu/layersoutdoors>

3. **Join a family-friendly hiking club in your area.**

Follow local nature centers and wildlife sanctuaries on social media to be alerted of family-friendly outdoor events.

4. **Engage children with these outdoor games:**

<https://go.unl.edu/engagingchildren>

5. **Be flexible and patient.** Instead of hiking toward a destination, enjoy the journey (however brief it may need to be)!

Source: Hiking, US Forest Service:

<https://bit.ly/3zHoDcw>

Check out more Family Fun on the Run articles:

<http://go.unl.edu/familyrun>

Tips for Shorter Hikes:

Children, especially those ages five and under, and adults new to hiking may do best with a shorter adventure. The goal is to enjoy being active outdoors.

Try stepping out on a neighborhood park trail for a short distance. Be on the lookout for the perfect walking stick. Observe the surroundings and talk about what you see, hear, smell, and feel. Young children might find making their own paths through backyard leaves a fun way to "take a hike."

This newsletter was originally written by Laura DeWitt. It has been peer-reviewed and updated in 2025.

