

# Safe outdoor activities during the COVID-19 pandemic

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For many people, the summer of 2020 has been like no other in recent memory. Public health restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

have led to canceled festivals, concerts and other events. Many vacations and large celebrations have been limited or put on hold.

Despite the changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, there's still plenty of fun to be had. In fact, seeking out fun activities may be even more important now. Doing something you enjoy can distract you from problems and help you cope with life's challenges.

When activities are near where you live and allow plenty of space between you and others, outdoor activities pose a lower risk of spread of the COVID-19 virus than indoor activities do.

## WHY CHOOSE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES?

The COVID-19 virus is primarily spread from person to person through [respiratory droplets](#) released into the air when talking, coughing, or sneezing. When you're indoors, you're more likely to inhale these [droplets](#) from an infected person, especially if you're in close contact, because you're sharing more air than you do outdoors. Poor building ventilation can cause droplets to hang in the air for a longer period of time, adding to the potential for infection.

When you're outside, fresh air is constantly moving, dispersing these droplets. So, you're less likely to breathe in enough of the respiratory droplets containing the virus that causes COVID-19 to become infected.

Being outside offers other benefits, too. It offers an emotional boost and can help you feel less tense, stressed, angry or depressed.

## LOW-RISK SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Many other [outdoor activities](#) can be good choices, too:

-Picnics. Pack food from home or pick up takeout from your favorite restaurant or food truck and take it to enjoy at your favorite public park.

-Farmers markets. Wear a mask and maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet (2 meters) from others.

-Gathering with friends. Allow for social distancing between people from different households and skip the hugs and handshakes. Plan activities that don't require close contact, such as sidewalk chalk for kids and games like Frisbee. And offer hand sanitizer. Remember that just getting together for a chat at a [safe distance](#) can offer a valuable opportunity to be with people you care about—and boost your mood at the same time.

-Drive-in movies. The COVID-19 pandemic has launched a drive-in movie theater comeback in the U.S. It's something many people can enjoy together with plenty of physical distance.

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