



Childcare.co.uk's 2017 ultimate children's summer holiday guide

Summer can be a stressful time for parents, juggling work with keeping your kids entertained and making sure you're making long-lasting memories with them. Not to mention trying to manage a budget for the duration of the 6 week break.

We thought that we could help by creating this handy guide, offering ideas on things you can do with your kids, current offers and discounts you can take advantage of and a checklist you can print and stick on your fridge, keeping tally of your summer adventures!

Activities at home

Create a mini garden project, this can be as simple as holding a sunflower growing competition or potting some plants with the kids to then tend to, or if you have the space give them a patch to grow vegetables. Not only will it get them outside, but teach them about responsibility and caring for something.

Fruit picking is a great way to, again, get kids outside and learning about the concept of working in a fun and easy way. Many farms will allow you to come and pick your own, a quick google search should give you results for your area like this - <http://www.getsurrey.co.uk/whats-on/family-kids-news/15-fruit-picking-farms-great-9842951>. You can then use the fruit you pick to make a jam or tasty desert!

Treasure hunts can be as elaborate or simple as you like, if you have a big garden a simple find the treasure hidden behind plant pots and in trees can keep children entertained for a good few hours, depending on if you decide to create clues. For a short treasure hunt, the 'hot and cold' method works well. For treasure you could use sweets, toys or rewards, such as half an hour play on a games console.

Arts and crafts are brilliant for keeping children busy whilst also stimulating their creative side and not to mention they're great fun! T-shirt painting is good if you have some old clothes waiting to go to the charity shop. You can use chopped up veg, such as peppers and potatoes as stencils, or simply get the paint brushes out.

Making a family tree is also a good way to get kids to learn about their own family, whilst letting them express themselves artistically, they also make a lovely framed picture as do self and family portraits which you can give out as presents!

Sock puppets are a lot of fun, and everyone has old socks lying about ready to be made into animated characters. You could even enlist your kids to make a puppet show to showcase to the family in the evening.

A summer scrapbook project is a wonderful way to get your children to document their summer adventures. You can get them to write a short paragraph on what they did, and then decorate it with pictures. This can be as frequent as every day or once a week, it's also nice to encourage them to collect items from their activities, that they can then stick into their books. Such items can include leaves, photos, flowers and leaflets/posters.

Activities out and about

Cinema – every sizeable town has a cinema, Odeon, Vue and Cineworld are the biggest ones with the most locations. There are some great kids films on at the moment including, The Emoji Movie, The Nut Job 2, Leap and Blazing Samurai.

Lido/swimming pools – you can find your local lido or swimming pool by simply googling. Most are either free or ask for a small admission fee.

Geocaching – Geocaching is a treasure hunt that combines technology with the great outdoors. There more than 2 million geocaches hidden globally. This is how it works: Geocaches are hidden all over the world by fellow geocachers. A geocacher will go to a location and hide a small waterproof box containing a few varied bits and pieces (usually of little value), a logbook and a pen or pencil. Using their GPS receiver, the geocacher records the coordinates of their geocache and returns home to log its existence on a website. Another geocacher will see the listing about the geocache, enter the coordinates into their GPS receiver and go in search of it. When they find it, the finder may take something from the geocache and leave something in return, and for posterity, enter a log in the logbook. You can play via these websites: <https://www.geocaching.com/play> <https://opencache.uk/> <http://www.terracing.com/>

Orienteering – Similar to geocaching, orienteering is an outdoors activity that will see you navigate, usually through wooded areas, using a map to various checkpoints. You can find your local orienteering course here <https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/pocs>

Go Ape – Go Ape is a great day out, which combines physical activity with a lot of swinging, climbing and fun! It's basically an assault course high up in the trees, if your kids aren't a fan of heights there's other activities they can do, such as forest Segway. Find your nearest site here <https://goape.co.uk/days-out>

Museums – the UK has a wonderful array of museums that cater to all interests, whether your child loves trains, dinosaurs or fashion, there is a museum for them. Most offer free admission as well! Find a museum here <http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryMagazine/DestinationsUK/Museums/>

Theme Parks – perfect for thrill seekers or kids who just love to play on the fayre ground stalls. Thorpe Park, Alton Towers and Drayton Manor are among the biggest in the UK. Be sure to book online beforehand as many will offer online discounts.

Wood trails – the UK has some of the most beautiful countryside, landscapes and forestry in the UK, make the most of it by going on a wood trail and find your nearest trail and activities here <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/visit>

Heritage sites – teach your children about the UK's rich history by visiting one of its heritage sites. If you're a member kids go free to all 400 sites. Such sites include Stonehenge, Dover Castle and Hadrian's wall. Find out more here <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/join/>

Car boot sales – forget the early mornings, car boot sales can be a lot of fun and can bring out the entrepreneurial spirit in your children. They're also perfect if you want to get rid of some junk in your house! Get the kids involved and tell them any money they make on selling their items they can keep. Find a car boot near you here <http://www.carbootjunction.com/car-boot-by-county.php>

Dog walking - If you don't have a dog of your own, it's likely your children are begging you for one. To keep them happy and get them out of the house, you can offer your services as a dog walker. Borrow My Doggy is a great site where you can find dogs in your area who need a bit of love <https://www.borrowmydoggy.com/>

Discounts and promotions

Vue cinemas – tickets are £2.49 each Saturday and Sunday at 10am and everyday during the summer holidays on selected children's films. Find out more here <https://www.myvue.com/offers/mini-mornings>

Legoland & Sea life Centre – the combi ticket for £16.50 gives you admission to both the Sea life centre and Legoland in Manchester <https://manchester.legolanddiscoverycentre.co.uk/tickets/>

Play tennis for free – This website helps you find participating tennis courts that will allow you and your kids to play for free <https://www.tennisforfree.com/>

Swap clubcard points for entry to London Zoo - To get the offer, register or log-in with Tesco, then visit the ZSL London Zoo Clubcard rewards page <https://secure.tesco.com/clubcard/boost/london-zoo/UK-000033.prd> and enter the amount of points you want to convert. Adult tickets cost up to £24.30 and kids up to £17.10.

Hobbycraft free summer workshops – Hobbycraft is running a free summer workshop every Wednesday from 12pm – 2pm at all of its stores. Find your nearest store here <https://www.hobbycraft.co.uk>

Bournemouth Oceanarium – 30% off tickets when booked online. Prices range are £8.55 for adults and £5.95 for a child's ticket, with a family ticket for four costing £23.95. <http://www.oceanarium.co.uk/news/save-up-to-30-this-summer-holiday>

Free theatre tickets for kids when purchased with an adult ticket – Kidsweek is running an offer throughout August where kids can get a free ticket to top London west end shows. Book tickets here <http://www.kidsweek.co.uk>

Free art and drawing workshops at the National Gallery – Every Sunday between 11am and 4pm the National Gallery is running free workshops for kids aged between 5 and 11 years old. Find our times and more info here <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/whats-on/5-11-activities-sundays/>

Dobbies Garden Centre free kids gardening workshop - Dobbies Garden Centre is running free workshops for 4-10-year-olds, Little Seedlings, on the first Sunday of every month at 34 stores across the UK. Book your child on to one here <https://www.dobbies.com/events/little-seedlings/>

Pets at Home free workshops – all Pets at Home stores are running a free pet workshop for kids aged between 5 and 11 years old, find out more and book here <http://community.petsathome.com/workshops/>

Childcare.co.uk Gold membership

Our gold membership which is £24.99/month, offers a number of discounts which include but are not limited to:

50% OFF or 2-FOR-1 @ OVER 7000 UK RESTAURANTS

Gold membership gives up to 12 months free digital tastecard membership worth £79.99 per year giving half price deals and 2-for-1 offers at over 7000 UK restaurants including Pizza Express, Strada, La Tasca, ASK Italian and lots more!

40% OFF CINEMA TICKETS AND 50% OFF DAYS OUT

Gold members also get free tastecard+ membership worth an additional £24.99 per year giving 40% off cinema tickets and discounts on days out at places such as Legoland, Thorpe Park, Chessington World of Adventures, Warwick Castle and Alton Towers.

FREE KIDS PASS WORTH UP TO £75 PER YEAR

Gold members get a free digital Kids Pass giving discounts on UK attractions, Kids Eat Free Deals at hundreds of restaurants, discounts at cinemas, bowling, play centres and lots more offers. Kids Pass usually costs £75 per year.

To see the full list of benefits of gold membership visit: <https://www.childcare.co.uk/gold-membership-benefits>