

BOREDOM BUSTERS



You have been hiking and your kids are getting ready to have a melt down. You need to save the mood quickly so that the hike can be enjoyed. Try out these boredom busters to occupy your kids mind!

9 games for hiking

1. One Word Stories

One person begins a story by saying one word, and then the story is passed on to the next person, and the next, and so on, with each person building to the plot of the story. Since each person can only say one word at a time, the story becomes really silly and fun, and this game allows your kid's imagination to run wild.

2. The Ants Go Marching

This is a classic song that is easily adapted to hiking. Everyone sings the beginning of the song "the ants go marching..." and then each person gives one thing that the little ant does. After everyone gives one, you move on to the next verse. This activity helps kids with their vocabulary and rhyming skills, as well as giving them something to think about while walking.

Example:

All: "The ants go marching one by one, hurrah, hurrah. The ants go marching one by one, the little one stops to..."

Person 1: Eat a plumb

Person 2: Have some fun

Person 3: Eat a ton

3. ABC Game

Start at the beginning of the alphabet and find something on the trail that begins with the letter "A." Work your way through the rest of the alphabet.

4. Twenty Questions

One person thinks of a noun (person, place, or thing). All the other hikers ask yes or no questions to try to guess the noun.

5. "I'm going on a hike and I'm bringing..."

One person starts and says what they are bringing on a hike, beginning with the letter "A." The next person says what the first person is bringing, and something else beginning with the letter "B." You work through the rest of the alphabet this way. This game helps kids with their memory and gives them a fun way to think about hiking.

Example:

Person 1: "I'm going on a hike and I'm bringing **apples**"

Person 2: "I'm going on a hike and I'm bringing **apples** and a **backpack**"

Person 3: "I'm going on a hike and I'm bringing **apples**, a **backpack**, and a **canteen**"

6. Categories

Choose one category, such as types of fruit, animals, TV shows, etc. One by one everyone identifies something in the category until no one can think of any more. Then pick another category and play again.

7. Riddles

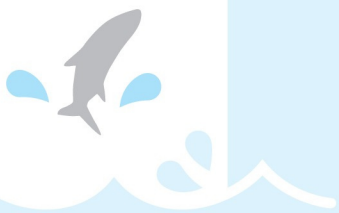
Write down your favorite age appropriate riddles and pull them out when your kids start to get tired and grumpy. Riddles will keep their minds occupied.

8. Sing Songs

This one is very simple. Before hiking come up with a list of songs that everyone in the family knows and enjoys. When your kids start to get bored and tired, start singing songs to bring back the mood.

9. Exploring Breaks

When people are tired, stop walking and explore your area. Turn over logs and rocks and record what you see.



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to do at the park

1. Pack a picnic
2. Play catch
3. Explore/Scavenger Hunt
4. Learn about nature
5. Hike
6. Play Tag
7. Hide and go seek
8. Frisbee
9. Make your own Olympic Games
10. Watch clouds



4. Make binoculars

Materials: paper towel/toilet paper tubes, tape/glue, decorating materials

Before you leave, have your kids decorate two cardboard tubes and tape the sides together. When you get to your campsite look through the "binoculars" and see what there is to see!

5. Squirt guns

Materials: squirt guns/spray bottles

Let's face it. Camping means dirt. Instead of fussing over your kids playing in the dirt, start the cleaning process with a fun game. Fill two spray bottles with water and let your kids battle it out as they clean themselves.

6. Canoe ride

Materials: canoe, paddles, life jacket

If you can rent a canoe, take a ride with your kid! You can even rent little paddles and have your kid help you paddle.

7. Make s'mores

Materials: graham crackers, chocolate, marshmallows

No camping trip is complete without s'mores. Make a fire and help your kids roast marshmallows. This treat will be a great reward after a long day.

8. Swimming

Cool off by jumping in the water and going for a swim.

9. Keep a journal

Materials: journal, writing tool

You think that you will remember your trip, but it will slip away. Have your kids write in a journal to record your activities and their thoughts. It will be something to look back on as a record of activities written in your kids own voice hand.

to do at the beach

1. Build sandcastle
2. Paint shells
3. Make necklace out of shells
4. Pretend to be pirate and hunt for buried treasure
5. Jump over waves
6. Chase birds
7. Bury someone in sand
8. Explore tide pools
9. Make a drip castle
10. Fly kites

to do while camping

1. Go "hunting" for firewood

It is important to have a good fire -so get your kids involved by having them gather sticks for the fire. Even if they can only carry very tiny ones, they will still feel like they helped build the fire.

2. Make campfire

Materials: firewood, matches/lighter

Nothing says camping like a campfire. So start gathering wood and make a fire! Need help? Check out: <http://www.smokeybear.com/build-campfire.asp>



3. Tell stories

Gather around the campfire and tell all the stories you can. Let your kids tell stories -made up or not. If your kids can handle it, tell ghost stories!