

39 Fun Ways Kids Can Play Outside This Spring

Source: [CBC](#)

The sun is getting warmer, birds are singing, and my children are shedding their winter gear all over our backyard. Spring is in the air! After the long sleep of winter, nature is filled with a flutter of activity and new energy. Trees are exploding with blooms, insects are buzzing, and critters are busy building nests. The kids are full of energy too! Thankfully, spring offers many simple, easy, and fun outdoor activities for children to get their wiggles out. On that note, here are 39 free and easy activities you can do outside with your kids this spring:

1. Search for signs of spring

Take a stroll around your neighbourhood or nearby park and search for signs of spring with your child, encouraging them to use all their senses to find spring. What can you see? What do you smell? How does spring feel?

What your child is learning: mindfulness, as well as an introduction to nature science.

2. Jump in a puddle

Next time your child spots a puddle [encourage them to jump in it!](#) Puddle-jumping helps children build strength and coordination in their legs, and it's just so much fun. Don't worry about the mess: clothes and children can always be washed and dried.

Skill your child is developing: jumping.

3. Make a mud pie

Spring is wonderfully mud-delicious! Playing in the mud encourages children to use their creativity and problem-solving skills and all the scooping, digging, pouring, lifting, and moving of mud helps children develop their hand dexterity – so important through life. Mud can be made into pies, castles and art – you'll be surprised what your kids might come up with.

What your child is learning: creativity, problem-solving, hand dexterity, and sensory processing.

4. Play in the rain

Rain, rain *don't* go away: you give kids [fun ways to play!](#) Rainy days transform the outdoor world into wet and wonderful landscapes to explore. Grab those raincoats and rubber boots and head out for some rainy day play. Children can catch raindrops into containers or on their tongue, make rain music on pots and pans, race sticks in gutters or creeks, or sing and dance in the rain.

Skills your child is developing: movement, creativity, and problem-solving.

5. Climb a tree

Yes! Let your child climb a tree. Tree climbing helps kids build strength, coordination, and awareness of the pleasures and risks of playing at great heights. Show your child which trees are good for climbing by pointing out trees with sturdy, low-hanging branches. Guide them to be aware of how high they climb, and help them learn how to come down safely.

Skills your child is developing: climbing and hanging.

6. Dig for earthworms

Digging into dirt and finding wiggly worms is exciting and educational. Children like digging for worms and finds it strange that they have no arms, legs or eyes.

What your child is learning: digging, sensory processing, and an introduction to nature science.

7. Spin in circles

Encourage your child to spread her arms like an eagle and see how fast she can spin before falling down. This simple activity helps children develop balance and spatial awareness.

Skills your child is developing: balance and spatial awareness.

8. Practice spring-themed yoga poses

Show your child how to pretend to be a tall tree, hop like a frog, curl up like a sleepy seed, or a flutter like a butterfly. These are a few simple spring-themed [yoga](#) poses that you can practice together outside in a park or your yard.

What your child is learning: body awareness.

9. Plant seeds together

Plant some easy-to-grow seeds like peas or sunflowers with your child. If you don't have a yard, try planting seeds in a pot on your patio or even indoors. Planting seeds is an important opportunity to teach kids how food grows and how to care for plants.

Skill your child is developing: dexterity.

10. Go for a bike ride

Spring is the time to tune up bikes and go for a ride! If your child is still learning how to cycle, choose a quiet street or park where he or she can learn. For more advanced bikers, try out trail biking or play some bike games to develop skills such as weaving through a line of objects.

Skills your child is developing: balance and movement.

11. Play with a jump rope

There are many ways to play with a jump rope. At first, your child will need to learn jumping with two feet. Be patient and encouraging during this phase – sometimes it takes time. Once this basic skill is learned, challenge your child to try different types of jumps: cross jumps, scissor jumps, and duckie jumps.

Skills your child is developing: jumping and coordination.

12. Watch the clouds float by

Place a blanket on the ground and invite your child to watch the clouds in the sky. Lay quietly or be curious about what you see. Are the clouds moving fast or slow? What shapes do you see?

What your child is learning: mindfulness.

13. Build a fort outside

Scrounge up some materials from around your home or in nature. Things like old sheets, long sticks, and rope are perfect for fort-building. Head outside and let your child use their imagination and problem-solving skills to build a fort. Younger children may need a parent or older sibling to help them.

What your child is learning: creativity and problem-solving.

14. Toss a ball

Now that the snow is gone, take out a ball. Find an open field to kick, toss, or throw the ball with your child. Your child might want to start up an impromptu game of soccer with the family, or make up a game of their own.

Skills your child is developing: kicking, throwing, and creativity.

15. Make rain art

Drip, drop, drip. Bring some paper, paintbrushes, and paint outside in the rain. Show your child how to use rain to clean brushes and to spread paint.

What your child is learning: creativity and fine motor skills.

16. Smell the flowers

Tulips and lilacs and daffodils – oh my! Go for a flower walk with your child. How many different flowers you can find? What do the flowers smell like?

What your child is learning: an introduction to nature science.

17. Draw with sidewalk chalk

Sometimes we need to help spring along by bringing a little colour outside. Cheer up your neighbourhood by creating sidewalk chalk art and [games like hopscotch](#) with your child.

What your child is learning: creativity and fine motor skills.

18. Visit a pond

Below the murky surface of a pond there's a whole world waiting to be discovered. Bring along a couple of buckets and a net and show your child how to go pond dipping. Can you find tadpoles or other pond mini-beasts?

What your child is learning: water safety and nature science.

19. Go on a bug hunt

By late spring there are tons of bugs buzzing around! Go on a bug hunt with your child. Do you see bugs on flowers? How about under rocks and logs?

What your child is learning: nature science.

20. Make a nature "potion"

Gather, mix, and stir. Nature potions are strange concoctions made of nature materials. They are endowed with magical properties. Help your child make their magical potions by giving them some pots and showing them which nature materials are safe to use.

What your child is learning: creativity and nature science.

21. Go bird-watching

Spring is an exciting time for birds. Birds are flying to their summer homes to build nests and raise hatchlings. Attract birds to your home by building or setting up a bird feeder, or go in search of birds by visiting parks and ponds. What kinds of birds can you see? What are they doing? Can you hear them sing?

What your child is learning: nature science.

22. Play in the wind

Spring weather can be windy! Play in the wind with a kite, flag, or streamers. Ask your child to experiment with throwing things in the wind like a leaf, pine cone, or feather. What do they notice?

Skills your child is developing: running and throwing.

23. Go on a spring picnic

Enjoy a spring picnic outside with your child. Bring healthy foods that are in season, like strawberries and peas, and taste how yummy they are when you eat them outdoors.

What your child is learning: healthy eating.

24. Watch bees and butterflies

Bees and butterflies are pollinators. They help plants grow and make food. Search for bees and butterflies outside with your child or learn more about honeybees by reading books or watching nature videos together.

What your child is learning: nature science.

25. Make spring rubbings

Spring is full of different textures, from rough bark and smooth leaves to wet grass and silky flowers. Invite your child to feel the textures of spring and try to capture those textures by making nature rubbings. Hold a piece of paper on top of a textured surface and rub it with a crayon.

Skills your child is developing: fine motor skills and sensory processing.

26. Search for animal tracks

When animals walk over soft earth and mud they leave prints behind. Bring your child on an animal track hunt and see how many different tracks they can find.

What your child is learning: nature science.

27. Weave a bird nest

Bird nests are works of art. Can you spot a bird's nest in the trees? Invite your child to gather twigs and grass and weave together a bird's nest of their own.

What your child is learning: Fine motor skills, problem-solving, and creativity.

28. Read a spring book outside

There are many wonderful books about spring for children. Explore your bookshelf for books on this theme, search your local library's e-book collection, or treat your child to a new book, and then find a nice spot outside for some read-aloud time.

What your child is learning: reading.

29. Turn over logs and rocks

There are unique critters that like to live under rocks and logs. Have your child move heavy stones or deadfall and look underneath. Don't forget to put them back in place so your new little friends can stay snug in their homes.

What your child is learning: lifting, pushing, pulling, and nature science.

30. Go on a colour hunt

Spring is bursting with colour. Go on a colour hunt with your child and see how many colours you can find in nature. Take pictures of all the colours you can find.

What your child is learning: observation and nature science.

31. Create spring nature art

Use nature finds that your child has brought home (rocks, pine cones, shells, feathers) to create a spring mandala, or invent your own nature art.

What your child is learning: creativity and fine motor skills.

32. Arrange a bouquet of flowers

Children love flowers and are naturally drawn to pick and arrange them. It's important to let kids do this when it's appropriate. If there are no dandelions growing in your grass for your child to pick (lucky you!) then try visiting your local garden centre to find affordable blooms your child can arrange.

What your child is learning: creativity and nature appreciation.

33. Play hide and seek

If your child has exhausted all the great hiding spots inside your home, then it's time to bring hide and seek outside!

What your child is learning: problem-solving, counting, and running.

34. Bring nature inside

Choose a special spot in your home to display your child's nature finds. Kids often have pockets full of rocks, shells, and other tidbits. Putting their treasures on display allows them to observe them more closely and be curious about nature.

What your child is learning: nature appreciation.

35. Lie down under a tree

Looking at something ordinary, like a tree, from a different perspective helps children see the world in a different way. Lie under a tree with your son or daughter and be curious together.

What your child is learning: mindfulness.

36. Balance on a log or beam

The next time your child spots a beam at the park or fallen tree in nature, help them walk along it. Be sure the fallen tree isn't rotten or slippery, and be ready to offer a helping hand if needed.

Skill your child is developing: balance.

37. Smell the scents of spring

Spring has many interesting smells. Flowers smell sweet and fragrant, while marshy meadows can be stinky. Notice how spring smells in your yard or a nearby park, or on a nature trail.

What your child is learning: nature science.

38. Blow bubbles

Little bubbles or big bubbles, kids love all bubbles and there are plenty of easy [recipes for making bubbles](#) online.

Skills your child is developing: sensory processing, fine motor skills, and coordination.

39. Wash toys outside

It's time for spring cleaning! Children enjoying imitating skills they see adults doing, so why not capitalize on this interest and get them to wash their own toys outside? Fill a shallow bin with warm soapy water and a rag and let your child give it a go.

Skills your child is developing: sensory processing and fine motor skills.

Measures put in place to help contain the spread of COVID-19 are gradually changing. Please remember to follow public health directives for gathering and social distancing in your region.