Staycation Ideas
Regardless of Income or Where You Live:

**Set Sail for a Staycation!**

We love the idea of staying home for a vacation and making the most of your time as a family without breaking the bank or needing to take several days off work. This list will give you a jumping off point for creating your own ideas. We thought having a theme would make the staycation more focused, fun and memorable. Take what we have and run with it or use it as inspiration to create a staycation that reflects your family’s interests. Feel free to invite friends and neighbors. When are you ever going to be able to afford to take them all on a real cruise?

If this seems too overwhelming and complicated, don’t worry. Take the ideas you like and put them on popsicle sticks or strips of paper and just pull one out of a jar when the kiddos say, “Mommy, I’m bored!”

Bon Voyage!!
### Shipwrecked

- Decorate your vacation spot like a shipwreck
- Treasure hunt
- Pan for gold in a shallow pool with water and sand. Use tiny balls of gold tin foil and a Frisbee with a few holes poked through to drain the water.
- Sun bathing/swimming

### Survival skills/games
- "Walk the plank"
- Backyard obstacle course
- Fort building
- Earn a merit badge
- Archery
- Dig for dollar store "booty" in a sandbox

### Cruise Ship

- "Shuffleboard" any backyard games--ring toss, bocce, etc.
- Bingo
- "Night life" talent show. Singing, magic, etc.
- Dress up and disco in the living room or outside with the neighbors
- "Water slide" slip and slide
- Eat buffet style outside

### Destination exploration:
Each day visit a local site or tour your area: The Zoo, a nearby Metropolitan, hike, bike, shopping strips, find goofy souvenirs
- Collect a similar trinket from each location like a rock or a small stuffed animal.
**Hawaiian Vacation**

* Slushy drinks in a pineapple
* Luau with hula dancing
* Canoeing
* Decorate your backyard in a Hawaiian theme
* Make leis out of paper flowers
* Paddle board on a lake or pond
* Sunbathing/Swimming
* Learn "Pidgin" (Hawaiian slang) and speak it all week "Howzit Brah?” “Wikiwiki, Malihinis. It’s time fo’ da grinds.”
* "Roasted pig" BBQ pork chops, kalua pork
* Learn to cook other Island foods
* Play hot potato with "lava rocks"
* Hike a mountain, waterfall or visit a flower garden

**European Vacation**

* Lie on a blanket and star gaze while pretending to look at the Sistine Chapel
* Take 3 hours to have a long relaxing lunch and conversation like the French
* Make sure there's French bread, French toast, German pancakes, schnitzel, sausages, etc.
* Make and eat gelato ice cream
* Find fun ways to reenact European history
* Make your kitchen into a pizzeria and learn to toss dough
* Climb a mountain or a large staircase and pretend you're ascending the Eiffel Tower
* Overlook the city lights
* Learn about architecture
* Visit museums
* Rent a canoe in the evening and pretend you're on a gondola, Point out imaginary European sites
* Find a river cruise
* Go to a thrift shop and put on a fashion show
* Take turns pretending you’re a palace guard and try to make each other laugh.
## African Safari/Backyard Campout Survival Skills

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<td>*Jungle Theme: make paper plate lion masks, safari hats, paper bead necklaces/jewelry, bean mosaics in a CD case</td>
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<td>*Cook with a Dutch oven, roast food, tinfoil dinners, different types of s'mores</td>
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<td>*Make and play camping games (tag, capture the flag, hide and go seek, bean bag toss into cans, ring toss, ladder golf, badminton)</td>
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<td>*Learn about animal prints and make your own for your family to guess which animals they are tracking</td>
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<td>*Make/Experiment with different fire starters</td>
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<td>*Find out about different light sources (crayons as candles, Crisco)</td>
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<td>*Set up tents</td>
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<td>*Get a fire pit and make food in your backyard, Make Namibian Potjke</td>
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<td>*Practice different knot tying</td>
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<td>*Use a compass</td>
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<td>*Setup archery, bb/airsoft/nerf gun target practice</td>
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<td>*Learn about constellations and spend time watching the night sky</td>
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## Service Days

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<td>*Make baby blankets</td>
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<td>*Make art kits, pillowcases, stuffed animals for hospitals</td>
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<td>*Volunteer at food banks/kitchen and homeless shelters</td>
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<td>*Hygiene kits</td>
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<td>*Check volunteer.lds.org, Boys and Girls Club, United Way, libraries, museums, senior centers, retirement homes, city public works department.</td>
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### Fairy/Gnome Forest

- Teach/help your kids plan and make their own garden in your yard! Plant the flowers and plants, find a way to water, and then decorate your garden as a fairy or gnome garden.
- Make Natural Playhouses out of willows, sunflowers, corn stalks (they will grow how you plant them into a hut/house to play in).
- Recycling into fairy objects and place in yard/nature (paint rocks, make rock bugs, bottle cap bugs, fairy houses out of toilet paper tubes).
- Teenagers: Dress up like a fairy and be the Head Fairy/Gnome that will conduct activities/games.

### Science Palooza (STEM)

- Plan a day doing experiments, blowing things up, building, launching, flying.
- Candy experiments.
- Visit a science museum.
- Work on your next science fair project.
- Explore bubbles.
- Buy a rocket kit and launcher.
- Egg drop.
- Make rock candy.
- Make Lego robots.
- Do water experiments outside.

- Paper airplane folding and flying competition.
- Bridge building (who can hold the most weight).
- Exploding toothpaste, Mentos and coke explosions, baking soda balloon bombs.
**Pre-Missionary Training Center**

- Read a book about Joseph Smith and gain a testimony of him.
- Read about Jesus Christ and gain a testimony of Him.
- Read through Preach My Gospel.
- Learn 3 hymns on piano, ukulele or guitar.
- Learn to get comfortable talking to strangers.
- Give a Book of Mormon to a stranger.
- Call and order pizza (communication/polite phone skills).
- Get others to ask difficult gospel questions and look up the answers.
- Iron a shirt
- Sew on a button
- Learn about different cultures
- Try new foods graciously
- Scripture study techniques
- Map reading
- Service
- Learn to work hard. Do a difficult project.
- Spend a few hours biking
- Learn to use public transit
- Learn to cook
- Menu planning/shopping
- Learn budgeting

**Spa Day**

- Make Kool-Aid lip gloss
- Manicures and pedicures
- Find a local place that gives massages (check with massage therapy schools for good deals).
- Make scrubs and face masks
- Decorate flip flops to wear
- Make a foot soak
- Make your own soaps
**History/Civics Week**

- Learn about people in history
- Visit historical or political museums, local government buildings
- Tour police stations and firehouses
- Attend a city meeting
- Read/memorize your country’s constitution. Learn what it means
- Learn about how your system of government works and compare it to another country
  - If there are separate political parties where you live, learn what each party says they stand for.

**Treasure Hunting**

- Check out [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com), and using a GPS device you can find hidden treasure all around your city
- Make geocaches and hide them for others to find
- Rent a metal detector (check online for your area, or buy one online), and you can explore parks looking for treasure
- Watch a movie about treasure hunting
- Do a Treasure Hunt Picnic (clues take you to different places and you eat something at each place)
- Create treasure hunts for each other
Around the World

Pick a country or destination each day of your vacation. Combine ideas and role play a story throughout the week. Did your train break down on the way to London? What did you do to pass the time? Did you have an overnight layover in Belgium? What was the hotel like? Did you end up sleeping in the airport? Get creative so little ones have stories to tell about their staycation. Plan meals, games, activities around that country/destination.

Become a Tourist in your hometown/nearby city

*Visit the city's visitor center and get a list of ideas and brochures (places to eat, museums, tours, parks, hikes, swimming pools, historical landmarks/buildings, national parks, etc.)
*Plan out your days to visit and do the various activities

*Put on backpacks, grab some maps
*Get the public transit schedules, and ride public transit to get to your destinations.
*Take pictures or record your family at various places and make a photo journal or video of your adventures.
**Obstacle Course Play**

*Set up an obstacle/play course for things like Nerf Gun wars, water balloon fights, paintball, airsoft, water guns, capture the flag, glow in the dark capture the flag, etc.  
*Build it with things like cardboard boxes, folding tables, chairs, painters drop cloth, big pieces of wood, etc.  
*Give dollar store plastic trophies or medals to each participant with a unique title.  “Fastest time, Best balance, Highest jumper”, etc.

**Book/Movie Theme Day**

*Don’t judge a book by its movie*

Read/listen to a favorite book together or watch your favorite movie and then have a theme day based on it. Here are some ideas for a Harry Potter theme day:

| *Dress up like the characters* | *Make a 9 and ¾ platform door* | *Make floating candles for your room* |
| *Serve a Hogwarts meal in your dining room* | *Make potions (use some science experiments, blow things up, change colors, etc.) or make perfume and lip gloss.* | *Make homemade butterbeer* |
| *Make wands (get a magic trick book and learn some magic together)* | *Bake mandrake cakes* | *Play your own game of quidditch in your backyard* |
| *Finish up your day watching your favorite Harry Potter movie* | *Try some Bertie Botts All Flavor Jelly Beans* | *Make chocolate frogs* |
Other Fun Ideas

*Topsy turvy day.  Mom is the kid for the day, Kids become Parents.

*Life skills - What do your kids need to learn? Budgeting, laundry, cleaning, car maintenance/repair, shopping, cooking, home maintenance/repair, painting, gardening, 72 hour kits, family emergency plan.

*Ice Cream Day - Make different homemade ice creams, use an ice cream ball, electric ice cream maker, blender, experiment with different flavors, etc. Have an ice cream sundae bar and invite the neighbors to cool down on a hot day.

*Garage Sale - Great way for kids to learn about selling, organizing and dejunking.

*Photo/Movie Day – Make a movie with toys (Legos, trains, cars, dolls, etc.) make a script and act out a play. Make a private link on YouTube and send it to family and friends to watch. Make something to share on LDS Media: http://create.lds.org/

*Family History- Use apps to find out how you are related to famous people (even our neighbor!), apps that map life events for your family, find names for the temple, visit graves/houses/cities where family members have lived.

* Make, write and publish a book - each member of the family can select a topic and learn how to put a book together.

*Park tour:  Tour all of the public parks in your city, and rate each one (1-10) and find the best parks for sports, kids, teens, fishing, watercraft, bike riding, make and sail your own boats at a park or trail with a river.

*Make matching t-shirts with date, and then wear them wherever you go. This will also help families organize photos according to vacation events and everybody looks nice in the photos.
What Else You Got? Or Not?

Don’t own it? Rent it! - Ask neighbors/friends to join you to split the cost, or ask to borrow things/rent from other people.

* Boats, canoes, watercraft
* ATV, Jet skis
* Rock climbing equipment
* Rent a projector for a backyard movie night

* Fishing poles
* Bounce houses
* Check your local rec center for Frisbee golf rental equipment, tennis, racquetball, pickle ball

* Bubble balls (for bubble soccer)
* You can also rent airsoft guns, paintball equipment

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