



40 Fun Things to Do With Your Kids This Fall

Beth Wegerbauer

Fall is rich with opportunities for outside fun, holiday crafts, family activities, serving others, and time to remember what you're thankful for. Here is a list of 40 fun things to do with your kids this fall. The best part? Most of them are free!

1. Go to the library for storytime, or spend an hour helping your child select fall- or Thanksgiving-themed books. Have a reading marathon! Then encourage older children to continue the story by writing their own "sequel."
2. Tell stories about family members or memories that you're all thankful for.
3. Encourage children to finish this sentence: "The 5 things I'm most thankful for are..."
4. Write letters to or email out-of-town family members or friends. Attach pictures of your fun activities!
5. Volunteer together.
6. Make a list of all the things you're thankful for. See if you can reach 100!
7. For every 5 items you see in your pantry, donate 1 item to your local food bank.
8. Collect your old sheets, blankets, and towels and donate them to your local animal shelter or hospital.
9. Clean out your basement, garage, and closets. Set aside whatever you can donate.
10. Go on a hayride together.
11. Visit a corn maze.
12. Construct your own maze (either in a park, in your yard, out of your furniture pillows, or draw one on paper) for your kids to try.
13. Create a fort in your living room out of blankets, pillows, or cardboard boxes.
14. Make a scavenger hunt, or create puzzles for each other to solve.
15. Go to a pumpkin patch and see who can spot the biggest and the smallest pumpkins.
16. Visit a craft festival.
17. Plant bulbs that will bloom in the spring.
18. Make a campfire in your backyard and roast marshmallows.
19. Paint or draw together. Make decorations for your mailbox, front door, and the rest of your house. Make extras for your neighbors who can't do this themselves, or take some to a local retirement community.
20. Fall is a great time for making lots of fun arts and crafts with things like acorns, leaves, and pine cones. Here are some projects to try:
 - Pine cone bird feeders (spread peanut butter on the pine cone and cover it with bird seed, then hang from a tree).

- Make a leaf mobile with leaves and sticks.
 - Make and hang a homemade fall wreath.
 - Collect leaves to make a leaf collage.
 - Place leaves inside contact paper to make a placemat.
 - Cut an apple in half and use it as a stamp to design pictures or placemats.
 - Make leaf rubbings.
21. Download free fall coloring pages (leaves, scarecrows, covered bridges) and have a coloring party.
 22. Make a scarecrow for your yard.
 23. Make “hand turkeys” by tracing your child’s hand, and then they can draw a face on the thumb and color the other fingers as turkey feathers.
 24. Make play dough from scratch. Find easy recipes through google.com.
 25. Have fun making tie-dye T-shirts.
 26. Play board games or card games.
 27. Have a pillow fight!
 28. Play hide and seek.
 29. Play house, school, or dress up.
 30. Turn on the radio or play a favorite CD and have a family dance party.
 31. Sing songs! Teach the kids some “oldies but goodies.”
 32. Go to a museum, the playground, or the zoo.
 33. Build paper airplanes and have a flying contest.
 34. Blow bubbles, or give the kids a bubble bath!
 35. Get outside! Play kickball or soccer. Play basketball. Play touch (or flag) football with a nerf ball. Play baseball or whiffle ball. Play freeze tag, or if it’s raining, stay inside and have a freeze dance contest. Ride bikes. Go on a hike. Go on a walk and take pictures of nature. Take a walk through your neighborhood or park and count how many different colored leaves you see. While you’re at it, bring a plastic bag and pick up any trash or recycleable items you find. Explore your yard and look for insects.
 36. Go to a local high school or college football game and have your own mini tailgating party.
 37. Get crafty in the kitchen! Bake pumpkin bread. Make popcorn. Drink hot apple cider. Make a pot of soup. Make and drink hot cocoa. Go apple picking together and bake a fresh apple pie. Bake cookies (let the kids help). Make mini pizzas with english muffins, sauce, and shredded cheese. Make milkshakes. Bake a cake and decorate it.
 38. Have Family Movie Night: rent a DVD from your library, online, or see what’s on TV. Spread out a blanket and have a “floor picnic” with the Fall treats you’ve made.
 39. Make a gingerbread house, or decorate gingerbread men.
 40. Begin your holiday shopping by making lists for different family members and other relatives or friends. Don’t forget teachers, babysitters, or even mail carriers, hairdressers, etc.

Beth Wegerbauer is the co-owner of Building Blocks and a mom of four children who love family projects!