



Go Take a HIKE!

Hiking can offer hours of enjoyment and a lifetime of personal fitness. A family hike can build wonderful memories and strong bodies at the same time. The key to successful hiking with kids is choosing the right trail for their abilities and interests. Montana and other states have helpful online lists of local trail systems. Look for a trail to fit your family at TrailLink.com or Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (<http://fwp.mt.gov/recreation/activities/hikingTrails.html>).

PLAN

Make a hike fit your family: When choosing a trail, carefully think about the length (shorter is better for kids) and elevation change (start flat, gradually go steeper).

Make a hike fun for kids: To reduce whining along the way, make a scavenger list of things to see or collect. Tell stories, sing songs, and stop to play in a stream.

Make a hike sun safe for everyone: Remember hats, sunglasses, and plenty of safe drinking water. Use a sunscreen of at least 30-45 SPF and reapply every 2 hours.

PLAY

So many trails, so many miles of family fun! Montana has over 15,000 trail miles with something for every family to enjoy at their own pace. Here are ten great options.

- 1. Lewis & Clark Cavern Trails:** 10 miles of trails, all levels, near Whitehall
- 2. Swan River Natural Trail:** 4-mile, easy family walk starting in Bigfork Village
- 3. Lone Pine State Park:** 5 miles of nature trails + visitor center near Kalispell
- 4. Headwaters Trail System:** 6 miles from Headwaters State park to Three Forks
- 5. River's Edge Trails:** 25 miles (11 are paved) around Great Falls
- 6. Heritage Trail System:** Expanding network of trails in and round Billings
- 7. Bozeman Trails:** 45 miles of city trails, connecting to many others outside town
- 8. Mt. Helena City Park:** Multiple trails, many miles on Helena's own mountain
- 9. Missoula Parks & Recreation:** 22 miles, with many newly improved trails
- 10. Glacier National Park:** Many miles of trails for all levels and interests

ENJOY

Two more tips to make hiking safe and FUN: (1) Sturdy, well-fitting shoes keep feet happy and injury-free. (2) Trail snacks provide fuel to keep everyone going strong.