



# CAMPING TOGETHER

Thanks for being part of Camping Together! We are so glad to be with you even while we are apart.

For lots of us, camping is synonymous with summer. Whether pitching a tent near a beautiful waterway or heading to a cabin in the mountains, it's a time when many of us embrace the inspiring beauty and serenity of the outdoors.

However, this summer, the pathway to nature will likely look a little different for people across the country because of the coronavirus pandemic. Many parks and overnight camps are closed, and campgrounds that are open are operating at limited capacity.

That reality shouldn't deter us from connecting with the natural world. By thinking outside of the box we can bring the campsite to us. A pillow fort in your apartment, a tent in your living room, or curling up under the stars in your backyard all make great places to camp.

**Share stories of your home camping adventures with us on social media using #CampingTogether and tag us @EnvAm !**



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# Tips for making the most of a backyard camping adventure

## **Tip #1: Set up your campsite**

Figure out the best location for your campsite. Choose an area that is flat, has enough space for everyone in your group to sleep comfortably and is as close to nature as you can get. If you are camping inside, try choosing a room with windows.

Now, pitch your tent. If you don't have a tent, build a [blanket fort](#) instead.

Don't forget to pack all of your camping gear for this adventure such as sleeping bags, flashlights and camp chairs.

## **Tip #2: Bring the outdoors to you**

Now that your campsite is set up, bring nature's ambiance to you. You can use [recorded nature sounds](#) to add the dulcet tones of our national parks to your campsite. Or just use your computer to [experience nature online](#). If you are indoors, open your windows to let fresh air in.

Are there kids coming along on this camping adventure with you? Have them set up blue and brown sheets and blankets to make a river or ocean near your campsite. They can even add some plushie wildlife for everyone to spot.

## **Tip #3: Make a campfire**

If you have a fire pit, you can set up your campfire in your backyard. But there are lots of other ways you can add a campfire ambiance to your campsite. Turn your phone, computer or TV into a campfire by using one of the many fire videos or apps available on various streaming platforms.

Are you crafty? You can also [make your campfire](#) using paper, felt, candles, sticks and more.

*When around fire, practice proper fire safety. Children should not use fire without adult supervision.*

**Of course, don't forget the snacks and activities!**

# Backyard Camping BINGO

Find something natural that is green	Stargaze	Make leaf rubbings	Learn about trail signs	Make s'mores or another camping treat
Make lanyards or another camping craft	Build a campfire	Draw a tree	Find something natural that is yellow	Pitch a tent or make a blanket fort
Sing a campfire song	Find something in nature that is brown		Tell a story using shadow puppets	Draw your favorite animal
Draw a flower	Learn about campfire safety	Share a story about a time you spent in nature	Make a nature portrait	Find something natural that is red
Read a book about nature	Make art inspired by your campsite	Listen to the sounds of nature	Take a camping selfie	Tell a spooky story

**Did you get BINGO? Share your photos with us on social media using #CampingTogether and tag us @EnvAm !**



# Camping Recipes

*Environment America Staff Picks*

## S'mores

S'mores are a classic camp treat, but did you know that rather than making them on a campfire, you can use the power of the sun? You just need a [solar oven](#) made from a pizza box, graham crackers, chocolate and marshmallows.

## Foil Packs

Campfire foil packets are an easy and fun way to make a good meal. Morgan Folger usually peels and dices a sweet potato, adds some canned black beans and other veggies that are around, and then puts in a tablespoon of olive oil and some taco seasoning for flavor. You then just rest the wrapped foil packet in the fire for 10-15 minutes until the sweet potato is soft. Her favorite veggies to add are onions, peppers, and zucchini.

## Sausage and peppers

Tired of hot dogs/burgers but still want to cook over the fire? Make a sausage and pepper sandwich! You can roast sausages over the fire on a stick just like a hot dog but with more flavor. Italian or veggie Italian work great. Start by chopping up peppers and onions. Place them in foil with olive oil, salt and pepper, then wrap them up and put the veggies in the fire for 15-20 minutes while you cook the sausages. You can also toast buns on a grate at the edge of the fire. Mayonnaise tastes great in the sandwich.

## Quesadilla

With a tortilla, cheese and a variety of veggies and other add-ins you can make dinner over a campfire or in a solar oven. Just fold your tortilla with all the cheese and add-ins you want, cook on foil over a flame or in a solar oven until hot. Simple, but delicious, just the way to cook while camping.

## Apple of my eye

Core an apple, but leave the bottom, making a pocket (Jamie Lockwood suggests granny smith), fill the hole with cinnamon, brown sugar, caramel, chocolate sauce, etc. Wrap your apple in tin foil, and throw it into the embers. Let it bake until your heart feels that it is right. Open up and dig in.

## Campfire Eclairs

Use aluminum foil to cover the end of a stick of dowel and use butter or oil to coat the foil. Wrap the dough of a refrigerator crescent roll around the stick, closing the dough at one end and cook over the fire until golden brown. Fill the pastry with pudding and enjoy! For extra flair, Emily Kowalski suggests adding a drizzle of peanut or other nut butter to the top and sprinkling with chocolate chips.

## Trail Mix

When venturing out on a hike or other camping adventure, trail mix makes a great snack! When you make your own mix, you can use your favorite ingredients. Try almonds, dried cranberries, sunflower seeds, pretzels and chocolate chips or other ingredients like:

- Peanuts, cashews, almonds or other nuts
- Raisins, dried cranberries or other dried fruit
- Sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- Coconut shavings
- Cereals
- Pretzels or crackers
- Chocolate chips or other sweets

**Share your favorite camping recipe or photos of your camp treats with us on social media using #CampingTogether and tag us @EnvAm !**

# Camping Activities

*Environment America Staff Picks*

## Have a sing-along

Singing talent is not required when singing around a campfire, just an enthusiasm to raise your voice. You can sing folk songs with a guitar, kid-friendly action songs, or anything in between. This [list](#) has some suggestions. During our virtual campfire Susan Rakov will be leading "[This Land Is Your Land](#)", a favorite of many Environment America staff.

If you need more tunes to camp by, Graham Marema made a [Spotify playlist](#) with even more songs to accompany your camping adventures.

## Stargazing

Learn how to [stargaze](#) even from your backyard. Use apps or other tools to help identify constellations or other planets.

## Nature Self-portrait

Gather sticks, flowers, leaves and other natural materials to make a portrait of yourself, someone else in your group, your campsite, or whatever you like. Megan Severson has [instructions for getting started](#).

## Scavenger hunt

Sometimes when you look closely, even at familiar sights like the tree in your own backyard, you can find things you never saw before. Use our [scavenger hunt](#) or make up your own list to see how much nature you can find even at your own home. If your camping adventure includes more people, try splitting up into teams and making it a competition.

## Make crafts

Did you go to camp as a kid and make friendship bracelets or a suncatcher? Break out the crafting supplies and make something. Check out [these resources](#) if you need inspiration.

## Tell spooky stories

If you like a little bit of scary at your campfire, Bridget Sanderson recommends telling or listening to spooky stories. Just be sure to choose a story that is appropriate for the age of your audience.

- For young kids: [The Little Old Lady Who Wasn't Afraid of Anything](#)
- For older kids: [Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark](#) and [The Green Ribbon](#) (Bridget's favorite)
- For older kids or adults: [The Thing in the Window](#)

## Read about nature

Curl up in your tent, blanket fort or camp chair with a flashlight and a book about nature.

- [Great books about nature](#)
- [Nature-themed children's books](#)
- [Greener Together Writing Contest winners](#)

*Check out our [Nifty Fifty](#) list for ideas of more activities!*

**Share photos with us on social media using #CampingTogether and tag us @EnvAm !**



# Action to support public lands

Americans love the great outdoors, and crave more nature in their lives. That's why we're excited to report that, with a little luck and a lot of work, we may see a major victory for our public lands.

The U.S. Senate voted on June 17, 2020 to pass the Great American Outdoors Act, which combines a consistent stream of funding for conservation (\$900 million per year) with a short burst of money (\$9.5 billion in funds over 5 years) to address a backlog of long-overdue maintenance projects on our public lands.

We hope to turn the momentum from the Senate's overwhelmingly bipartisan vote (73-25 vote) into a similarly bipartisan (and exciting) victory in the House. To do that, we need your help.

You can help by printing one of the posters below, or making your own sign with the message "We love our parks & public lands."

Take a selfie holding the poster and post the picture of to social media tagging @EnvAm and using the hashtag #FundLWCF. You can also send it to us at [ekowalski@environmentamerica.org](mailto:ekowalski@environmentamerica.org).

Once you are done, place it in your home window to share your support of public lands with your neighbors.

Thank you for your continued support of the great American outdoors!

# WE LOVE OUR PARKS & PUBLIC LANDS

*Great Smoky Mountains National Park  
Credit: anthony heflin via Shutterstock.com*



# #FundLWCF





# WE LOVE OUR PARKS & PUBLIC LANDS

*Mount Rainier National Park  
Credit: Sveta Imnadze via Shutterstock.com*



# #FundLWCF