GAIA NEXUS

FREE PDF LIST

52 Screen-Free Weekend Ideas for Kids

One activity for every weekend of the year: make, move, explore



Gaia Nexus

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How to use this list

Here are 52 screen-free activities for children aged roughly 4 to 10, one for every weekend of the year. Most need only things you already have at home. Each idea notes where it works best, how long it takes and what you need.

> Tip: let your child pick the activity from two or three options. Choosing makes them more invested.

Key: 🏠 indoors · 🌳 outdoors · ⏱ approximate time

Make and build (1–13)

1. **Cardboard city** 🏠 ⏱ 1–2 h — Boxes, tape and markers become houses, shops and roads for toy cars.
2. **Paper airplane contest** 🏠 🌳 ⏱ 45 min — Fold five designs and test which flies farthest. Measure with steps.
3. **Sock puppets and a show** 🏠 ⏱ 1 h — Old socks, buttons and yarn. Use a table turned on its side as the stage.
4. **Build a blanket fort** 🏠 ⏱ 1 h+ — Chairs, sheets and pillows. Bring a flashlight and books inside.
5. **Salt dough sculptures** 🏠 ⏱ 1 h + drying — 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, about ¾ cup water. Shape, let dry, then paint.
6. **Homemade musical instruments** 🏠 ⏱ 45 min — Rice in a bottle, rubber bands on a box, pot lids as cymbals.
7. **Nature collage** 🌳 🏠 ⏱ 1 h — Collect leaves, petals and twigs on a walk; glue them on paper.
8. **Marble run on the wall** 🏠 ⏱ 1 h — Tape toilet paper tubes to a wall or door to guide a ball down.
9. **Bird feeder from a bottle** 🏠 🌳 ⏱ 45 min — Cut small openings in a clean plastic bottle, add a stick perch and seeds.
10. **Comic strip day** 🏠 ⏱ 1 h — Fold paper into six boxes and draw a story with a beginning, middle and end.
11. **Paper boat race** 🌳 ⏱ 30 min — Fold boats and race them in a tub, puddle or stream.
12. **Treasure box decorating** 🏠 ⏱ 45 min — Decorate a shoebox to keep small treasures found on walks.
13. **Simple kite** 🏠 🌳 ⏱ 1–2 h — Paper or a plastic bag, two sticks, string and tape. Test it on a windy day.

Move and play (14–26)

1. **Backyard or park obstacle course** 🌳 ⏱ 1 h — Jump over a rope, crawl under a chair, run around a tree.
2. **Scavenger hunt** 🏠 🌳 ⏱ 45 min — A list of things to find: something round, something red, something soft.
3. **Dance party with freeze** 🏠 ⏱ 30 min — When the music stops, everyone freezes like a statue.
4. **Chalk hopscotch and games** 🌳 ⏱ 1 h — Draw hopscotch, a maze or a giant board game on the pavement.
5. **Balloon volleyball** 🏠 ⏱ 30 min — A string between two chairs is the net. Don't let the balloon touch the floor.
6. **Animal walks race** 🏠 🌳 ⏱ 20 min — Crab walk, bear crawl, frog jumps, penguin waddle.
7. **Picnic in the park** 🌳 ⏱ 2 h — Let children prepare part of the food and pack the basket.
8. **Bike or scooter adventure** 🌳 ⏱ 1–2 h — Pick a new route and draw a map of it afterwards.
9. **Indoor bowling** 🏠 ⏱ 30 min — Plastic bottles as pins and a soft ball.
10. **Bubble day** 🌳 ⏱ 45 min — Dish soap and water; make wands from bent wire or straws.
11. **Shadow tag** 🌳 ⏱ 20 min — On a sunny day, try to step on each other's shadows.
12. **Yoga story** 🏠 ⏱ 20 min — Tell a story where each animal is a pose: tree, cat, cobra, butterfly.
13. **Water play** 🌳 ⏱ 1 h — Cups, sponges and buckets on a warm day. Always supervised.

Explore and learn (27–39)

1. **Neighbourhood nature walk** 🌳 ⏱ 1 h — Count birds, trees and flowers; take a notebook.
2. **Kitchen science: volcano** 🏠 ⏱ 30 min — Baking soda and vinegar in a cup surrounded by a sand or dough mountain.
3. **Sink or float** 🏠 ⏱ 30 min — Guess first, then test objects in a bowl of water.
4. **Grow a bean in a jar** 🏠 ⏱ 20 min + daily check — Damp cotton, a bean and a glass jar. Draw how it changes each day.
5. **Star gazing** 🌳 ⏱ 30 min — On a clear night, find the brightest stars and invent your own constellations.
6. **Cloud watching** 🌳 ⏱ 30 min — Lie down and describe the shapes you see.
7. **Library trip** 🏠 ⏱ 1–2 h — Each child chooses one book to read together during the week.
8. **Map of your home** 🏠 ⏱ 45 min — Draw a floor plan from above, then hide a "treasure" and use the map to find it.
9. **Measure everything** 🏠 ⏱ 30 min — How many hands long is the sofa? How many steps to the door?

10. **Rainbow in a glass** 🏠 ⏱️ 20 min — Shine a flashlight through a glass of water onto white paper.
11. **Insect safari** 🌳 ⏱️ 45 min — Look under leaves and stones (gently). Draw what you find and put everything back.
12. **Weather station** 🏠🌳 ⏱️ 30 min + daily — Record sun, clouds, rain and wind every day for a week.
13. **Ice rescue** 🏠 ⏱️ 1 h — Freeze small toys in a container; use warm water and spoons to free them.

Together time (40–52)

1. **Cook a simple recipe together** 🏠 ⏱ 1 h — Fruit salad, sandwiches or pancakes. Children measure and mix.
2. **Family board game tournament** 🏠 ⏱ 1–2 h — Keep score on paper and give a homemade trophy.
3. **Photo album storytelling** 🏠 ⏱ 45 min — Look at printed photos and tell the story of each one.
4. **Write letters** 🏠 ⏱ 45 min — Write or draw a letter to a grandparent, cousin or friend and post it.
5. **Home restaurant** 🏠 ⏱ 1–2 h — Children write a menu, take orders and serve a simple meal.
6. **Talent show** 🏠 ⏱ 1 h — Songs, jokes, magic tricks or a cartwheel. Everyone gets applause.
7. **Plant something** 🌳 🏠 ⏱ 45 min — Herbs in a pot or seeds in the garden. Give each child a plant to care for.
8. **Clean-up mission** 🏠 ⏱ 30 min — Set a timer and race to tidy a room. Then donate toys they no longer use.
9. **Storytelling chain** 🏠 ⏱ 20 min — Each person adds one sentence to the story.
10. **Make a time capsule** 🏠 ⏱ 1 h — Drawings, a letter to their future self and a small object. Open it in a year.
11. **Puzzle afternoon** 🏠 ⏱ 1–2 h — A puzzle everyone works on together; leave it on a table all weekend.
12. **Visit a market** 🌳 ⏱ 1–2 h — Let children choose one new fruit to try and learn its name.
13. **Gratitude jar** 🏠 ⏱ 20 min + weekly — Each person writes or draws one good thing from the week. Read them together at the end of the year.

Weekend planner

Weekend	Activity #	Indoors or outdoors	What we need	Done
1				☐
2				☐
3				☐
4				☐

Safety notes

- An adult supervises any activity with water, scissors, heat or small objects.
- Small items like marbles, beans and buttons are not suitable for children who still put things in their mouths.
- Outdoors: sunscreen, a hat and water on sunny days.

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