

Considerations for Your First Hike

You do not need much specialized gear to go on your first hike. Indeed, select a particular hike at a particular time, and you will not need anything particular at all. We detail those considerations: selecting a particular hike at a particular time and a few other things that are needed on practically every hike.

Define your own adventure. Do you need a hike that will help burn older kids' energy? Or do you have toddlers who simply want to touch every leaf and rock you pass? Decide what's most important for your family hike and pick a trail that best supports that!

Give kids' time. Want to encourage your kids to love hiking and being outside? Let them develop their own interests and explore their own curiosities when you go on a hike. Sometimes this might mean playing in a creek for half of your planned hiking time.



Plan for the basics. Take a look at the weather for the area or region you're hiking, get a gauge on the terrain, and wear or pack appropriate clothes and shoes. Oh, and snacks. Lots of snacks!

Plan for a mess.

When a kiddo plods through a creek, it sure is nice to have a backup pair of socks and shoes! Sometimes, an emergency change of clothes packed in your bag or in your car can come in handy. Some bandaids or a basic first aid kit is always nice to have in a pinch and, in general, bring more water than you think you'll need, because you never know!



Embrace serendipity. It's good to have a plan, but don't be surprised if something better comes along! Maybe you hike further than you thought you would, or perhaps your child surprises you (and themselves!) by taking some time to rock hop across a creek or explore animal tracks.