



# How to...



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
The Appalachian Trail is about 2,193 miles long and stretches across 14 US states, from Georgia to Maine.

## Take a spring nature walk

Enjoy the sights and sounds of the season while on a hike.

Spring is a wonderful season to explore nature. Trees and flowers are beginning to display new buds, and baby animals are being born. Choose a day on the weekend, and ask a parent and a few friends to head out on a special walk. Here's how.

### Pick a path

The first step is to choose where you're going to go. You can keep it simple by walking around your neighborhood or a local park. Or you could make the walk more of a hike and head to a trail at a nearby nature preserve or state park. An adult can help you find trails near you at [alltrails.com](http://alltrails.com). You can search by distance from your home, length of the trail, level of difficulty, and more.

### Get prepared

You'll want to wear sturdy sneakers or hiking boots. Add an extra layer of clothing, such as a light jacket, that you can take on and off when needed. Grab a backpack that you can use to store sunscreen, a hat, water, and snacks (see ideas at right). You could also pack extras such as binoculars to view animals from a distance or a pencil and notebook for sketching.

### Add excitement

To get your group to take notice of nature on your walk, you could create a scavenger hunt. Make a list of items to look for and then distribute copies of the list with

pencils at the start of the hike. As people find the items, they cross them off their list. The goal is to be the person who finds the most items. Some ideas for what to put on the list: flowers of different colors, animal tracks, a bird's nest, a spiderweb, a butterfly.

### Capture the rainbow

Another way to enjoy a walk is to search for the colors of the rainbow. Each time you find an item that's a different color, ask an adult if you can take a photo of it.

When you get home, you can print out the photos and display them as a rainbow.

### Look for signs of animals

If you see flattened plants, that may be a sign that an animal had been resting there. Animal tracks, feathers, and animal droppings are other signs that animals are busy living in the area. If your walk or hike takes you near a stream or lake, you may be more likely to see wildlife because animals like to be near a water source.

### Tread lightly

One of the main rules of spending time in nature is to "leave no trace." This means you want to leave the trail as it was when you found it. Collect all your trash, and don't take any leaves, flowers, or branches from trees or bushes. You want to leave them there for the wildlife as well as for other hikers to enjoy.



Enjoy the bright colors.

## 5 portable snacks for your walk

If you're going on a long hike, packing an energy-boosting healthy snack is a good idea. Here are some options.

### Trail mix

You can buy trail mix at the store or make your own by combining foods such as dried fruit, nuts, cereal, and small chocolate pieces.



### Muffins



Homemade or store-bought muffins are a good outdoor

snack option because they're tasty and keep well on a hike. To make a muffin more filling, cut it in half and add nut butter in the middle.

### Fresh fruit

Choose fruit that you can eat whole, without needing a knife to cut it, and wash it before you go. Try apples or bananas, or cut up oranges before you go.



### Granola bars



Granola bars are also easy to eat on a

hike. Just be sure to take the wrapper with you so you can throw it away later.

### Jerky

Jerky is a type of dehydrated meat that's often eaten as a snack. You can choose from many different kinds, including beef, chicken, turkey, and salmon.

