

60 Ideas for Staying Sane at Home During the Pandemic

With so many of us staying at home for weeks on end, it is easy to start feeling stir crazy. Perhaps you have kids bouncing off the walls, or, if you are on your own, you feel a sense of unending days and boredom. We have put together 100 ideas to help you and your family find joy in these challenging times. Most work for any age and many are perfect assignments for your kids.

Do something you normally don't have the time to do:

1. Listen to full music albums. (Here's Rolling Stone Magazine's [500 Greatest List](#).)
2. Cook "slow food" (soups, baked beans, and pot roast come to mind) so your house can smell great while you're working or tending to your kids.
3. Read a great novel that takes you away to another time/place.
4. Call a long lost friend.
5. Write a real letter and mail it to a loved one.
6. Try meditation. (Even micro-meditations can [reduce stress](#).) Even [kids can participate](#).
7. Create a time capsule to open in the future. You might include a diary, ephemera, photos, or objects. Whether you open it in a year or a decade, there's no doubt it will be interesting to look back on this time!
8. Weave [a friendship bracelet](#) and send it to someone you're thinking about.

Interact with nature:

9. Start birdwatching. (The National Audubon Society has [birding](#) and [bird identification](#) guides or you can get a [birding app](#) on your cell phone.)
10. Get your hands in the dirt: create a small garden plot, pull some weeds, or simply dig a hole to see what's living under the surface.
11. Create a [nature journal](#) that details the appearance of flowers, animals, birds, etcetera (spring is a great time for this). You can also make rubbings, press flowers and leaves, etcetera.
12. Have a picnic dinner in your yard.

13. Plant a tree. (You can get 10 trees that work for your area for \$10 from the [Arbor Day Foundation](#).) Or sow [seeds for pollinators](#) (grow in a pot or box if your space is limited).
14. Download a nature app and upload your plant / animal sightings and help with identification. (Kids love [iNaturalist](#) and its map view. [PlantSnap](#), [PlantNet](#) are also good tools.)

Get philosophical about the situation:

15. Remember this too shall pass.
16. Revel in the seemingly slower passing of time.
17. In the Celtic tradition it is believed that if you radiate love and share goodness with others, it will be returned ten thousandfold. Give it a try!

Polish up (or gain new) skills:

18. Pick up your old guitar or other instrument. (Don't have one? [Make your own](#).)
19. Take online classes to improve your (cooking, singing, writing, knitting, etc) skills.
20. Try hula-hooping.
21. Learn the Tango. Or take up ballroom dancing. Or pick up a few new [party dance moves](#)!
22. Start learning a new language with an online learning program such as [Duolingo](#) or [Babbel](#). (Or keep it simple by learning a few key phrases from a culture you find interesting.)

Have fun with your pets:

23. Make [homemade pet treats](#).
24. Play [hide and seek](#) with your dog.
25. Make [fishing pole cat toys](#) for your cat. Or make a [cat castle](#) out of cardboard.

Get out of the house (safely):

26. Pitch a tent in the yard and go "camping" (or use the tent as a kids' clubhouse).
27. Set up your work- or school-from-home station outside (in a shady spot) for a day.
28. Try to walk every street in your immediate neighborhood.

Have fun with friends:

29. If you and your friends each have 6 dice, you can play [Farkle](#) via FaceTime with friends.
30. Have a celebrity imitation contest with your kids or friends online.
31. Share a meal or treat with friends from afar via FaceTime, Skype, or WhatsApp. Plan something you can both make (banana splits or [sundaes](#) are one fun idea) and enjoy eating "together."

Get fit:

32. Give yourself a fitness challenge: for example, 20 minutes per day of exercise for the duration of your time at home. Or do a certain number of pushups, or reps of other fitness moves, each day.
33. Start a yoga practice: it requires little space, works for all ages, and has [numerous mental and physical health benefits](#). (See if your local yoga center has online classes or you can find videos suited to your abilities on YouTube.)
34. Do a vintage 80s fitness workout; here's [a 12 minute one](#), or if you want a challenge, try a [full hour](#). You can even dress the part!

Bring on the vacation vibes:

35. Correspond with a penpal in a place you'd like to visit. ([PenPal World](#) and [InterPals](#) are two online platforms.)
36. Pretend you are English all day: speak in an English accent and plan a tea time. Or pick traditions from another culture/country.
37. Reminisce about your favorite past vacation(s). You might even make a word cloud, write a poem, or create a collage.
38. Pack your cooler and have a backyard "beach" party. Spread out towels, grab beach balls, and maybe even set up a DIY [slip n' slide](#).

Make the space around you nicer:

39. Rearrange furniture to suit your stay-at-home month. (You can change it back when life goes back to normal.)
40. Kondo a closet.
41. Clean out your junk drawer.

- 42. Organize your books by color. Or arrange them alphabetically.
- 43. Repaint your front door. Or find a small paint project (perhaps a picture frame) that will make you smile.

Look up!

- 44. Learn to identify major [constellations](#).
- 45. [Spot the International Space Station](#) in the night sky.
- 46. Watch the sunrise.
- 47. Watch the sunset.
- 48. Lay in the grass with your kids (or bae) and say what you see in the shapes of clouds.

Get a blast from the past:

- 49. Take turns sharing your first memory. Or write about it.
- 50. Pull out a few of grandma or mom's old recipes and make a nostalgic dinner.
- 51. Pull out your old yearbooks or school photos and laugh.
- 52. Dig up old family photos and text images to loved ones.
- 53. Bring back a cultural tradition that your ancestors might have enjoyed.
- 54. [Tie-dye](#) matching tees or socks for you and your friends or family.

Deal with chores you'd usually put off:

- 55. Dump paper records that are over 7 years old.
- 56. Repot or give some [special care](#) to your houseplants.
- 57. Clean under the couch, bed, or some other spot you don't normally get to.

Find/create humor:

- 58. Text your friends with "[knock knock](#)" jokes.
- 59. Put out [funny signs](#) to entertain your neighbors.
- 60. [Go overboard](#) with comical coronavirus "prevention" outfits.