



THE OUTDOOR DAD CO — FREE GUIDE

The Saturday Morning Playbook

5 ways to build more outdoor time into real dad life — without overhauling your entire schedule.

Let's be honest. Nobody needs another list of outdoor activities that sounds like it was written by a summer camp counselor.

This isn't that.

This is for the dad who wants to be intentional with his time outside — but also has a job, a social calendar, a honey-do list and two kids who are currently fighting over the same toy. Getting outside with your kids isn't a production. It's maximizing the resources around you and fitting it into your otherwise busy life.

Five small shifts. That's all this is. Let's go.

SHIFT 01

The Journey Is the Destination

You don't need a destination to have an adventure. You just need to decide that **getting there is the point.**

If you're in the suburbs or the city — walk. Walk to the coffee shop. Walk to the bagel place. Walk to the park instead of driving. The errand becomes secondary the moment your kid starts asking questions about every single thing they see on the sidewalk.

If you're more country than city — same energy, different execution. In the summer I load my kids into the Burley cart and we ride the interurban trail to the pool. They love the ride just as much as the swim. Sometimes more.

"The best local coffee shop isn't the one with the best espresso. It's the one worth walking to with your kid."

TRY THIS WEEK:

- Walk one errand you'd normally drive
- Let your kid set the pace — stop when they stop
- Leave the phone in your pocket for the first 10 minutes

SHIFT 02

Protect Saturday Morning — Even Imperfectly

Here's the thing about Saturday mornings — if you don't have a plan by Friday night, life will make one for you. Costco by noon. Chores by two. Screens until dinner.

This isn't about a rigid rule. It's a mindset. There will always be the golf weekend, the birthday party, the family obligation. That's life. But **keeping the concept front of mind** changes how often you actually follow through.

My favorite Saturday morning right now? Coffee on the deck while my kids beg me to push them on the swingset before I've finished my first cup. It's not planned. It's not organized. It's just what happens when you decide to be outside instead of inside.

"You don't need a perfect Saturday. You just need to not waste it."

THE FRIDAY NIGHT QUESTION:

- What are we doing outside tomorrow morning?
- Even 60 minutes counts — farmer's market, trail, playground before the crowds
- Decide before Saturday decides for you

SHIFT 03

Upgrade the Time You Already Have

Life is overscheduled. Overcommitted. A complete rat race. We know this. But that doesn't mean you can't make the most of the pockets of time that already exist.

You're not adding outdoor time to your schedule. You're **converting existing time** into something better.

The 30 minutes between work and soccer practice? Sidewalk chalk. Dinner on a nice night? Fire up the grill and eat outside — every time. Friday night dinner with friends and the kids want to stay up late? Skip the bedtime battle and roast marshmallows instead. Those are the nights they remember.

"You're not finding more time. You're making better decisions with the time you have."

EASY CONVERSIONS:

- Daycare pickup → 20 minute park stop on the way home
- Nice weather = dinner outside, every time, no negotiation
- Post-nap cranky toddler → walk around the block, resets everything
- Late bedtime on a Friday → earn it with a bonfire

SHIFT 04

Build Rituals Worth Repeating

Kids don't remember the random special days. They remember the things you **always** do.

Every December we cut down our own Christmas tree. Non-negotiable. My kids light up every time they find an egg in the coop — it never gets old. We spend as much time as possible on the deck I built with my own hands. And summers at the family lake house follow the same perfect order every time — arrive Friday night, bonfire, boating Saturday, late dinner, and the unofficial dress code: jammies to swimsuit to jammies. That's the whole plan. That's enough.

Rituals give your family identity. **"We're the family that..."** — finish that sentence intentionally.

"Repeated experiences become the stories your kids tell when they're grown."

START ONE THIS MONTH:

- Sunday morning donuts + park walk
- First warm day of spring — eat outside no matter what
- Monthly dad date — just you and one kid, outside, no agenda
- Cut your own Christmas tree every December

SHIFT 05

Lower the Adventure Threshold

A lot of dads think getting outside means packing the car, finding the perfect trail, checking the weather forecast and committing to a whole-day production. That's not outdoor culture. That's overthinking.

Real outdoor time is **20 intentional minutes**. It's stepping into the backyard with no agenda. It's walking to the river. It's sitting on a bench at sunset with a coffee while your kid finds something worth picking up off the ground.

Getting outside with your kids isn't booking a trip to a state park. It's deciding that right here, right now, is good enough.

"Adventure starts the moment you stop waiting for ideal conditions."

THE 20-MINUTE OUTDOOR RESET:

- Backyard with no agenda — let them lead
- Walk around the block with a snack
- Find one thing in nature — a bug, a cool rock, a bird
- Sit outside and just be there

THE OUTDOOR DAD QUICK-START CHECKLIST

Before you head out — keep it simple

- Water for everyone
- Snack in the bag
- Layers if it's cool
- Wipes — always wipes
- Phone in your pocket — unless the moment is worth capturing
- "Good enough" attitude — the most important item on this list

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THEOUTDOORDADCO.COM

Get outside. 

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