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It's time for ...

Summer
FUN



Summer days are here again with adventures
and activities abound.

Check out summertime tips & entertainment ideas –
there's so much to see and do!

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Backyard
games and
activities



Backyards are experi-
encing a resurgence in
recent years. Driven
largely by a collective
desire to reduce screen
time, which has surged
among many age groups,
particularly children,
families are investing in
physical play and recre-
ational options at home.
All About Play notes the
global outdoor toy
market is a growing
industry valued at
around \$23 billion in
2026. Fortune Business
Insights says outdoor
play has an expected
steady growth of 4.65
percent annually through
2034.

Modern outdoor spaces
feature far more grass
and a swing set. Such
areas have evolved into
activity hubs for
everyone who wants to
spend time in the yard.
Whether a homeowner
has a small patio or
sprawling acreage, these
games can make outdoor
entertaining spaces more
fun.

- Cornhole: A reigning
champion of "toss"
games, cornhole has
legions of fans. Hard core
players may want to
invest in regulation-sized
solid wood sets and
weather-resistant profes-
sional bags.
- Pickleball: Portable
pickleball nets allow for
quick pop-up courts on
grass or driveways.
- Supersized games:

Large versions of popular
indoor games like
Connect 4® and Jenga®
enable play to be more
hands-on and physical.

- Active play: The rise
of digital active play
systems has moved
outdoors. Systems like
Nex, for example,
employ motion sensors
to turn a backyard into a
live-action video game.
This bridges the gap for
tech-savvy kids and
adults who want to
spend more time
outdoors.
- Virtual reality: In a
similar vein, players can
take VR gear outdoors
and enjoy the same rush
of virtual play while
outside in the fresh air.
- Modular play-
grounds: All About Play
says recent industry
reports indicate the
North American outdoor
play structure market is
expected to reach \$850
million by 2033. Families
are prioritizing one-stop
play environments that
include modular set-ups.
Instead of single-use
equipment, families are
looking for systems that
combine trampolines,
adjustable basketball
hoops and climbing
frames, among other
options.

Moving outdoors into
the yard for recreation
can be good for physical
and mental health.
Trends indicate certain
backyard activities are
particularly popular.

Summer pool party safety

A backyard pool opens the door to an endless source of summertime memories. There may be no better place to gather when the sun is shining and the heat is blazing than the cooling waters of a backyard pool. Although a pool can be an enjoyable and relaxing home feature, it also carries significant responsibilities.

Recent findings from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) show that drowning and submersions among children remain high. In 2020, 339 children younger than age 15 fatally drowned and in 2021 that figure rose by 12 percent. Young children (age five and under) represent 75 percent of child drowning deaths and 77 percent of nonfatal injuries.

Pool safety concerns and drowning incidents are largely preventable. By staying up-to-date on safety standards and being vigilant when hosting others, people can ensure that the pool remains a place to relax and have fun.

Create physical barriers.

Modern safety standards require separating the pool from the neighbors and the rest of the home and yard. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say a fence that is at least four feet tall that completely surrounds the water can reduce a child's drowning risk by up to 83 percent, compared to three-sided property-line fencing.

Gates should be self-closing and self-latching, and entryways to the pool should swing outward away from the water. New smart lock technology can alert homeowners if a gate is left open.

Visual supervision.

No technology can replace a human. Someone should be enlisted to watch the water anytime someone is swimming and especially when larger crowds during a party will be using the pool. The person should have no phone, book or other distractions and should remain sober. The CPSC suggests this "water watcher" handle the task for a set period of time and then can be rotated out. Those hosting a party may want to hire a lifeguard, even if they have an above-ground pool, to ensure the safety of all swimmers.

Establish firm rules.

While pools can be fun, it's essential that everyone behave safely when in and around the water. Party hosts can set rules, such as no running or diving. People may consider removing large floats or extra toys from the pool water, which can hinder sight lines and mask someone floundering or drowning.

Additional rules may prohibit drinking alcoholic beverages and swimming or having separate swim times for children and adults, as larger adults might overwhelm the pool and make swimming more challenging for younger swimmers.

Keep safety gear nearby.

Rescue equipment, such as a shepherd's hook and a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life ring, should be poolside at all times. At least one person in the household should be trained in CPR. Survival rates and neurological outcomes for drowning victims improve considerably when CPR can be administered immediately, says the American Heart Association.

Planning a pool party requires more than making sure water chemicals are balanced and there are refreshments available. Ensuring that swimmers remain safe should be the utmost priority.


June 13 & 14

July 11 & 12

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