At Home
ON THE PLAINS

52 PLAINS ADVENTURES

A FREE CHECKLIST · LUBBOCK AND THE SOUTH PLAINS

Fifty-two reasons to leave the house.

Mostly free or cheap. Mixed by season. Written for moms with school-age and teen kids. Print it, stick it on the fridge, and check them off as you go.

01 SPRING

13

- [ ] 01 · SPRING

Walk the wildflower trail at Lubbock Lake Landmark

Check in at the Nash Interpretive Center, then take the boardwalk. Go slow and read the signs with the kids.

- [ ] 02 · SPRING

Watch the prairie dogs at Mackenzie Park

A short, free stop. Bring patience. They will come up if you stay still.

- [ ] 03 · SPRING

Picnic on the grass at Maxey Park

Pack sandwiches, claim a patch of lawn, and let them run until they are ready to go.

- [ ] 04 · SPRING

Walk the ranch street at the National Ranching Heritage Center

Admission is free. Start in the historical park and duck into the indoor galleries if the wind picks up.

- [ ] 05 · SPRING

Look for birds along Canyon Lakes

A level walk with water in sight. No ticket needed. Keep it short if anyone is done.

- [ ] 06 · SPRING

Fly a kite on a wide park lawn

The wind will do half the work. Pick an open field away from lines and streets.

- [ ] 07 · SPRING

Walk the Texas Tech landmarks and public art

Start at Memorial Circle, find Will Rogers and Soapsuds, and let a teen lead the next stop.

- [ ] 08 · SPRING

Count the windmills at the American Windmill Museum

Do the outdoor mills first if the weather is fair, then walk the indoor hall.

09 · SPRING

Hike an easy trail at Caprock Canyons

Make a day of it. The park lists Mesa Trail as an easier option. Pack water and keep a safe distance from bison.

10 · SPRING

Leave Mahon Library with a new stack of books

Let each person pick their own. Sit down and start one before you go back to the car.

11 · SPRING

Find the Buddy Holly statue and Walk of Fame

The plaza at 19th and Crickets is open dawn to dusk and is free. Pair it with the Center if you want the galleries.

12 · SPRING

Watch sunrise over a playa east of town

Bring a thermos, pull off safely, and be home before the morning rush.

13 · SPRING

Ride bikes on a level park path

Keep the loop short and the exit easy. A good way to use the long evening light.

02 SUMMER

14 · SUMMER

Cool off at Lake Theo in Caprock Canyons

The park lists swimming, fishing, and no-wake boating. Go early, pack more water than you think you need, and watch the heat.

15 · SUMMER

Spend a hot afternoon at Science Spectrum

Indoor, hands-on, and air conditioned. A clean Plan B when the pavement is too hot to think.

16 · SUMMER

Catch a film in the OMNI Theater

A dome screen and a dark, cool room. Check the official showtimes before you go.

17 · SUMMER

Stargaze on a clear county road

Drive far enough for the lights to thin out, park safely, and give it twenty quiet minutes.

18 · SUMMER

Walk Maxey Park after the heat breaks

Go after supper. Bring a ball. Leave when the first person has had enough.

19 · SUMMER

Tour the FiberMax Center for Discovery

Agriculture, old equipment, and indoor exhibits. Confirm hours and admission on the official site before you go.

20 · SUMMER

Spend a day at Buffalo Springs Lake

Swimming, hiking, and a full day outside. Check the current gate price on the way out the door.

21 · SUMMER

Get lost in the Museum of Texas Tech

Free admission and free parking. Let everyone pick one gallery and actually stay there.

22 · SUMMER

Watch a plains sunset from a west-facing park

No plan required. Sit on the tailgate, share a snack, and stay until the light is gone.

23 · SUMMER

Walk the Depot District with no agenda

A late breakfast, then a wander. Let a teen pick the next stop.

24 · SUMMER

Take photos at a canyon overlook

Caprock Canyons has the views. Go for golden hour, pack water, and keep back from the edge.

25 · SUMMER

Picnic dinner at Mackenzie Park

Bring a blanket and something cold to drink. Watch the prairie dogs, then eat before dark.

26 · SUMMER

Do one museum, then talk about it in the car

Keep the visit to an hour. On the way home, each person names one thing they would go back for.

03 FALL

27 · FALL

See the ranch buildings in fall light

The National Ranching Heritage Center is free. The light is kinder this time of year. Walk the park before it closes.

28 · FALL

Hike a short canyon trail before it turns cold

A day trip to Caprock Canyons. Pick a trail you can finish with energy to spare.

29 · FALL

Visit Silent Wings Museum

Stand under the restored CG-4A glider and give the story time to land. Good for school-age kids and teens.

30 · FALL

Walk the Nature Trail at Lubbock Lake Landmark

Sign in first. The preserve has miles of trail through native habitat. Wear closed shoes.

31 · FALL

Drive the scenic road at Caprock Canyons

If a long hike is too much, the park still rewards a slow drive, a short walk, and a picnic.

32 · FALL

Spend an hour in the Windmill Museum hall

A leisurely indoor walk with plenty to look at. Easy on a gusty Saturday.

33 · FALL

Tour the Buddy Holly Center galleries

Music history that even a reluctant teen can get interested in. The Fine Arts Gallery is free.

34 · FALL

Make a thermos and walk Canyon Lakes

Cool air, a level path, and no ticket. Keep it to a loop you can finish before anyone gets cold.

35 · FALL

Pick a library book for each person, including you

Mahon is downtown and free to visit. Sit in the stacks long enough that it feels like a stop, not an errand.

36 · FALL

Look for migrating birds at the lakes

Bring binoculars if you have them. You do not need to know the names. Just notice what is new.

37 · FALL

Photograph the red dirt after a rain

The plains change color when they get wet. Take a short walk and let the kids take the pictures.

38 · FALL

Pack a simple trail lunch and eat it outside town

Any quiet pull-off with a view will do. The point is to eat somewhere that is not your kitchen.

39 · FALL

Walk campus between classes letting out

The lawns and public art are easy to share with a school-age kid who is already thinking about later.

04 WINTER

40 · WINTER

Science Spectrum on a windy day

When the dust is moving, go indoors on purpose. Stay as long as the energy holds.

41 · WINTER

A cold Sunday at the Museum of Texas Tech

Free, indoor, and open Sunday afternoon. A low-stakes way to leave the house.

42 · WINTER

Hide in the Mahon Library stacks

Warm, quiet, and free. A fair trade when the wind is doing what it wants.

43 · WINTER

Stand under the glider at Silent Wings

A good winter indoor hour. Read a little, look a lot, and let questions come.

44 · WINTER

Indoor galleries at the Ranching Heritage Center, then a short outdoor loop

Do the museum first. If the sun is out, walk a few of the ranch buildings and go back in when you get cold.

45 · WINTER

A short neighborhood walk, then something warm to drink

Keep it to twenty minutes. The point is to get everyone outside, not to make a production of it.

46 · WINTER

Spend time in the Lubbock Lake Landmark interpretive center

Free, and a good look at 12,000 years of the Southern High Plains. Add a short trail if the weather allows.

47 · WINTER

Write your own list of places still left to try

Sit at the table, look at this checklist, and let each person circle one for next weekend.

48 · WINTER

A slow walk through the Depot District

Window-shop, walk the block, and do not overplan it. Easy for teens.

49 · WINTER

Find a piece of campus public art you have never noticed

Use the official landmarks page as a treasure map. Dress for the wind.

50 · WINTER

Watch winter light at Prairie Dog Town

They stay active in the cold. Keep the visit short and the coats zipped.

51 · WINTER

One museum, a simple lunch, and home before dark

Pick any indoor place in this guide. Keep the day small on purpose.

52 · WINTER

End the year with a sunrise and a thermos

Drive east of town, watch the light hit the plains, and start the list again if you want to.



LUBBOCK, TEXAS

A weekly shortlist for families in Lubbock and on the South Plains.

Take the challenge with other South Plains families.

The Rugged Face community