

Think Outside In Nature

# JUST ADD NATURE IDEA GUIDE

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## Why Add Nature?

Over 400 studies show that nature is healing. It doesn't matter if we're looking out the kitchen window at our garden, or if we're hiking a trail.

Science has now caught up with what we've known all along: time in nature has positive effects on our physical and mental well being.

Connecting with nature has proven to reduce heart rate and blood pressure, enhance immune function, lower breast cancer risk, and reduce physical pain.

After 15 minutes in nature, our minds have clarity and more ability to focus. Exposure to natural surroundings lowers anxiety and depression, eases symptoms of PTSD, improves quality of life, and increases happiness.

Let's take advantage of nature's therapeutic properties by adding it back into our lives!

*"Time connecting to nature has positive effects on our physical and mental well being."*



## INSIDE OR OUTSIDE?

We can get back into nature and use it as our inspiration. But - get this - it doesn't always have to be outside. Connecting to nature can happen in the kitchen, on the couch, and with our pets. It can happen with natural scenery, colors, spices, scents and sounds.

*"We get to decide what inspires us each day, and the ways we can use nature to do this are endless."*

And, of course, there's the option of getting out into the the thick of it by breathing the fresh air, building a snowman, feeling the wind on our faces, walking a path, smelling the pine in the forest and listening to the ocean waves crash along the shore.

The point is, we get to decide what inspires us each day, and the ways we can use nature to do this are endless.



# Energy Levels

Is it a high energy day, or a low energy day?

*"Good news!  
We can surround  
ourselves with  
nature despite  
our energy  
levels."*

The residual side effects of treatment make our days unpredictable. We never know how much energy we are going to have and chemo brain doesn't help us when we're trying to remember activities we can do on those fatigued days.

Sometimes we wake up tired and feel like all we can do is lay back down. Other days we're wide awake and ready to conquer the world. It's difficult to make a plan and stick to it when our energy levels are inconsistent.

Good news! We can surround ourselves with nature despite our energy levels. Read on for tips, ideas and activities we can do indoors, outdoors, on high energy and low energy days.



## Low Energy/Indoor Activities

It's time to stay home because we're not feelin' up to doing much else today. And that's okay! There are still a lot of ways we can reap the benefits of nature while staying indoors.

- Practice self-care using natural scents. Enjoy a cup of tea and a bubble bath, light some incense, or drop some essential oils into the diffuser.
- Relax and watch nature (on TV or out the window), or cuddle up and play with a furry friend.
- Read, journal, or create near a scenic view.
- Listen to sounds of nature, or listen to a nature related audio book or podcast.
- Get creative with a camera and take a nature or food photography challenge.

## Remember

*Rest IS recovery. If we are feeling low in energy, that's our body's way of telling us that it's time to heal.*

## Set the Scene

*Turn on that diffuser, or light a favorite scented candle.*

*Grab what's needed: a book, journal, ear buds, camera, or fluffy friend.*

*Light a cozy fire, or plant yourself near a scenic window.*

*Use all 5 senses to actively connect to nature and enjoy the downtime.*



## Low Energy/Outdoor Activities

Got a little bit of energy and itching to get out?

- Go for a leisurely walk alone, with a pet, or catch up with a friend.
- Go for a drive. Roll the windows down and feel the wind, or keep them up and listen to a nature related audio book or playlist.
- What time of year is it? Try to notice seasonal views, sounds and smells.
- More of a night owl? Light a campfire and bundle up outside on a blanket. Look for constellations and shooting stars.
- Need some greenery or sustenance, but not up for a hike or cooking? Head out to a nursery or farmer's market instead.

## Natural Resources

*Looking for nature-related books, podcasts or playlists? Check out some of these faves:*

### Book Titles:

*Blue Mind  
The Nature Fix  
Flight Behavior  
Wild  
Forest Therapy  
The Monk of Mokha*

### Audible

Originals:  
*Sincerely, X  
earpedia*

### Podcasts:

*The Nature Podcast  
Farm to Table Talk  
Dog Talk*

### Spotify playlists:

*Nature Noise  
Nature Sounds*



## High Energy/Indoor Activities

Feeling great today, but don't want to push it? Do something active and fun indoors, instead.

- Love to dine? Savor the flavor at a farm-to-table restaurant or host a farm-to-table dinner.
- Take online lessons in cooking, music, or art. Support a local business and attend an intro class.
- Like to shop? Go to a favorite store or mall and play with colors, scents and textures. Treat yourself to lunch, coffee or tea and savor some new flavors.
- Get up close and personal with nature at a local wildlife museum, conservatory, or aquarium.
- Book nerd? Host or attend a nature-related book club, or go to a fave bookstore and check out the nature, art, or photography sections.

## Pro Tip

*There are plenty of inexpensive ways to connect to nature indoors.*

*Search YouTube for music, art and make-up lessons (pigments are natural)!*

*Rebecca Katz and The Minimalist Baker offer pro online cooking lessons.*

*Groupon provides discounts to nearby activities.*

*Pinterest has a ton of ideas for hosting dinners and book clubs.*

*The Meetup app gets people together with similar interests.*



## High Energy/Outdoor Activities

This is the kind of day where the energy is high, and doing something outside sounds incredible.

- Get out on the water. Go for a swim, stand up paddle (SUP), kayak, fly fish, or try dragon boating.
- Go for the snow in skis or snow shoes. Build a snow man and have an epic snowball fight!
- Hike a favorite trail, or discover a new one. Better yet, join a trails challenge and reap the rewards when its done.
- Rent a bike or bring one along and cycle, cruise the boardwalk, or go off-road.
- Bring a flashlight or a headlamp, bundle up and go for a night walk. Check out what lurks in the dark!

## Hydrotherapy

*There's lots of positive research out there about breast cancer recovery and the benefits of being near the water.*

*Dragon boat racing and fly fishing have proven especially effective. Dragon boat racing has positive benefits on muscle strength, body composition, self-esteem, and the participants' quality of life.*

*"Fly casting can be good physical therapy for increasing mobility in the arm and upper body". Check out [Casting for Recovery](#) to learn more.*

# NATURE IDEA LIST

## High Energy Levels



## Outdoor Activities

- Bundle up for a night walk
- Hike a favorite trail, or discover a new one
- Get in the water and swim, dragonboat, fly fish, stand up paddle (SUP), or kayak
- Go for the snow in skis, or snow shoes
- Cycle, cruise, or go off-road on a bike



## Indoor Activities

- Host, or attend a nature-related book club
- Dine at a farm to table restaurant, or host a farm to table dinner
- Visit an aquarium, or natural history museum
- Take lessons in cooking, music, dance, or art
- Shop and play with colors, scents, and flavors



## Outdoor Activities

- Go for a leisurely walk alone, or with a friend
- Drive with the windows down and the stereo up.
- Notice seasonal views, sounds and smells
- Watch the night sky and wish upon a star
- Go to a nursery, or farmer's market



## Indoor Activities

- Take a nature, or food photography challenge
- Watch, cuddle, or play with animals
- Listen to nature related books, podcasts, or natural sounds
- Read, journal, or create near a fire, or window
- Practice self-care using natural scents



## Low Energy Levels





## **Shh. Don't tell anyone, but..**

*Just by reading the Just Add Nature Idea Guide and looking at the pictures, we've lowered our stress levels. Way to go!*