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It's spring! The sun is shining, the grass is turning green before your eyes, flowers are blooming, and birds are singing. Who could stay inside? On the next few pages are some fun ways to spend your outside time. They're tricks every kid should know—and they'll give you a great excuse to stay outside a little longer!

Special
**GREEN
HOUR**

FUN OUTSIDE

A Simple
How-To Guide



SKIP A STONE

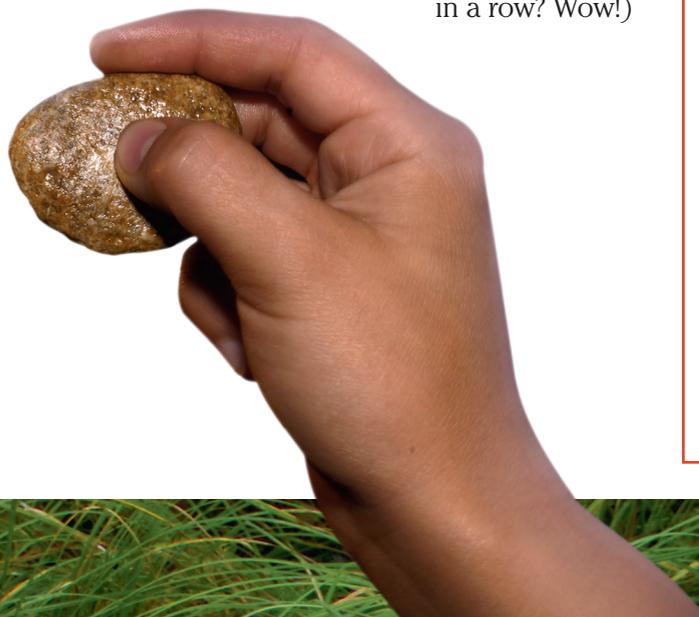
A stone bouncing across the water looks like magic. But you don't need a wand—just plenty of practice.

1. Head for the shore of a pond, lake, or slow-flowing river.
2. Find a smooth, flat stone that easily fits in the palm of your hand.
3. Hold the stone flat, with your thumb on top and middle finger below. Curl your pointer finger around

the stone's edge.

4. Throw the stone toward the water. Snap your wrist forward when you release the stone and spin it off your pointer finger. The faster it spins, the better it will skip.

5. Count how many times your stone skips before it sinks. Then see if you can beat your record! (Can you believe that the current world record is 51 skips in a row? Wow!)



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CATCH A FROG

Watching a frog next to a pond is fun. But it's even *more* fun to hold that slippery frog in your hands!

1. Make sure your hands are clean and wet. Oils and lotions on your hands can hurt a frog, while wet hands help its skin stay moist.
2. As long as the pond is shallow enough, it's best to sneak up on the frog from the water. If you approach from the

bank, the frog can simply jump into the pond and swim away.

3. Cup your hands together and quickly pop them over the frog.
4. Keep your hands cupped around the frog so it can't jump away. But don't squeeze it!
5. Dip your hands into the water now and then to keep the frog wet. And, of course, let it go after a short time.



FLY A KITE

There are lots of ways to launch a kite. If you don't have a favorite method already, try this one:

1. With your kite and a friend, find an open area with no trees or power lines nearby.
2. Stand with your back to the wind while you hold the spool of kite string.
3. Have your friend face you, holding the kite. Back up until you are about 20 feet (6 m) from your friend.
4. When a gust of wind comes, have your friend toss the kite into the air while you jog backward to help the kite lift off.
5. Take turns holding the spool. Tug on the string when the kite is sailing upward to make it go faster. If it starts to plunge down, let out some string until the wind catches it again.
6. When you're ready to land the kite, slowly wind in the string. Catch the kite before it hits the ground.



3. If you call a bird close to you, congratulations! Can you identify it? (Check a field guide for help. The curious bird at **left** is an indigo bunting.) And, for extra credit, can you match the bird with a song you've been hearing?

CALL A BIRD CLOSER

Spring is full of flitting birds and their trilling songs. For a closer look at some feathered friends, try this trick:

- 1.** Go to a place where you see or hear birds nearby, such as a row of shrubs, a big tree, or a patch of woods.
- 2.** Make this sound: *PSSSH, PSSSH, PSSSH*. This is called “pishing.” To birds, it sounds like an alarm call, so they get curious about what is going on. Some birds may swoop down to investigate.



MAKE A DANDELION CHAIN

You can find dandelions almost anywhere. And you probably *won't* find anyone who minds if you pick a handful!

- 1.** Pick a dandelion with a long, thick stem.
- 2.** Use your fingernail to make a short slit halfway down the dandelion's stem.
- 3.** Poke the stem of another dandelion into the slit. Pull it through until it stops at the flower head.
- 4.** Make a slit in the stem of the second dandelion. Poke a third one through.
- 5.** Continue adding to your chain until it's as long as you want it.
- 6.** Connect the ends of the chain by tying the last stem in a knot around the first one.
- 7.** Crown yourself the king or queen of spring! If you have *lots* of dandelions, make crowns or necklaces for your mom, dad, best friend, brother, sister—or even your dog or cat!

WHISTLE WITH A BLADE OF GRASS

OK, it's not exactly beautiful music. But it's really fun when you manage to make a loud honk!

- 1.** Find a long, wide blade of grass.
- 2.** Cup your hands together with your thumbs lined up and the blade of grass sandwiched between

them. Your thumbs should touch at the top and bottom, leaving an opening in the middle.

- 3.** Hold the grass tight between your thumbs.
- 4.** Blow through the opening. When the grass vibrates, it will make a sound. This is a little tricky, so, if it doesn't work at first, keep trying until it does! 🐱



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