

How to Reconnect with Nature

Try these ideas to bring a little more of the outdoors into your day.



You don't have to work in a "green" building—or live near a majestic mountain or forest—to get more from the outdoors. Even city-dwellers and suburbanites can take steps to bring more nature into their lives. Here are some ideas.

Walk or bike to run errands.

If you live close enough to the library, the post office or other stores, and the roads are safe, combine your errands and workout. Pair the calorie-torching challenges of hills and wind with views of sky and trees.

Keep your car in the garage.

A significant proportion of car trips are made within a few miles of home. On days when you can do errands within this radius, put on a pair of comfortable shoes, strap on a good backpack with padded straps and travel by foot.

Plant something and watch it grow.

Even the tiniest spaces—including a window ledge—can be made greener. Start by planting herbs like basil, oregano and chives in an egg carton. In an office cube, shade plants (like miniature hostas) do well. Bonus: NASA scientists say houseplants remove many indoor pollutants from the air.

Meditate outdoors.

Strengthen your mental focus and become more emotionally balanced by bringing your meditation outdoors. Find a quiet place to sit or stand for a few minutes as you get centered. Start to cool down (5 to 10 minutes) by concentrating on breathing deeply, feeling the stability of the ground beneath you, observing the colors and textures of trees and plants and listening to the breeze, birds or any other sounds around you.