



## 6 Ways to Safely "Take It Outside" this Holiday Season

With the holiday season starting, the Iowa DNR is encouraging families to find safe ways to spend time outdoors this winter. Please be sure to keep your group small, social distance, and wear a mask when visiting places where social distancing is not possible.

**Here are a few fun winter activities to "Take It Outside:"**

**Backyard Adventure.** Turn your backyard and neighborhood into your outdoor discovery zone. Try putting up bird feeders for winter birdwatching and check out [these tips for best winter bird feeding](#). You can also look for [animal tracks with these tips and track identification](#).



**Take a hike.** Walk for miles in Iowa's state parks and forests, trail systems and nature areas. Bundle up and enjoy viewing wildlife, along with the solitude of the "off season." Find a trail or a park that's a little less traveled to get away from big crowds. [Find a state park near you](#).

**Enjoy a scenic drive.** Load up the car and visit a nearby state or county park. With dozens of parks to choose from, late fall and winter provides unique viewing and scenic beauty. Bring your own snacks and consider staying somewhat close to home.

**Pedal a trail.** Cool-weather biking can be an invigorating way to explore Iowa's immense trail system. Or consider the newest trend in biking and conquer winter on a fat-tire bike.

**Cast a line.** Fall and winter provide a picturesque setting to catch trout with less competition and no bugs. While [Backbone State Park](#) is Iowa's only state park with a trout stream, there are streams near [Pikes Peak State Park](#), [Yellow River State Forest](#) and [Volga River State Recreation Area](#). Or take advantage of Iowa's many urban



trout stockings, where local ponds and lakes have been stocked with rainbow trout for a new opportunity that's easily accessible for all age groups and abilities. Check out the DNR's [trout fishing page](#) for details and stocking information.

**Grab those skinny skis.** Some people are actually crossing their fingers for snowfall so they can get out their cross-country skis and head down the trail.

Check out one of Iowa's state parks and forests that have groomed trails for cross-country skiing.

**For more information about state parks and ideas for outdoor activities, go to [www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov). The DNR wishes everyone a safe and healthy holiday season.**