

URBAN HIKES

Lace up those walking shoes and check out your local trails. They're easily accessible in most major cities. Whether for an hour or a whole day, hiking an urban trail is a great way to spend quality time with your family and stay fit.

WATERFALL GLEN

Chicago, Illinois

Travel through Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve's 2,474 acres of diverse plant and animal life on trails scattered throughout the preserve. Hike the wide, 9.5-mile main trail that loops around the park. Or explore one of the many side trails that branch off into more secluded areas. One such spot is a waterfall nestled in an oak wood along Sawmill Creek. And watch for critters as you pass Poverty Prairie—with more than 160 native plant species serving as habitat for wildlife, you're sure to spot something of interest.

For more information, contact DuPage County's Forest Preserve District at 630/933-7200 or visit www.dupageforest.com.

OAK LEAF TRAIL

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

With approximately 90 miles of mixed-use paths, there's no shortage of trails for hikers, runners, skaters, and bikers. A favorite route is Lake Loop, which passes Veteran's Park, the McKinley Marina, and Bradford Beach. Take a 5.4-mile trek on the Lincoln Creek Spur or a 2.6-mile jaunt on the Whitnall Loop. Or spend the day covering the 13.7-mile east-west connector. Sections of these routes may take you through major parks, on off-road paved trails, and even through municipal streets.

For more information or to request a map of the area, contact the Milwaukee County Parks department at 414/257-6100 or visit the Web site at www.countyparks.com.

MONON TRAIL

Indianapolis, Indiana

This 12.7-mile trail—built on an abandoned railroad right-of-way and part of the Indy Greenways network—links commercial districts, schools, parks, and the state fairgrounds with residential neighborhoods. The 7.5-mile Indianapolis section of the trail travels a variety of landscapes and neighborhoods. It connects to the 5.2-mile Carmel portion, providing a momentary escape from urban life in its quiet, wooded areas.

Contact Indy Greenways at 317/327-7431 or visit the Web site at www.indygreenways.org.

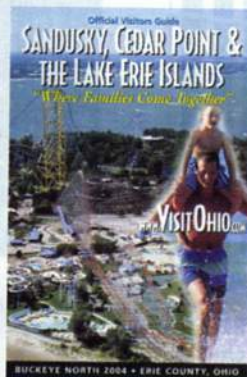
If you want to locate more trails in your area, browse through the maps or recreation guides published by the local Chamber of Commerce. Web sites are also useful sources of information. Hunt down local trails through www.americantrails.org, www.localhikes.com, or www.americanhiking.org.

—by Julie Collins

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