

## Enjoying National Parks as a Military Family

There's something for almost everyone in our national parks. Follow these travel tips to plan your next great national park adventure:

- Visit the [National Park Service's website](#) to pick a park and plan your trip.
- Get your [free annual pass](#), available to active duty and reserve service members.
- Pick from hundreds of activities.
- Visit your [Morale, Welfare and Recreation program](#) for discounts on camping and other outdoor gear.

## Enjoy an outdoor adventure on a budget

It costs next to nothing to discover nature and spend quality time with your family, so pick a park, pack up your car and hit the road. Here are a few travel tips as you plan your next vacation to one of the country's 417 national parks or areas:

- **Find a park:** With fields and forests, canyons and coastline, America's national parks have something for every kind of nature lover. You can search for parks by name, location, activity or topic at the [National Park Service website](#).
- **Visit the park's website:** Once you've picked a park, you can download all you need to know about hours, directions, activities and fees. While most parks don't charge a fee, military families — active, reserve and those medically discharged — qualify for a no-cost annual pass. Many parks issue passes onsite, or you can plan your visit to a park during one of the [six fee-free entrance periods](#).
- **Pick your activities:** National parks offer exciting activities for all ages. If you have children, check out the [Junior Ranger](#) events and programs. Remember, you can search for activities everyone in your family can enjoy. You can also find wheelchair-accessible activities and trails.
- **Contact the Morale, Welfare and Recreation program:** Don't forget to contact [Morale, Welfare and Recreation](#) on your installation for lodging discounts and options. Also see what equipment you can rent before you head out on your adventure. Whether you need a kayak, skis and snow boots, or you want to rent a boat, the program has a lot of gear available to rent. Your [Information, Tickets and Travel](#) office can also help you score majorly discounted tickets to nearby attractions and activities outside the parks too.
- **Play safely:** Always follow the rules and warning signs at each park. Sturdy looking rocks may not be as solid as you think. If there is a sign warning you to stay off, be alert and follow the rules. You don't want your trip to end in an emergency room.

With free passes, discounted outdoor gear and tons of activities, you can spend quality time with your family and explore the country's national parks. Get free, year-round access to national parks and other federal recreation spots with the [military pass](#).