

Stuff to do with Kids in Los Angeles/SFV

MUSEUMS AND SCIENCE STUFF

[Aquarium of the Pacific](#) (Long Beach. Open 9a-6p daily, but some exhibits may close early. \$34.95/adult, \$24.95/child, \$31.95/senior. Special exhibits are extra. \$8 parking. 11,000 animal exhibits, some interactive videos/games, Pacific Pals Live show, harbor tours, etc.)

[Discovery Cube](#) (2 and under is free, \$15.95/adult w/ online discount; \$13.95/child age 3-14 w/ online discount)

[The Getty](#) (closed Mondays; free admission but parking is \$20)

[Getty Villa](#) (closed Tuesdays; free but need advanced ticket and parking is \$20)

[Griffith Park Observatory](#) (free, but the planetarium show is \$7/adult, \$5/students and seniors, \$3 for kids ages 5-12. Children under 5 are only admitted to the first show of the day and must sit on an adult's lap)

[Hollywood Wax Museum](#) (\$35.99/adult, \$19.99/child ages 4-11; kids under 3 are free)

[Huntington Library](#) (library, art museum, and botanical gardens. Open 10a-5pm except Tuesdays. Weekday/Weekend prices: \$25/\$29 Adults, \$21/\$24 seniors and active military and students, \$13 kids age 4-11, kids under 4 are free.)

[Kidspace Museum](#) (\$14.95/person; \$12.95/senior; kids under 1 are free; closed on Mondays during fall/winter)

[La Brea Tar Pits](#) (free first Tues of month except July and Aug; \$6/kid ages 3-12 w/ online discount, \$14/adult w/ online discount, \$11/student and senior w/ online discount. Special experiences are extra. Parking \$15)

[LACMA](#) (closed Wed; kids under 17 free; \$25/adult or free after 3pm M-F if you reside in LA County)

[Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum](#) (only open on Sundays 11am-3pm; train ride is \$3 per person. Must be 34" tall and able to sit upright on a straddle-type riding car)

[Reagan Library](#) (\$20-30/person; buy in advance. Kids under 2 are free)

[Santa Monica Aquarium / Heal the Bay](#) (Open 12:30pm-5pm daily. \$7/person, -\$5 for CA locals, kids 12 and under are free. Small aquarium under the Santa Monica Pier, there is also a touch-tank).

[Skirball Museum](#). Art gallery, archaeological dig site (interactive), Rainbow Mist Arbor (interactive) Arts & Crafts studio (interactive), various exhibits, Jewish Life from Antiquity to America, [Noah's Ark at Skirball \(interactive\)](#) (free on Thursdays; kids under 1 are free; \$7/child age 2-12; \$9/student; \$12/adult; \$9/senior; reserve in advance)

[Travel Town](#) (free; train ride is \$2.75 per person) (5200 Zoo Drive)

UCLA Area: [Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden](#), [Hammer Museum](#), [Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden](#), [Fowler Museum](#), [Meteorite Gallery](#)

USC Area: [California Science Center](#) (free; but special exhibits/IMAX are extra); [Natural History Museum](#) (\$6/kid ages 3-12; \$11/student or senior; \$14/adult; special exhibits may be extra); [Rose Garden](#); [California African American Museum](#), [USC Fisher Museum of Art](#)

PARKS, ZOOS, AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

[Arboretum](#) (3rd TUESDAY free; kids under 5 free; open all week but Mondays some areas are closed)

[Calabasas Commons](#)- outdoor shopping center with a small turtle pond, Barnes & Noble bookstore, and occasional events

[Descanso Gardens](#) - 2nd TUESDAY free. Gardens, art gallery. Enchanted railroad on Tues/Thurs 10a-12pm, Sat/Sun 10a-4pm.

[Farm Sanctuary – Los Angeles](#)

[The Gentle Barn](#)

[Griffith Park](#) (merry go round, pony rides, train ride). [Griffith Park Southern Railroad](#) (train ride is \$3.50/adult; \$3/child under 11; \$2.75/senior) (near Los Feliz Blvd and Riverside Drive at the South end of Griffith park)

[LA Zoo](#), Griffith Park, 5333 Zoo Dr, Los Angeles, CA 90027 (lots of hills, bring water!)

[Lake Balboa/Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area](#) – bike rentals, paddle boats, hiking, playground, remote control aircraft, Japanese Garden, archery range, sports fields, etc. [The Japanese Garden](#) (Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area) 6100 Woodley Ave, Van Nuys, CA 91406. [Woodley Bird Sanctuary](#)

[Leonis Adobe Museum](#) "Lil' Ranchers Days" Tuesdays 930-1130 am. Live music, arts & crafts, water play, feeding the ranch animals

[Los Encinos Park](#) – duck feeding and historical ranch house (bring quarters for duck seed!)

[Moorpark Zoo](#) (open on weekends from 11a-5p)

[Santa Barbara Zoo](#) (also consider taking the [train](#) there)

UCLA Campus: [Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden](#), [Hammer Museum](#), [Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden](#), [Fowler Museum](#), [Meteorite Gallery](#)

HIKES

[Chantry Flats](#) (Arcadia)

[Dixie Canyon Park](#) (Sherman Oaks)

[Escondido Canyon Trail](#) (Malibu) (waterfall but only if it's been rainy)

[Eaton Canyon](#) (Altadena) (waterfall)

[Franklin Canyon Park](#) (Beverly Hills)

[Griffith Park – Charlie Turner Trail](#) (starts at the Observatory), or [Bronson Canyon Cave](#)

[Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area](#) (Culver City)

[Placerita Canyon](#) (Santa Clarita)

[Santa Ynez Falls Trail](#) (Topanga)

[Solstice Canyon](#) (Malibu)

[Temescal Gateway Park](#) (Pacific Palisades)

[Topanga Canyon State Park](#) (Topanga Canyon)

[Vasquez Rocks](#) (Agua Dulce)

INDOOR PLAYSACES

[3 Cats Kid's Playground](#) (Vanowen and White Oak, in Lake Balboa area. \$11 for toddlers and up; \$7 for crawlers, discounts for siblings, multiple passes, etc. This is an indoor playspace with a bounce house, toddler room, ball pit, developmental toys, play kitchen, slide, club house, art area, dollhouses, climbing dome, rideable toys, cars, puzzles, etc. Parent lounge with kitchen. Must wear socks.)

[CDI Early Learning Center](#) (7260 Owensmouth Ave, Canoga Park, CA 9130; Mon-Fri 9a-4p; Sat 10a-4pm; closed on Sun. Free. There's an indoor play area with a small slide, craft area, toddler/baby room, small library, and outdoor garden. Best for newborns-kindergarteners).

[Glow Zone](#) (Woodland Hills, between Pierce College and Warner Center. Mon-Thur 11am-10pm, Fri 11am-midnight, Sat 10a-midnight, Sun 10a-10p. Pricing is based by package/event, ranges from \$8-40. The Soft City pass is \$10/person. This is a good place for older kids, with a few sections that are good for younger ones [e.g. soft city]. Laser tag, rope obstacle course [must be at least 48"], rock climbing [must be at least 40 lbs], bumper cars [must be at least 44"], soft city [ages 7 and under], laser maze, bazooka ball.)

[Green Chateau](#) (Encino, across from the Encino Town Center, on Ventura. \$12/child, discounts for siblings and multiple visits. Under 9 mos is free. They have a ball pit, a giant mushroom they can climb up and slide down, interactive toys, ride-able vehicles, inflatable slide, toddler area, and various classes. Ages from infancy to 7 years, but I think it's best for babies-4 years. Socks required.)

[Kids Empire](#) (Woodland Hills on Victory and Owensmouth. Open 10a-8p, open until 10p weekends. 2 adults free per child; \$15/kid. Socks required. Mazes, floor-to-ceiling climbing walls and play structures, slides, ball pit, motorized riding cars, soccer field, dance floor, obstacle course/bridges, toddler area. The non-toddler area is very large and a bit more intense than your average play space, so be advised if your kid is easily overwhelmed.)

[Kidz Korner Encino](#) (On Ventura in the Encino Town Center, bottom floor. Open play on Mon-Fri 10a-6p, closed on weekends for parties. \$12/person, \$10 for additional siblings. Socks required. Bounce house, arcade games, basketball hoop, toddler area, play kitchen, dress-up stuff, big climbing structure with slide, ride-able toys, interactive video game floor-mat, parents lounge area and kitchen.)

[Maddie's Playhouse](#) (Northridge. \$12/person, \$8 for kids under 2. Discount for siblings, and siblings under 8 months are free. Adults are fee (max 2/kid, then it's \$5/adult. Discounts for multiple passes. Open Tues-Fri 10a-6p; call for weekend availability due to parties. Must wear socks. There are inflatable bouncey houses and slides, obstacle course, playhouses, dress-up stuff, toddler area, lounge area for parents)

[Noah's Ark at Skirball](#) (free on Thursdays; kids under 1 are free; \$7/child age 2-12; \$9/student; \$12/adult; \$9/senior; reserve in advance. There a multiple rooms, a "storm" room with interactive noise and lightening machines and a hand-crank ark for mini-animals, the "ark" room with tons of climbing areas, rope bridges, toy kitchen, interactive toys, even fake animal poop with brooms to clean them up, and the "rainbow" room with crafts and story-telling/musical events. Elsewhere in the Skirball there is also an art room and an interactive archaeological dig on the roof)

[Northridge Fashion Center Mall](#) (There is a small indoor play area [free], a short train ride around the mall ride perfect for kids under age 7 [about \$4/person], and rentable animal scooters that kids can sit on and ride around the mall themselves [or with a parent])

[Pump It Up](#) (Van Nuys. Call before going to make sure they aren't closed for a party, but usually open for Open Jump on Tues-Thur 3-5pm. \$12/kid. Socks required. There are two rooms filled with inflatables [slides, bounce houses, obstacle courses, etc.]

[Sky Zone – Trampoline Park](#) (Van Nuys. \$23 for 1-hour pass, \$26 for 90-min, etc. Open Mon-Thur 3p-8p, Fri 3p-11p, Sat 10a-11p, Sun 10a-8p. Various trampoline areas, warped wall, zip line, ninja warrior course, battle beam. This is best for older kids, but they do have some reserved areas/times for toddlers to jump, but call ahead.)

[We Rock the Spectrum Tarzana](#) (\$14/child, sibling discount. Infants through age 13 yrs. Mon-Fri 9a-7p. Call for weekend availability. This is an indoor play space for all kids, including [but not limited to] those who have sensory needs. They have a zip line, trampoline, toy kitchen, indoor swings, toy trains, art area, and other activities. Benches for parents. Socks required. Located near Ventura and Crebs, across from the CPK)

STORYTIMES

[Barnes and Noble \(Calabasas\) Storytime with Ms. Jennifer](#) - Thursdays 10am and some Saturdays. They also have other special events that might be good for older kids.

[Encino-Tarzana Library – Preschool Storytime](#) – Wednesdays at 10am

[Sherman Oaks Martin Pollard Branch Library – STAR Reader](#) – Thursdays at 1pm

[Northridge Branch Library – STAR Reader](#) – Thursdays at 2:30pm

OTHER POPULAR SITES

[Americana at Brand - Kids Club](#) (Glendale, 11am -1 pm Tuesdays)

Downtown (shopping, food, flower market, [Angels Flight Railway ride](#), [OUE Skyspace Los Angeles](#), [El Pueblo de Los Angeles and Olvera Street](#), [Clifton's Cafeteria/The Neverlands](#), [Chinatown](#), [Grand Park](#), [City Hall](#), [MOCA Grand Avenue](#), [LA Central Library](#), [Grammy Museum](#), [The Last Bookstore](#))

[Encino Farmers Market](#) (17400 Victory Blvd, between Balboa and White Oak, Sundays 8a-1p)

[Santa Monica Pier](#) (roller coaster, aquarium, carousel, arcade, Ferris wheel, shopping, food, beach)

[Universal Studios](#) ([CityWalk](#) is free but paid parking: shopping, restaurants, movie theatres, nightly live events. The [Theme Park](#) is huge, with a LOT of motion rides, roller coasters, and attractions for older kids. If your kids are younger, your options will be more limited than a place like Knott's or Disneyland, BUT if your little ones like character interactions, Universal is great. They also have a Super Silly Fund Land on the Upper Lot which has a few rides for littles, and a fantastic splash pad/water play area. I highly recommend that you pack bathing suits, towels,

and water shoes if you come in the summer because the splash pad is fun for all ages. The Wizarding World of Harry Potter is fantastic for Potter fans, and a lot of fun even for those who haven't read the books. The Flight of the Hippogriff rollercoaster only has a height limit of 39", so if your little one is particularly adventurous, this is a good ride. Littles are also allowed on the Studio Tour ride, but be aware that there are some intense sections of the tour involving 3-D and motion [with Fast and Furious, King Kong, and dinosaur attacks]. I recommend bringing ear protection if your little one wants to give it a try. If your kids can sit still long enough, the shows are worth checking out: Animal Actors (great for littles), WaterWorld (intense and action-packed), Special Effects Show (pretty cool).

[Venice Beach](#) (boardwalk, street artists, people-watching, beach, food, Muscle Beach, Venice Canals, drum circle, art)

OTHER IDEAS

Arcades ([Chuck E Cheese](#) in Northridge or West Hills is our favorite because there are a lot of great arcade games, even for toddlers. With the play pass it ends up being much cheaper than a traditional arcade because can buy an unlimited pass for a set period of time, instead of paying by the game. And kids always love collecting tickets and buying gifts at the end)

Arts & Crafts at home (check out my "Activities" lists on my [Parenting in the Valley](#) website)

Batting cages (my favorite is [Castle Batting Cages](#) near Sepulveda and Ventura in Sherman Oaks)

Bicycling/Scootering at the park

Bowling (consider the Kids Bowl Free program: <http://www.kidsbowlfree.com/index.php>)

Craft Days/Activities at [Lakeshore](#) (Saturdays at 11am-3pm, ages 3+) or [Michael's](#) (they have classes throughout the week, and a Kids Club on Saturdays from 10a-noon for ages 3+)

Ice Skating (such as [Iceland Ice Skating Rink](#) in Van Nuys, or [LA Kings Valley Ice Center](#) in Panorama City)

Kite flying

Mini golf (my favorite is [Sherman Oaks Castle Park](#) near Sepulveda and Ventura)

Picnics at the park

Rolling Skating (like [Northridge Skateland](#))