

July is **National Park and Recreation Month** and **National Picnic Month**

You can find the best resources for them by clicking the names above.

July 4th - Independence Day

Happy 4th of July! Enjoy a day of parades, BBQs, family, and fireworks!

July 11 - All American Pet Photo Day

How do your pets help you with your workouts? Share a pic with us for Pet Photo Day!

July 14 - National Mac & Cheese Day

Make a family favorite for dinner tonight and sneak in some [in-season summer squash!](#)

July 18 - National Ice Cream Day

Make a sundae at home and add healthy toppings like chopped walnuts, fresh berries, goji berries, banana, granola, or unsweetened coconut.

July 24 - International Self Care Day

Eat healthy, exercise, or treat yourself to a little R & R today!

July 29 - National Lasagna Day

A wise cat named Garfield once said, "Lasagna... nature's perfect food" We couldn't agree more!

July 30 - International Day of Friendship

Let all of your friends know how much you appreciate them with a card, a letter, a phone call, an email, a text, etc.

July 31 - National Avocado Day

Did you know avocados are large berries! 🥑

FOOD & DRINK

What's in season? Apricots, beets, bell peppers, blackberries, blueberries, broccoli, cherries, cucumbers, herbs, lettuce, onions, peaches, plums, raspberries, spinach, strawberries, summer squash, tomatoes, and zucchini.

National Fried Chicken Day is July 6. Try a healthy twist on a southern classic from the [Food Network](#) for dinner tonight. #friedchickenday

Feeling a bit stressed out? **Eat an avocado.** They are rich in vitamin B that helps reduce stress.

Do you have some extra produce from your farmers' market haul? Dehydrate it for a sweet, chewy, and fiber-rich snack.

Think lasagna can't be healthy? Think again! These recipes from [Cooking Light](#) will prove you wrong. That [Grilled Vegetable Lasagna](#) looks divine! National Lasagna Day is July 29th.

Avocados aren't just for toast. They're incredibly versatile. Here are [54 avocado recipes](#) to try for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Nice Cream Milkshakes = Blend 2 bananas + 1 Tbsp honey + ½ cup milk. Add 1 tsp vanilla extract for a Vanilla Shake, 1 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa for a Chocolate Shake, or 1 cup frozen strawberries and an additional ½ cup milk for a Strawberry Shake.

It's National Picnic Month, and [these recipes](#) are full of Summer vibes. Plan your picnic today!

[This recipe](#) has summer written all over it!



LIFESTYLE

Summer vacations are back, and [Conde Nast Traveler](#) has everything you need to know about your upcoming trips.

Keep your grill clean! Deposits of stuck-on food can harbor bacteria and create carcinogenic compounds when you cook your meat at high temperatures.

Friendly reminder: The maximum amount of time you should go between sunscreen applications is 2 hours. Always reapply sunscreen after swimming or sweating.

Did you know More than 50,000 fires are caused by fireworks every year? Be safe this 4th of July, and [check out these valuable safety tips](#).

Never leave home without them - a water bottle, chapstick, a hair tie, hand lotion, hand sanitizer, and a good attitude!

“Running is not just exercise; it is a lifestyle.”
~ John Bingham

The July heat can be unbearable for humans and pets alike. Keep your pups protected and read these [hot weather safety tips](#).

Be more optimistic and stop complaining. According to [BetterHelp](#), complaining without trying to fix your problem is just whining and gets you nowhere. Instead of complaining, take steps to change what’s bothering you. #selfcare #mentalhealth



COMMUNITY

Independence Day is a time to **honor military families and veterans** by giving back. Check [Idealist.org](https://www.idealists.org) to see where you can volunteer around the 4th.

In honor of **All American Pet Photo Day**, donate to your local animal shelters. Many pets have been abandoned or are unable to be cared for by their owners. By donating or even adopting, you can help future pets in need.

Stop by the information table at your local **farmers' market** and ask about volunteering. Many markets are operated by nonprofit organizations or belong to a local nonprofit association.

Don't forget to **check on your elderly or impaired neighbors** during extreme temps. [Heat-related illnesses and deaths](#) are preventable!

Talk to your kids about ways they can make a difference in your community this summer. Fun activities like a car wash or lemonade stand can help collect money for a cause of their choice.



HEALTH

July is UV Safety Month. Protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses, hats, or visors. The most hazardous times of day for UV rays are between 10 am and 4 pm.

Did you know Pistachios have as much protein as an egg! This smart snack is also full of potassium, cancer-fighting vitamin E, and vitamin B6.

A Pilates workout has many health benefits. Don't believe us? Then read [this article](#) from Self.

Egg, tuna, and chicken salads can be full of unhealthy fats. **Lighten them up** with mashed avocado + lemon juice + garlic + salt/pepper + optional: pickle relish or chopped pickles or fresh herbs.

Can't get to the Y? Try this [Cardio HIIT Workout](#) you can do from home.

Warm up your body and muscles with these [pre-workout stretches](#).

Pro Tip: When cleaning your home, make it a habit to check for visible leaks or moisture, leading to mold growth problems - a huge allergen for most people.

Boost your body positivity. Share this [infographic](#) with your members.

Crank up the tunes. Research has shown that blood flows more easily when music is played, making it very heart-healthy!

Tick check! After being outside or walking through the woods, give yourself a once-over, paying particular attention to areas like behind the knees, ankles, and scalp.



PARENTING

With July 4th celebrations going on, it can be easy to let your guard down. [Here are some tips](#) to help you and your family have a safe and happy Fourth.

What tree is that? Summer is the perfect time to take the kids for a walk and identify and learn about trees in your neighborhood. Check out the [Arbor Day website](#) for a step-by-step guide.

National Sugar Cookie Day is July 9. Bake some [soft and chewy cookies](#) with your kids!

School has been out for a few weeks, and we bet some of your kids are bored already. WIRED has compiled [a list of great books](#) for all ages to read this summer.

Have some fun on **National Ice Cream Day** and make [homemade ice cream sandwiches!](#)

Beat the heat with this [fresh and fruity snack](#) from Japan that kids of all ages will enjoy.

Disconnect from those screens, build lifelong memories and visit an open-air museum. There are many great botanical gardens, nature centers, living-history museums, and zoos all across the country for you to enjoy.

Go on a nature scavenger hunt! You can find printable templates online or create your own.

Get crafty with your kids. Pressed and laminated leaves and flowers make great bookmarks that make great homemade gifts!

Create summer memories your kids will never forget with [these awesome outdoor activities and adventures!](#)

MEMBERSHIP

What are the must-haves that you can't live without during the day?

Can't get to the Y? Try this [20-minute workout](#) from home.

Start collecting school supplies for your local schools. Teachers will be grateful!

Share your workout mantra or motivational quote with us! We are especially fond of **"Get fit for life, not just for summer."**

Get up with the Sun and get to the Y for early morning workouts. (*link to the page with class schedule*)

Not sure if the Y is for you? Register for a guest pass and check it out for yourself. You can also request a "Tour Day" to see what our facility has to offer.

Tell us what you think! What is your favorite part about being a member of the YMCA?

It's never too early to start the **back-to-school push!** Highlight your childcare programs and any fall sports that your YMCA organizes.

Those hot summer days are perfect for using the **YMCA pool!** Stop by and learn more about our hours and what your membership with the YMCA can offer you.



TRIVIA

True or False - Watermelon consists of over 90% water.

Answer: True

The summer's "Dog Days" get their name from whom?

Answer: Sirius, the Dog Star.

Which three fresh fruits outsell all other fruits during the summer in the U.S.?

Answer: Watermelon, tomatoes, and peaches.

What percent of milk goes towards making ice cream in the U.S.?

Answer: 10%

What vitamin can you get from direct sunlight?

Answer: Vitamin D.

In which year was the beach ball invented? 1924, 1938, or 1961

Answer: The beach ball was invented in 1938 by Jonathon DeLonge in California.

Which beach sport became official in 1986?

Answer: Beach volleyball.

Which sport has been a part of the Olympic Games since its inception in 1896?

Answer: Cycling.

A close-up photograph of aloe vera leaves, showing their characteristic serrated edges and layered structure. The leaves are a vibrant green color.

INSPIRATION

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

~ Benjamin Franklin

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow."

~ Audrey Hepburn

Good things come to those who sweat.

"What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness."

~ John Steinbeck

"If you're not barefoot, then you're overdressed."

~ Unknown

My head says go to the gym. My heart says eat more ice cream.

'If something stands between you and your success, move it. Never be denied.'

~ Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson

"Live in the sunshine. Swim in the sea. Drink in the wild air."

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Exercise is therapy. But so is ice cream.



VIDEO

Showcase your Social Responsibilities by asking people who identify as LGBTQ+ to create and share videos about how they feel safe and supported by your Y.

Make a splash with a slow-mo video of someone jumping in your pool.

Highlight a Summer Camp Activity each week in July so members can see what fun their kids are missing out on or getting into!

Post video bios of your lifeguards. “Who is the lifesaver on duty? Meet Joe.”

Help us help you! Take the [ySocial Survey!](#)