



Make Time for Hobbies and Leisure Activities

Having a hobby or engaging in a leisure activity you enjoy can improve your life. It can be good for your health, mind, and relationships. The right hobby can lead you to learn new skills, take pride in new accomplishments, and set aside—for a time—your day-to-day pressures and worries.

But how do you find a hobby if you don't have one? Here are some ideas!

Think broadly.

The range of potential hobbies and leisure activities is limitless. Consider these examples:

- **Arts and crafts**—woodworking, quilting, sewing, knitting, crocheting, weaving, origami, drawing, painting, photography, computer programs for graphics
- **Nature and the out-of-doors**—gardening, birding, hiking, camping, boating, fishing, raising houseplants
- **Physical activity**—cycling, running, walking, swimming, yoga, lifting weights, playing basketball or tennis, rollerblading, golfing
- **Volunteering**—helping at an animal rescue center, your local library, a youth center, or a senior citizens' center; teaching English as a second language; helping recent immigrants with resettlement
- **Repair and restoration**—furniture restoration, restoring a vintage motor vehicle, home repair and restoration, fixing old electronic equipment

Try something new.

Another way to find a hobby is to take a leap into the unknown:

- **Try something you've never done before.** It's a sure way to open the door to new learning and skills, and you may discover new interests and new sides of yourself.
- **Try something that's the opposite of what you think you're good at.** If you tend to choose precise and neat activities, try something loose and messy. If you've always thought you had no ear for music, try learning to play an instrument. If you lead a mostly sedentary life, try something active and strenuous, like rock climbing.

Find an activity that makes you forget about your day.

As you consider and try different hobbies and leisure activities, look for one that fully absorbs your attention. The perfect activity is one that allows you to enter a state of flow, in which you're so intent on what you're doing that you lose track of time. When you're that involved in an activity you enjoy, your day-to-day worries melt away, and you free yourself from your normal stresses and tensions.

That's one of the most important benefits of a good hobby.