

## Theme Park Survival Strategies

It's a summer ritual. Millions of families visit theme parks, entering fresh and rested and emerging short-tempered, sweaty and exhausted. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be that way for your family.

The first step in avoiding theme-park burnout is finding accommodations as close to the park as possible. That will enable your family to take a rest break during the hottest part of the day without losing too much time. Most parks will stamp your ticket to allow readmission and since many theme parks stay open later in the summer, an afternoon rest will allow you to enjoy the park during the cooler evening hours.

Another step in the planning process is to examine park maps and websites to determine which attractions you want to visit beforehand. This saves a lot of standing around peering at maps and trying to figure out what to do next. Be sure to involve your children in the planning process so that they can add their favorites to the list. Once you've determined what you want to do, develop a rough schedule and a walking route that will avoid backtracking.

The night before your visit, pack your supply kits. Each member of the family should have a small fanny pack containing their park tickets, a cell phone or two-way radio (these can be rented at many parks), a couple of energy bars, identification, a small tube of sunscreen, a park map and a small washcloth or a small pack of baby wipes. This is the time to discuss with your children what to do if they get separated from you and to lay down the ground rules regarding food and souvenirs.

One the morning of your visit, dress in cool, comfortable clothing and good walking shoes. Hats and sunglasses are also essential on sunny days, even for small children. One member of the family should carry a larger bag containing a towel, a pen, a pair of extra socks for each family member, a small first-aid kit and any supplies for younger family members such as extra clothing or diapers.

Try to arrive at the park at least a half hour before opening time. Some parks actually open earlier than their stated hours, giving you a jump on the crowds. When you arrive at the park, note where you parked your car on the back of your park ticket. Reinforce ground rules with your children before you enter the park. Once prepared with your supplies, schedule and rest time, you're sure to have a great day in the park!

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

### About the Author

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