

FAMILY ROUTE · NEW YORK

NEW YORK, MADE EASY FOR FAMILIES

The ultimate New York travel guide for families: a simple, hands-on route with children.

Pick neighborhoods, match sights to your kids' ages and the weather, and leave room for a stroller nap and a playground break.

Iconic sights · free parks and waterfront walks · rainy-day plans

AT A GLANCE

Your guide, in one glance

Scan these family patterns first, so your tickets and routes fit your crew.



First-time visitors

Choose one headline sight a day, then balance it with a slow park or playground stop.



Little ones under 6

Keep walks short, favor stroller-friendly routes, and pick places with kids' areas and low height limits.



Mixed-age crews

Pair one major museum with an easy neighborhood walk or ferry ride the whole group can enjoy.



Rainy-day plan

Keep one indoor museum or play space near your route as a backup.

ORIENT YOURSELF

New York at a Glance

Plan around one neighborhood cluster a day, so the kids are not stuck on the subway for hours.

ZONE	WHAT'S THERE
Midtown Manhattan	Times Square lights, the Rockefeller Center rink in winter, and Bryant Park lawns in summer.
Upper West Side & Central Park	Central Park playgrounds, the Natural History Museum, and Riverside Park walks.
Lower Manhattan	Harbor ferries, Battery Park, and a short walk across the Brooklyn Bridge.
Brooklyn	Waterfront playgrounds, DUMBO views, and an easy picnic by the bridges.
Museum Mile	The Met, the Guggenheim, and the Museum of the City of New York, best taken one at a time.
Midtown West & Hudson Yards	The Intrepid on the Hudson, High Line strolls, and Hudson Yards viewing decks.
Practical tips	Cluster stops along one or two subway lines, and build in time for snacks, naps, and rush-hour crowds.
Transit & airports	Use the subway for longer hops, ferries for views, and book a stroller-friendly ride from the airport.

Which major attraction fits your family?

DESTINATION	WHY IT WORKS
Statue of Liberty & Ellis Island	Harbor ferry views and a story older kids can follow; book the earliest ferry slot.
American Museum of Natural History	Dinosaur halls and a planetarium show; a great pick for hot or rainy days.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art	Egyptian temple and armor galleries; choose one wing and keep the visit short.
Intrepid Museum	An aircraft carrier, a submarine, and a space shuttle; a big-kid favorite.
Central Park	Playgrounds, a carousel, and open lawns; free room to run and a relaxed pace.
Grand Central Terminal	A grand hall and a short, easy outing; great for a quick train-spotting break.

Before you book, check each attraction's official site for current hours, timed tickets, height limits, and closures.

THE BIG LIST

20 Must-Visit Family Attractions

1. **American Museum of Natural History** for dinosaur halls and a planetarium show.
2. **Statue of Liberty & Ellis Island** for ferry views and a story kids can follow.
3. **New York Transit Museum** for vintage subway cars kids can climb into.
4. **Children's Museum of Manhattan** for hands-on play for toddlers and older kids.
5. **The Metropolitan Museum of Art** for Egyptian temple halls and a short, kid-sized tour.
6. **Intrepid Museum** for an aircraft carrier, a submarine, and a space shuttle.
7. **Central Park** for playgrounds, a carousel, and open lawns.
8. **Grand Central Terminal** for the main hall and a train-spotting break.
9. Top of the Rock for a family-friendly city view at sunset.
10. Bronx Zoo for big animals and a full day outdoors.
11. New York Hall of Science in Queens for hands-on science labs.
12. Brooklyn Children's Museum for pretend play and kid-scale exhibits.
13. Hudson River Park for bike paths, piers, and sunset views.
14. Coney Island Boardwalk for rides, a beach, and classic boardwalk snacks.
15. Central Park Zoo for a compact animal visit close to midtown.
16. Museum of the Moving Image in Queens for hands-on animation and games.
17. The High Line for a stroller-friendly walk on an elevated park.
18. Times Square after dark for bright lights and street performers.
19. Liberty Science Center in New Jersey for a big science day across the river.
20. Empire State Building observatory for an early-evening city view.

Before you go, check age guidelines, timed-entry slots, stroller rules, and closures on official sites.

LOWER-COST DAYS

10 Free & Budget-Friendly Places

Pair one paid highlight with a free stop, and the day stays relaxed and affordable.

01 **Brooklyn Bridge Park** for waterfront playgrounds and skyline views.

02 **Staten Island Ferry** for a free harbor ride with Lady Liberty views.

03 Central Park's Conservatory Water for model-boat sailing and open lawns.

04 Bryant Park's free lawn games in summer and a cool reading room for a break.

05 Walks along the Brooklyn Bridge's pedestrian walkway for skyline views.

06 Hudson River Park piers for free play and a breezy waterfront walk.

07 Riverside Park for playgrounds and river views on the Upper West Side.

08 Governors Island in summer for car-free lawns, bike rides, and play areas.

09 Times Square at night for free people-watching and bright lights.

10 Prospect Park's Long Meadow for free running room in Brooklyn.



A New York local day: a slow lawn, a playground, and a snack break.

OFF THE BEATEN TRAIL

10 More Local Favorites & Hidden Gems

1. Jane's Carousel in Dumbo for a classic ride beneath the bridges.
2. Little Island in Hudson River Park for treetop paths and kid-friendly lawns.
3. Chelsea Market for a food-hall lunch with easy tastings for picky eaters.
4. Hamilton Grange in Harlem for a short, history-rich visit.
5. Socrates Sculpture Park in Queens for art, open lawns, and East River views.
6. Brooklyn Botanic Garden's Children's Garden for hands-on plant play.
7. Apollo Theater tour in Harlem for a short, lively history stop.
8. Washington Square Park for street performers and fountain splashing.
9. Wave Hill in the Bronx for gardens and river views.
10. Snug Harbor Cultural Center on Staten Island for quiet gardens and open space.

Choose one neighborhood per day; a short walk and a snack stop keep little legs happy.

WEATHER BACKUP

Rainy-Day & Indoor Picks



For little scientists

American Museum of Natural History, **Children's Museum of Manhattan**, and the New York Hall of Science in Queens.



For the littlest ones

Indoor play spaces, a library storytime, and a quiet hotel-room nap break.



For transit and show fans

New York Transit Museum for vintage subway cars, plus a kid-friendly Broadway matinee.



For a brief break in the rain

Grand Central Terminal for its food hall and main hall, or a Chelsea Market lunch.



For grown-ups

Leave a cushion in the schedule: snacks, a dry set of clothes, and one indoor highlight instead of rushing between boroughs.

Check each museum's official website for timed entry, indoor options, and current hours before you head out.

BEFORE YOU GO

Map, Pitfalls & Source Notes

New York Area Map

ZONE	HIGHLIGHTS
Midtown & Museum Mile	Central Park, The Met, Intrepid, Grand Central Terminal
Upper West Side	Natural History Museum, Children's Museum of Manhattan, Riverside Park
Lower Manhattan	Statue of Liberty, Transit Museum, Staten Island Ferry, Battery Park
Brooklyn	Brooklyn Bridge Park, DUMBO, Prospect Park
Queens	Museum of the Moving Image, Socrates Sculpture Park

Common Planning Mistakes

1. Squeezing two major museums into one day with little ones.
2. Forgetting that some subway stations have stairs but no elevators, so plan a stroller route.
3. Booking a Statue of Liberty ferry without checking the boarding time.
4. Underestimating weekend crowds at The Met and the Natural History Museum.
5. Walking long Midtown blocks in heat without a shaded rest stop.
6. Having no plan B for rain or snow.