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Frugal Entertainment for the Whole Family

By Fisher Swanson

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– Start Article –

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Here are some frugal entertainment ideas for the whole family.

Board Games

Board games are a great investment. If well taken care of, they can easily last a generation. You can often find them at garage sales for a dollar or two, even the new board games. Every family should have some basics like cards, dominoes, chess, and checkers.

Movie Night

Rent a movie, pop some popcorn and entertain the whole family for a couple hours. Take turns picking out what movie to watch. You can order DVDs or videos from the library for free. Sometimes there is a wait but many libraries allow you to place holds online and receive notifications when your items are available.

Discount Movie Theatres

Most areas have at least one movie theatre that runs older movies for cheap prices. All you have to do is wait until the movie has

been out a for a few months and it will eventually show up at one of these theatres. Ticket prices can be even less than a matinee and are sometimes double features. Drive-in movie theatres can also be great bargains.

Minor League Sports

If your area has a minor league team they can be a lot of fun to watch and much cheaper than their major league counterparts. The minor league stars of today are often the major league stars of tomorrow.

Playgrounds, State Parks and Local Parks

Most parks are free, especially if you are not camping. Pack a picnic lunch or bring some barbecue. Try out different parks in your area until you find your favorites. Bring a frisbee and a dog!

Support the Arts

High school plays, talent shows and community theatre are generally inexpensive and a lot of fun. You will be surprised at how much talent there is in your community. Churches also have plays and programs that are open to the community even if you don't attend that church.

Watch for Free Days and Free Events

Many museums, zoos and aquariums have free days. This is often one day per month such as the first Tuesday or last Friday. There are a lot of museums that are fun and have areas tailored towards

kids. In art museums the ancient cultures exhibits are often fun for kids.

Open Houses, Openings and Festivals

Sports teams often have a free open house before the season starts. Also make note of free festivals and events in your communities. Check your local paper and chamber of commerce for upcoming events.

Zoo Membership

If you have kids who love to go to the zoo you should consider a family membership. It can be a great value if you plan on going often and have a zoo nearby. Similar memberships are available at museums and aquariums as well.

Farmers' Market and Swap Meets

You don't have to spend much money to have a good time at your local Farmer's Market. Most communities have them on Saturday or Sunday every week during the Spring, Summer and early Fall. You can buy some great vegetables for less than you pay at the grocery market and usually there is something fun for the kids to do.

Library and Bookstore Events

Next time you go to the bookstore or library pick up an events calendar. They often have live music or book readings that might interest your family.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Keep your eyes and ears open and you will find many more opportunities to have fun with your family without spending a lot of money.

Fisher Swanson is a regular contributor to the Daily Thrifty Tips newsletter at ThriftyFun.com. ThriftyFun publishes information about thrifty living. Send an email to dailythrifty-on@thriftyfun.com to subscribe to The Daily Thrifty Tips newsletter.
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Book Review: "Frugal Living for Dummies"

By Deborah Shelton

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Book Review: "Frugal Living for Dummies"
Reviewed by Deborah Shelton

"Frugal Living for Dummies"
by Deborah Taylor-Hough
Publisher: Wiley Publishing, Inc.
ISBN: 0-7645-5403-4
Price: \$16.99 US

Whatever your reason for wanting to save money (job loss, suddenly single-income, another child on the way, rising college tuition costs), arm yourself with Frugal Living for Dummies for super saving success.

This book details so much more than coupon-clipping. Some of the chapter topics include ideas for frugal family fun, thrifty cooking tips, ways to cut utility bills, setting a budget and lots of inexpensive gift ideas. And that's just the beginning! Frugal Living also provides icons in the margins that alert readers to important reminders, tips, super savers, special warnings, great ideas and handy checklists.

Each section is jam-packed with cost-cutting ideas for baby showers, back-to-school needs, dinner parties, gift giving, auto maintenance, home cleaning, dining out, laundry, family trips.... Basically, Deborah Taylor-Hough offers money-saving solutions for every aspect of your life.

Frugal Living for Dummies is an essential reference for your family collection. This book will make a practical and thoughtful gift for young couples just starting their lives together, college students on their own for the first time, single-income families, new parents, and anyone who needs

proven ways for cutting costs while keeping their sanity.

A must-have guidebook for the novice penny pincher as well as the seasoned dollar stretcher.

About the Reviewer: Deborah Shelton is a mother, freelance writer, and author of the brand new book, "The Five Minute Parent: Fun & Fast Activities for You and Your Little Ones." Visit Deborah's website for more family-friendly ideas: <http://www.fiveminuteparent.com>



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