

Yosemite With Kids

A realistic family trip starter before you book



Plan Yosemite without the overwhelm

Yosemite looks simple on a map, but the entrances, seasonal roads, parking and trail difficulty can make family planning surprisingly time-consuming. Start with this framework and you will know what to reserve, where to base yourself and how to shape three balanced days.

I already did the research—and tested it with my family

I spent the hours comparing routes, learning the park's logistics and visiting Yosemite with my own family in different seasons. This starter guide gives you the essential decisions in one place, so you can avoid common planning mistakes and move forward with confidence.

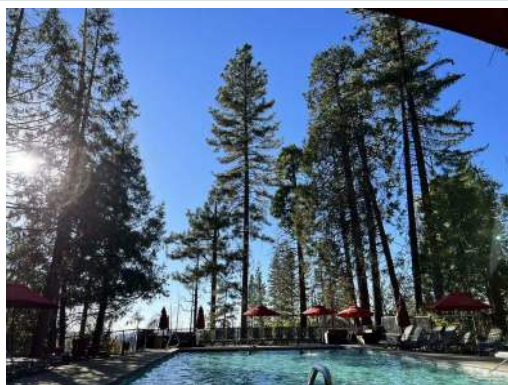
Your first five decisions

1. Choose your season.
2. Decide whether the Valley, sequoias or high country is your priority.
3. Match your lodging corridor to that priority.
4. Reserve the hardest-to-get stay first.
5. Give each day one anchor experience plus an easy backup.

SAVE THIS Roads, shuttles, trails and entry procedures can change. Recheck official conditions before every trip.

A family-friendly 3-day framework

Day	Main idea	Highlights	Easy backup
1	Yosemite Valley icons	Yosemite Falls • Sentinel Bridge • El Capitan Meadow • Valley View	Meadow picnic + one short waterfall walk
2	Choose-your-level hike	Vernal Fall Footbridge, top of Vernal, or a bigger hike for experienced families	Lower Yosemite Fall + Mirror Lake
3	Big viewpoints	Glacier Point • Washburn Point • Tunnel View, when the road is open	More Valley time or Wawona



The family rule that changes everything

Do not schedule every famous stop. Choose one must-do, two nice-to-dos and a low-energy fallback each day. That creates room for traffic, snack breaks, weather and the moments your children actually want to linger.

Plan with flexibility

Download an offline park map before you arrive, but use the National Park Service for current road, trail and shuttle conditions. The exact driving routes and tap-to-open maps are included in the complete paid guide.

Where should your family stay?

Your priority	Best starting area	Why
Fast Valley mornings	Inside Yosemite Valley	Less daily driving; inventory is limited.
Cabin or resort feel from the west	Hwy 120 / Big Oak Flat	Good for a Bay Area approach; Evergreen Lodge is a family-tested favorite.
Practical Valley access	El Portal / Hwy 140	A useful outside-the-park base near the Valley corridor.
Sequoias + south entrance	Fish Camp / Oakhurst	Pairs naturally with Mariposa Grove.
Tioga Road + high country	Lee Vining / June Lake	Best only when Tioga Pass is open.

Read my complete where-to-stay guide

For more help comparing Yosemite Valley, Highway 120, El Portal, Fish Camp and the eastern approach, use my detailed lodging guide before you reserve.

[Where to Stay in Yosemite](#)

My family-tested pick

We loved Evergreen Lodge near the Big Oak Flat entrance for its rustic-comfort atmosphere. Compare the actual drive to your first activity, and reserve dining if you want to eat on property.

[Check Evergreen Lodge rates](#)



What to book and what can wait

Do early	Do closer to travel
Lodging or campsite	Weather and road review
Any permit or reservation tied to your chosen activity	Trail and waterfall conditions
Rental car and major travel	Shuttle operations and meal plan
A flexible cancellation strategy	Daily start times and backup options

Yosemite family packing list

- **Daypack:** Water • filling snacks • offline park map • charged backup battery
- **Weather:** Layers • rain shell • sun hat • sunglasses • sunscreen
- **Trail:** Broken-in shoes • extra socks • blister care • trekking poles if helpful
- **Family extras:** First aid • insect repellent • wipes • medications
- **For the car:** Extra water and snacks • charger • change of clothes

Before you leave

- Check current conditions, seasonal roads and trail turnaround times.
- Download an offline map and follow park food-storage rules.

[Check official Yosemite conditions](#)

Want the exact plan?

STOP SEARCHING START PLANNING

Save hours of planning and learn my exact family itinerary. I have visited Yosemite several times with my family, and this guide brings together the route, pacing, places to stay, hikes and backup plans I have learned work best.

Inside the full guide

- A detailed 3-day itinerary with realistic family pacing
- Tap-to-open route maps for Yosemite's main areas
- Hike, lodging and seasonal guidance with clear family decision points
- Packing, parking, wildlife and planning resources

Your Yosemite trip, planned for you

Good lodging fills quickly, and piecing everything together takes time.
Get my family-tested itinerary, maps and practical tips in one place.

GET IT BEFORE THE PRICE GOES UP

GET YOUR GUIDE NOW

Just \$17 | Start planning your family adventure