How Much to Budget For Spring School Holidays? | MyBudget

Canonical:
https://www.mybudget.com.au/moneyhub/articles/budgeting-tips/spring-school-holiday-activities-australia/

Details:

Looking for school holiday activities that will not blow the family budget? Start with free outdoor adventures, library programs and community events, then add one or two paid outings your family genuinely values.

As a working parent, I know the drill: calendars, snack negotiations, missing drink bottles and someone declaring “I’m bored” before breakfast. You’ll find practical school holiday ideas and things to do with kids on any budget, without the financial hangover afterwards.

Before the holidays begin, use our free Personal Budget Template or follow our guide on how to set up a budget to work out what you can comfortably spend.

What are the spring school holidays all about?

The spring school holidays are a chance for families to enjoy free or paid experiences during the September and October term break. These can include outdoor adventures, library programs, creative workshops, community events, sports, vacation care and family-friendly activities and attractions. The best mix suits your children’s ages, your location and your budget.

School holiday activities at a glance

School holidays do not have to be expensive to be memorable

Choose one or two paid experiences and fill the remaining days with free activities

Libraries, councils, parks and community centres often run free or low-cost school holiday programs

Pack food, book early and check family passes to make paid outings go further

Set your spending limit before the holidays and keep a small buffer for spontaneous fun.

Need a refresher on when school is out? Here’s your updated school holiday dates across Australia .

Free Personal Budget Template

Get your free Budget Planner. Manage your income, debts and savings in one simple spreadsheet.

Get it Now

How can you budget for the school holidays?

Set one total spending limit, choose your priority outings and allocate the rest before the holidays start. A five-step plan makes this simple:

Choose your total . Check upcoming bills and decide what is available for entertainment, transport and food

Pick one special outing . Let the kids help choose, then skip activities nobody is excited about

Fill the calendar for free . Add parks, playdates, library events and home days

Plan the extras . Allow for parking, petrol, snacks and booking fees, the small costs that arrive wearing a trench coat and pretending not to be one large cost. Pack lunch where you can.

Keep a buffer . Leave a little for a treat or rainy-day change of plan.

If you are saving ahead, our Savings Calculator can show how regular contributions add up. For more hands-on support, explore personal budgeting help .

Our clients gained back the equivalent of 5 days a year by spending less time on financial admin
Source: MyBudget Financial Wellbeing Report 2026.

What are the best free spring school holiday activities?

The best free school holiday activities often include outdoor activities for kids and make use of places already available in your community. Translation: family fun without hearing the EFTPOS machine beep. Try these ideas:

Go wildflower spotting . Choose a national park, garden or local trail and turn the walk into a scavenger hunt.

Check your library . Look for story time, craft, science, gaming and creative workshops. Libraries are the school-holiday MVP: free, full of activities and someone else has already organised the craft supplies. Book early.

Follow your council . Council and community-centre calendars can reveal school holiday events, youth programs, exhibitions and sports clinics.

Create a backyard Olympics . Build a course with chalk, buckets, balls and skipping ropes. The judging can be wildly biased; this is your event.

Pack a picnic . A new park, beach or playground can feel like an adventure without an entry fee.

Rain forecast ? Build a fort, hold a board-game championship or cook together.

Our summer school holiday guide has more ideas that work year-round.

Free vs paid school holiday activities: which offers better value?

Free activities offer flexibility; a carefully chosen paid experience can become the holiday highlight. The sweet spot is a mix, because every day cannot be a theme park, financially or emotionally.

Option	Typical cost	Best for	Time needed	Budget value
Library, park or scavenger hunt	$0–$10	Most ages	1–3 hours	Excellent; repeatable and flexible
Home craft, baking or backyard games	$0–$25	Primary-aged kids	1–3 hours	High; use supplies you already have
Mini golf, cinema or creative workshop	$20–$80 per family	School-aged kids and teens	2–4 hours	Good when booked as a special outing
Zoo, aquarium or wildlife park	$80–$200+ per family	Mixed-age families	Half or full day	Better with passes, discounts and

				packed food

Costs vary, so check the full price before booking.

Which school holiday activities are worth paying for?

Paid activities can be worthwhile when they are hard to recreate at home, suit everyone attending and fit your plan. Think zoos, aquariums, museums, mini golf, outdoor cinemas or hands-on workshops. A discount on an outing nobody wants is still an expensive way to hear, “I’m bored.”

Compare family tickets, memberships and off-peak sessions. Check cancellation terms and calculate transport and food too. A discount only helps when the activity was already planned, one of the principles in our guide to spending with intention .

Inside my family’s $250 budget for the spring school holidays

In our house, the school holiday budget is a whole family event in itself! We start with a $250 budget and the kids help allocate it. Each holiday, the split changes; the total does not.

These school holidays we will spend our $250 on:

$90 – family pass to a virtual reality adventure or interactive game experience. Try using Groupon-style deals.

$60 – two-hour self-guided scavenger hunt, a fun and interactive way to explore your city.

$50 – craft supplies and baking ingredients for chill days at home.

$50 – spontaneous extras like milkshakes, op-shop finds or a round of mini golf.

Free – visit the Whispering Wall in the Barossa, SA. This acoustic marvel lets you hear someone speaking from over 100 metres away. It’s fun, it’s outside and completely free!

The rest of the days? Covered with free and easy wins: parks, puzzles, board games, a beach trip, cousin sleepovers and whatever fun we can squeeze out of leftover craft supplies.

How my kids earn extra money for the school holidays: side hustles for kids

This season, our lemon tree is full, so there will definitely be a lemonade stand on the kerb. The kids also hunt through old clothes and toys to sell on Facebook Marketplace or eBay, turning clutter into extra school holiday money .

For more ways they can earn extra cash, explore our best side hustles in 2026 and keep the money lessons going with Money & Me: Money management guide for kids.

Plan the fun. Skip the money stress.

Our clients, Alyssa & Pete budget ahead for school holiday adventures with their kids.

Start your Budget

What are some great spring school holiday activities around Australia?

Use these ideas as starting points, then check the official venue for current opening times, bookings, accessibility and costs.

State	Free activity	Paid activity
South Australia	Adelaide Botanic Garden nature trail and picnic	Monarto Safari Park day trip
Victoria	Family visit to the NGV collection	Monopoly Dreams or a creative workshop
New South Wales	Bike ride or picnic at Centennial Parklands	Luna Park or an interactive museum experience
Queensland	Daisy Hill Koala Centre and forest walk	Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary
Western Australia	Kings Park playgrounds, trails and picnic	WA Museum Boola Bardip program or workshop

Search “ school holiday program ” plus your suburb to uncover nearby activities. Check your local council, library, community centre, museum, sports club and shopping centre too. Many offer free or low-cost workshops and events that disappear faster than snacks in the back seat.

For working families, Vacation Care and Out of School Hours Care can provide full-day options, but compare the total cost, operating hours, age requirements, meals and activities included. Popular programs often book out early, so join mailing lists or set a reminder for when registrations open.

Do school holidays have to be expensive?

No. Children often remember feeling included and connected more than the price of an outing. In my experience, pancakes for dinner can mysteriously outrank the attraction I booked three weeks ahead. Try one simple tradition each break: a yes-day within a limit, a new walking trail or a lounge-room dance party. A budget makes room for fun while protecting bill and savings money.

Fun belongs in a good budget. Choose one experience, set an amount that fits, then enjoy it without guilt. One confident ‘yes’ beats a miserable ‘no’ to everything. Tammy Barton | MyBudget, Founder & Director

The bottom line

Spring school holidays do not have to be expensive. Set a clear family budget, choose one or two special outings and use free parks, libraries and community events for the rest. Planning food, transport and a small buffer before the break can help your family have fun without creating financial pressure afterwards. These budget-friendly school holiday ideas put connection ahead of cost.

Here’s to spring holiday fun: more sunshine, more memories, and hopefully no slime stuck in the carpet!

Need help budgeting for school holiday costs?

Every great school holiday starts with knowing what you can comfortably afford. Learn more about how we work or Enquire Today for a free, no-obligation chat with a Money Coach and a personalised 12-month budget plan you can keep.

Join the 130,000+ Australians living free from money worries

Start with a free, no-obligation appointment.

Book Your Free Appointment

Important information

This page provides general information only. It does not take your personal circumstances into account and is not personal financial advice. Consider whether the information is appropriate for your circumstances before acting.

Related guides and tools

School holiday activities: 15 free and cheap ideas for kids this autumn

School holiday survival guide: budget-friendly ideas for summer in Australia

Back-to-school budget tips for Aussie parents

Budgeting help

What are the best spring school holiday activities for families on a budget?

A strong low-cost mix includes parks, beaches, nature walks, picnics, bike rides, playgrounds, library sessions, council programs, community events and home activities. If the budget allows, add one paid experience the family genuinely values.

What free school holiday activities can families try?

Free options include wildflower or nature walks, botanic gardens, beaches, playgrounds, backyard games, scavenger hunts, picnics and library or council activities. Some free sessions still require advance registration.

How much should a family budget for the spring school holidays?

There is no universal amount. Check upcoming bills, transport, food and other commitments, then set one total the household can comfortably afford. Divide it between priority outings, low-cost activities and a small buffer.

What five-step approach does the article recommend for holiday budgeting?

Choose a total spending limit, select one priority outing, fill the remaining calendar with free activities, allow for extras such as petrol and food, and retain a small buffer for an unexpected or rainy-day change of plan.

Is it better to choose free or paid school holiday activities?

The article recommends a mix. Free activities offer flexibility and can be repeated, while one carefully selected paid experience may become the holiday highlight. Value depends on the family's interests, ages, location and budget.

When is a paid school holiday activity worth the cost?

A paid activity can be worthwhile when it is difficult to recreate at home, suits everyone attending and fits the planned budget. Compare family passes, off-peak sessions, cancellation terms, transport and food before booking.

How is the example $250 spring holiday budget allocated?

The example assigns $90 to a family interactive experience, $60 to a scavenger hunt, $50 to craft and baking supplies and $50 to spontaneous extras, while filling the remaining days with free activities.

What should working families check when comparing vacation care?

Compare the full cost, operating hours, age requirements, included meals and activities, availability and booking deadlines. Popular programs may fill early, so registration reminders and mailing lists can help.

How can families find activities near them?

Search for school holiday programs with the suburb name, then check local council, library, community centre, museum, sports club and shopping-centre calendars. Confirm current prices, accessibility, opening hours and booking requirements with the organiser.

Is the school holiday article personal financial advice?

No. It provides general budgeting information and does not account for personal objectives, financial circumstances or needs. Families should decide what is appropriate for their own situation.

What should readers know about school holiday activities at a glance?

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What is spring school holiday activities in australia: fun ideas for every budget?

Cheryl Hayford Looking for school holiday activities that will not blow the family budget? Start with free outdoor adventures, library programs and community events, then add one or two paid outings your family genuinely values. As a working parent, I know the drill: calendars, snack negotiations, missing drink bottles and someone declaring “I’m bored” before breakfast. You’ll find practical school holiday ideas and things to do with kids on any budget, without the financial hangover afterwards. Before the holidays begin, use our free Personal Budget Template or follow our guide on how to set up a budget to

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How can someone plan the fun. skip the money stress?

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