

## Summer free ride: Check out the stuff you can do this summer with no cost in the Tulsa area

By Michael Smith Tulsa World Jun 4, 2019



This hike is an exceptional choice for a quick afternoon outing. The trail is short, and it's marked well, and don't be surprised you share it with some wildlife. And remember the Oxley walks on Saturday mornings: the bird walk, the botany walk, butte walk and more. Check out [oxleynaturecenter.org/home](http://oxleynaturecenter.org/home) for the schedule. MIKE SIMONS/Tulsa World

MIKE SIMONS



TOP ARTICLES 1/5

**Find the pianos all over Tulsa:** Remember how people used to go scavenger hunting for all those colorful penguins across Tulsa? Now, it's pianos but only through the end of July. The Saied Music Co./Mayfest project — Play Me, Tulsa — saw a dozen pianos designed and painted by public school art departments stationed at a variety of outdoor spots around the city, from Lacy Community Center to Kendall Whittier Square to Cherry Street's STG Gelateria.

[playmetulsa.com/find-a-piano](http://playmetulsa.com/find-a-piano)

**Tulsa Parks aquatics:** Get relief from the heat and let the kids play for as long as they want at either a "water playground" at 12 Tulsa Parks locations or at the more low-impact "splash pads" at 18 parks. Just check online at

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[cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/park-and-recreation/aquatics](http://cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/park-and-recreation/aquatics) for which ones are where.

**Turkey Mountain:** Tulsans can enjoy the trail system in the expanse of the mountain. That makes it a great spot for running trails, mountain biking, going for a hike or just exploring nature along the Arkansas River.

**See Tulsa's art deco masterpieces downtown:** Tulsa is one of the top-10 cities in the U.S. for viewing art deco architecture, according to multiple sources. An organized way to check out these artistic wonders is to take your own self-guided art deco tour: Just visit the Tulsa Regional Chamber site at [visittulsa.com/groups/plan-a-tour](http://visittulsa.com/groups/plan-a-tour) to print out your map and information, and remember to wear sensible shoes.

**Tallgrass Prairie Preserve:** Open to the public north of Pawhuska is the largest expanse of protected tallgrass prairie left on the planet. You can drive the scenic 10-mile bison loop — don't forget binoculars — and bring along a picnic if you wish. [Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Facebook page](#)

**Oxley Nature Center walks:** This hike is an exceptional choice for a quick afternoon outing. The trail is short, and it's marked well, and don't be surprised if you share it with some wildlife. And remember the Oxley walks on Saturday mornings: the bird walk, the botany walk, butterfly walk and more. Check out [oxleynaturecenter.org/home](http://oxleynaturecenter.org/home) for the schedule.

**Gathering Place:** Admission is always free to enter Tulsa's riverfront park, and there is something to do everywhere you look. But check its events calendar, too, for music, storytelling events and more.

[gatheringplace.org](http://gatheringplace.org)

## Events

**Tulsa Tough:** This three-day cycling event is like a festival for everyone involved, or one big party, and that makes it a great spectator weekend, full of fast bikes and tough competition. Races are set for Friday-Sunday, June 7-9, with lots of events. That includes the annual — and free — Tulsa Townie ride through Tulsa that brings families together to hit the streets on their bikes. [tulsatough.com](http://tulsatough.com)

**Home & Garden Expo of Oklahoma:** It's Green Country's largest free home-and-garden expo, and it's going on July 19-21 at the Exchange Center at Expo Square. [coxradiotulsa.com](http://coxradiotulsa.com)

**Tulsa City-County Libraries:** Free events abound at libraries in the Tulsa City-County system. Some highlights include making arts and crafts, "storytime" sessions, good gardening tips, how-to displays and more. [tulsalibrary.org/events](http://tulsalibrary.org/events)

**Free couples dance lessons:** Taking place at Track 5 inside Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa on Wednesdays through June 26, with "beginner country western" at 7 p.m. and "beginner/intermediate West Coast swing" at 8 p.m.

**"I Can't" workshops:** Free from noon to 12:45 p.m. at the McKeon Center for Creativity at the downtown Tulsa Community College campus, featuring "I Can't Embroider" with 108 Contemporary (June 10), "I Can't Compost" with Tulsa Zoo (June 17) and "I Can't Deal with Writer's Block" (June 24).

[tulsaCC.edu/CenterforCreativity](http://tulsaCC.edu/CenterforCreativity)

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## Movies

**Movies in the Park:** This Guthrie Green movie series — with films showing at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays — returns with a lineup that currently includes “Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse” (June 13) and “Ralph Breaks the Internet” (June 27), with more to come. *Guthrie Green Facebook page*

**Circle Cinema special events:** Tulsa’s historic art-house theater is always staging a variety of free events, and this summer that includes Thursday’s D-Day film and program (Thursday, June 6), the Tony Awards on the big screen (Sunday, June 9), Cine de Oro (June 11, classic Mexican movies) and more, which can be found at [circlecinema.com](http://circlecinema.com).

**Will Rogers movie nights:** Admission is free, as are popcorn and beverages for this series of Will Rogers films playing on the last Friday of each month, with doors at the Will Rogers Memorial Museum in Claremore opening at 6:30 p.m. for the 7 p.m. movies.

## Festivals

**Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival:** This year’s festival in Okmulgee is set for June 20-23, with many activities planned (a parade, all-Indian rodeo, fun fair for kids). Live music will include free concerts, with the schedule still being filled but already including Easton Corbin on June 21. More information is available at [creekfestival.com](http://creekfestival.com).

**Bixby Green Corn Festival:** You can eat corn, sip lemonade and experience carnival rides if you want. But it’s free to just stroll through Charley Young Park in Bixby and people-watch, or to sign up for a race or eating contest or listen to live entertainment. It’s all set for June 27-29, and there’s more information at [bixbyoptimist.com](http://bixbyoptimist.com).

**Black Gold Days in Glenpool:** This 41st annual festival that honors the area’s rich oil history and includes all kinds of fair fun and live entertainment runs from June 20-23 this year. *Black Gold Days Facebook page*

**Porter Peach Festival:** The 53rd annual event takes place July 18-20, with fun, live music, arts and crafts, a car show and that unforgettable peach ice cream — free until it runs out!

[porterpeachfestivals.com](http://porterpeachfestivals.com)

## Outdoor concerts

**Summer’s Fifth Night at Utica Square:** The 28th annual edition of this Tulsa favorite returns Thursday nights this summer, offering a variety of music styles and with concerts scheduled from 7-9 p.m. A special note: Utica Square is hosting a new jazz music series, too, and the next edition is set for June 15. Check out [uticasquare.com/events](http://uticasquare.com/events) for more details.

**Starlight Band concerts at Guthrie Green:** Longtime favorite the Starlight Band features its concert band for four shows and its jazz orchestra for two other evenings. The groups offer theme-driven performance nights, beginning at 8 on six Tuesdays, June 11-July 23. See [starlightbands.net](http://starlightbands.net) for show themes.

**Gardens at LaFortune Park concerts:** These first-Friday-of-the-month shows (second Friday in July due to Independence Day) take place at the green space west of the intersection of 51st Street and Hudson Avenue, northwest of the Herman and Kate Kaiser Library. Music begins about 7 p.m. and continues for two hours.

**Sunday concerts in the park at Guthrie Green:** These take place from 2:30-6:30 p.m. every Sunday featuring a variety of artists and genres that are constantly changing.

**Tuesdays in the Park:** This annual event is a June-only collection of Tuesday concerts from 7-9 p.m. at Central Park on the lawn, 1500 S. Main St., in downtown Broken Arrow. More information at [baarts.org/tuesdays2019](http://baarts.org/tuesdays2019) on who’s

playing.

**Riverwalk summer concert series:** The Riverwalk Crossing center in Jenks offers an amphitheater area for Thursday shows, all set from 7-9 p.m., and they fill up fast so you might consider a blanket and/or lawn chair just in case. A few dates remain to be booked on this schedule through July, including a July 4 “Boomfest” show at the amphitheater.

## ARTS

**First Friday Art Crawl:** 6-9 p.m. Friday, June 7, July 5 and Aug. 2. Crowds fill M.B. Brady Street, Guthrie Green and the museums and galleries of the Tulsa Arts District during this festive monthly trek through downtown’s arts centers. [thebradyartsdistrict.com](http://thebradyartsdistrict.com)

**Philbrook Second Saturdays:** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, June 8, July 13 and Aug. 10. Enjoy free admission to Philbrook Museum of Art while kids enjoy arts-and-crafts projects. [philbrook.org](http://philbrook.org)

**Gilcrease Funday Sunday:** Free admission begins at 10 a.m. June 16, July 21 and Aug. 18, with events starting at noon. This family-friendly event at Gilcrease Museum takes place on the third Sunday of each month. [gilcrease.org](http://gilcrease.org)

**Open studio time at Ziegler Art and Frame:** One of Tulsa’s coolest stores, 6 N. Lewis Ave., has many classes but also a great free deal for artists and those who hope to become one: open studio time from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays, as they say: “No teacher, no hassles, no cost, just like-minded artists painting together and having a good time.”

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