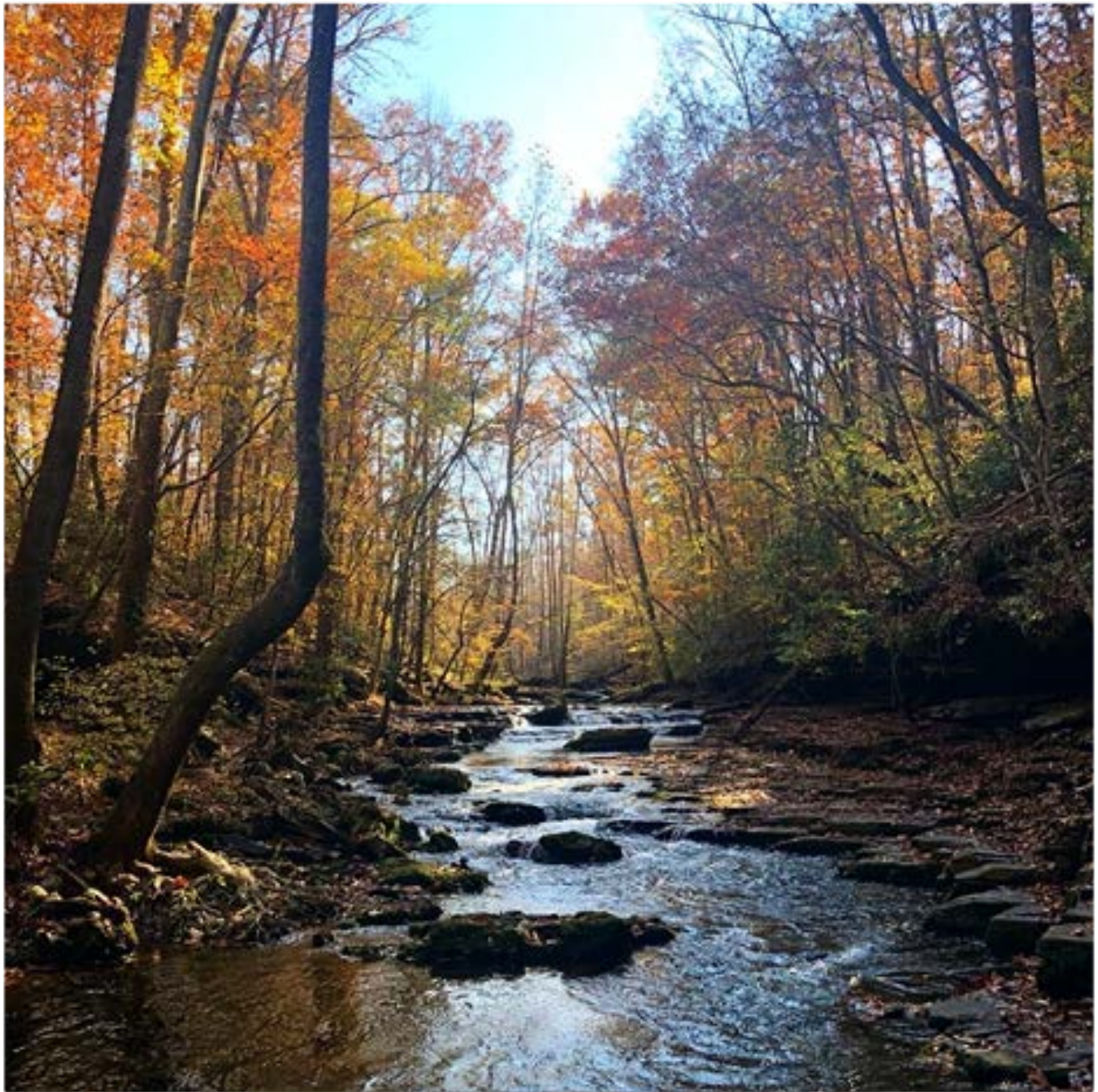


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# NASHVILLE AREA OUTDOOR GUIDEBOOK

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Created by Kyle Cassling and Kelly Wu

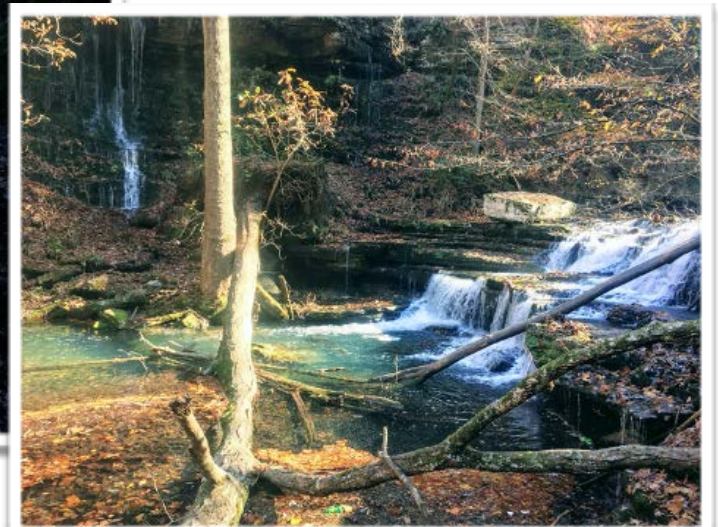
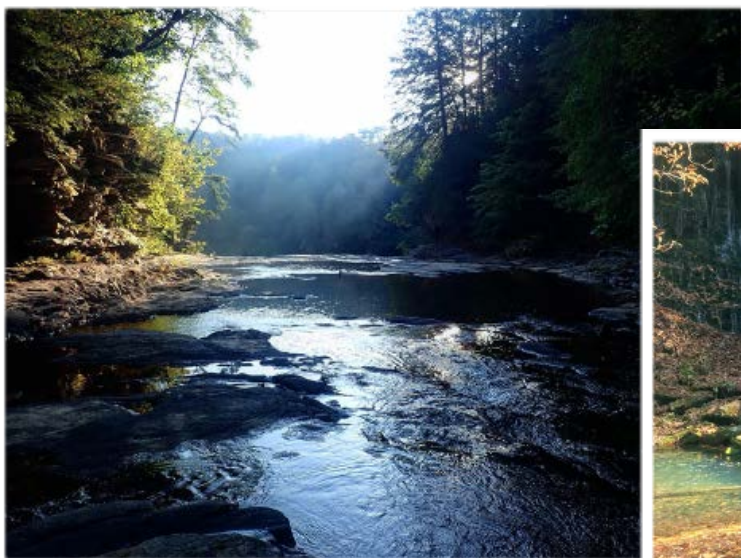
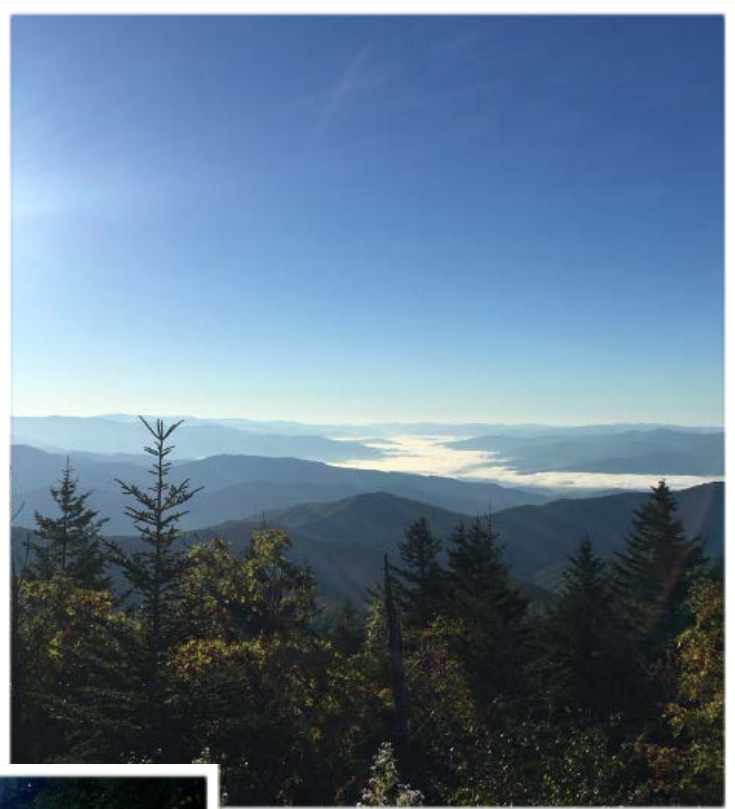
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## Mission Statement

This guidebook was designed to help simplify your search for outdoors activities in and around Nashville. Thankfully, it is not too difficult to replace the hallways of VUMC with trails, routes, and rivers. Whether it's a run after a long day or a whole weekend in the woods, this guide covers VUMC residents' tried-and-true ways to spend time outdoors.

## Contents

- ◆ **Backpacking** - p. 3-6
- ◆ **Biking** - p. 7
- ◆ **Camping** - p. 7-9
- ◆ **Climbing** - p. 10-11
- ◆ **Hiking** - p. 11-13
- ◆ **Kayaking, Canoeing, Paddle Boarding** - p. 13-14
- ◆ **Running** - p. 14
- ◆ **Tubing** - p. 14-15
- ◆ **Outdoors Retailers** - p. 15
- ◆ **Miscellaneous** - p. 15
- ◆ **Other Resources** - p. 16



## Backpacking

### ◆ Suggested backpacking packing list

<https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/backpacking-checklist.html>

### ◆ Rent gear through Vanderbilt Outdoor Recreation!

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/recreationandwellnesscenter/outdoorrecreation/equipment-rental/index.php>

### ◆ Suggested Excursions:

#### ◆ South Cumberland State Park - ~1.5-hour drive from Nashville

- ◆ <https://tnstateparks.com/parks/south-cumberland>
- ◆ Over 90 miles of trail with more than 100 backcountry campsites covering the Fiery Gizzard and Savage Gulf trail systems with abundant primitive and group sites. All backcountry primitive sites are limited to 4 adults and 2 children. Group sites typically have a maximum occupancy of 30 people. Primitive sites cost \$8 per night on Su-Th and \$9 on Fri/Sat. Group sites cost \$35 per night.
- ◆ Overview of trailheads: <https://tnstateparks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/scsp-trailheadmap2020.pdf>
- ◆ **Campsites:**
  - ◆ Savage Gulf West:
    - ◆ Alum Gap Campsite – 8 primitive sites and one group site located 2.9 miles from the Stone Door parking lot via the Laurel trail or 4.0 miles from the Stone Door parking lot via the Stone Door and Big Creek Rim trails
    - ◆ Sawmill Campsite – 8 primitive sites located 5 miles from the Stone Door parking lot via Stone Door, Big Creek Gulf, and Connector trails. Also located 4.2 miles from the Collins West parking lot via the Collins Gulf trail
  - ◆ Savage Gulf East:
    - ◆ Hobbs Cabin – 8 primitive sites and one cabin with 6 bunks located 8.5 miles from the Savage Gulf parking lot via the Savage Day loop and North Rim trails



- ◆ Collins West Campsite – 5 primitive sites located 0.5 miles from the Collins West parking lot via the Collins access trail
- ◆ Stagecoach Road Campsite – 7 primitive sites and one group site located 6.1 miles from the Savage Gulf parking lot via the Savage Day Loop and South Rim trails. Also located 7.5 miles from the Collins West parking lot via the Collins Rim and South Rim trails.
- ◆ Fiery Gizzard Area:
  - ◆ Father Adamz Campground – 8 primitive sites just a half mile hike from the Foster Falls parking lot
  - ◆ Grundy Forest Campsite - 5 primitive sites and one group site located 0.6 miles from Grundy Forest trailhead
- ◆ **Trails:**
  - ◆ Fiery Gizzard Trail – 12.5 mile one-way trail connecting Grundy Forest and Foster Falls
    - ◆ Map: [https://tnstateparks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/32-fiery-gizzard\\_1.pdf](https://tnstateparks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/32-fiery-gizzard_1.pdf)
  - ◆ Savage Gulf and Stone Door areas – 55 miles of trails with more flexibility for loop trips
    - ◆ Map: <https://tnstateparks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/17-savage-gulf-web2.pdf>
    - ◆ Distance chart: <https://tnstateparks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/so-cumberland-stonedoor-savagegulf-distances.pdf>
- ◆ **Fall Creek Falls State Park** - ~2-hour drive from Nashville
  - ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/fall-creek-falls>
  - ◆ Home to one of the tallest waterfalls in the Eastern US, Fall Creek Falls (256 ft). This park offers 30 cabins and 222 campsites including 16 backcountry sites along with two long-distance overnight trails, the upper and lower loop trails. All backcountry primitive sites are limited to 4 adults and 2 children and cost between \$8-10 per night.
- ◆ **Campsites:**
  - ◆ Lower Loop Trail:
    - ◆ Backcountry 1 – 4 primitive sites 2.6 miles from the Cane Creek Overnight Trail parking area. Cannot be booked online, but is available by calling the Nature Center at (423)881-5708.
    - ◆ Backcountry 2 – 4 primitive sites 5.8 miles from the Cane Creek Overnight Trail parking area. Cannot be booked online, but is available by calling the Nature Center at (423)881-5708.

- ◆ Cable Crossing Camp Area – 3 primitive sites 1.5 miles from the Virgin Falls parking lot.
- ◆ Upper Loop Trail:
  - ◆ Backcountry 3 – 4 primitive sites 7.5 miles from the Cane Creek Overnight Trail parking area.
- ◆ Virgin Falls Area:
  - ◆ Virgin Falls Camp Area – 3 primitive sites 4.5 miles from the parking lot via the main trail. As the name suggests, this is the closest site to Virgin Falls.
  - ◆ Martha’s Pretty Point – 3 small and 1 group primitive sites 2 miles in via the main trail or 2.5 miles from the Scotts Gulf Road parking area via the Upland trail.
  - ◆ Caney Fork Camp Area – 4 primitive sites 4.5 miles from the parking lot via the main trail.
  - ◆ Old Corner Campsite – 4 primitive sites located 4 miles from “Backcountry 3.”
- ◆ **Cane Creek Overnight Trail:**
  - ◆ Upper Loop (Moderate) – 14 miles
  - ◆ Lower Loop (Difficult) – 13.2 miles
  - ◆ Map: [https://tnstateparks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/park-maps/Fall\\_Creek\\_Falls\\_web.jpg](https://tnstateparks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/park-maps/Fall_Creek_Falls_web.jpg)
- ◆ **Red River Gorge, KY** - ~4.5-hour drive from Nashville
  - ◆ Rough trail – 10.7 miles each way with optional sightseeing detours/extensions
  - ◆ Hanson’s Point Hike – 5-7 mile hike to probably the best and most exposed lookout point in the Gorge! Not found on any tourist maps. Rough directions are found in these links, but some navigating (and likely getting-lost) is needed: <https://www.meetup.com/bluegrass-hikers/events/244918256/>; <https://myhikes.org/trails/hansons-point-spur-trail>
  - ◆ Numerous trails into and around Daniel Boone National Forest, ranging from 1 mile to 6 miles. Most of these lead you to or by some amazing arches!
  - ◆ Backcountry camping, cabins, AirBnBs available in area
  - ◆ Other activities: rock climbing, zip-lining, kayak/paddle-board in an underground mine!
  - ◆ <http://www.redrivergorge.com/>
- ◆ **Other excursions to investigate**
  - ◆ Great Smoky Mountains National Park (<https://www.nps.gov/grsm/index.htm>)

- ◆ Mammoth Cave National Park (<https://www.nps.gov/macac/index.htm>)
- ◆ Natchez Trace State Park (<https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/natchez-trace>)

## ◆ Tennessee Wildlife

### ◆ Snakes

- ◆ Venomous species in TN: Copperhead (most common envenomation), cottonmouth, timber rattlesnake, western pigmy rattlesnake, eastern diamondback rattlesnake
- ◆ TN Wildlife Resources Agency: <https://www.tn.gov/twra/wildlife/reptiles/snakes.html>
- ◆ More on envenomation from the TN Poison Center: <https://www.vumc.org/poisoncenter/10247>

### ◆ Ticks

- ◆ Species and associated disease:
- ◆ Black legged tick (a.k.a. deer tick): Found throughout Tennessee and can spread Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, and Lyme disease
- ◆ Lone star tick: Found throughout Tennessee and can spread Ehrlichiosis and Heartland virus
- ◆ Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever is also spread by ticks including the American Dog tick
- ◆ Tick bite prevention: [https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on\\_people.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on_people.html)

### ◆ Spiders

- ◆ Venomous species in TN: Black widow, brown recluse
- ◆ TN Poison Center: <https://www.vumc.org/poisoncenter/13220>

## ◆ Leave No Trace: <https://lnt.org/>

- ◆ Remember to “**P**ass **T**he **D**onut **L**eft **M**y **R**otund **B**rother”
  - ◆ **P**lan ahead and prepare
  - ◆ **T**ravel and camp on durable surfaces
  - ◆ **D**ispose of waste properly
  - ◆ **L**eave what you find
  - ◆ **M**inimize campfire impacts
  - ◆ **R**espect wildlife
  - ◆ **B**e considerate of others

## Biking

### ◆ Resources to help plan routes around Nashville

- ◆ Commuter Guide by Walk Bike Nashville: [https://www.walkbikenashville.org/commuter\\_guide](https://www.walkbikenashville.org/commuter_guide)
- ◆ Groove Bike Map: [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/walkbikenashville/pages/49/attachments/original/1569359517/GROOVE\\_11x17\\_2019\\_download.pdf?1569359517](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/walkbikenashville/pages/49/attachments/original/1569359517/GROOVE_11x17_2019_download.pdf?1569359517)



### ◆ Want to learn more about bikes? Consider building your own!

- ◆ Oasis Bike Shop – Adult Build-A-Bike Workshop: <http://www.oasisbikeworkshop.org/adult-class.html>



### ◆ Bike Rentals

- ◆ Green Fleet Bicycle Shop: <https://greenfleetbikes.com/bike-rentals/>
- ◆ Nashville B Cycle: <https://nashville.bcycle.com/>



## Camping



### ◆ Suggested camping packing list

<https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/family-camping-checklist.html>

### ◆ Rent gear through Vanderbilt

#### Outdoor Recreation!

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/recreationandwellnesscenter/outdoorrecreation/equipment-rental/index.php>

### ◆ Suggested Campgrounds

◆ **Bledsoe Creek State Park** - ~45-minute drive from Nashville

- ◆ 58 campsites with water and electricity hookups suitable for RVs and trailers. Sites cost \$33 per night Su-Th and \$34 per night Fri/Sat.
- ◆ 19 primitive sites costing \$16 per night.
- ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/bledsoe-creek>

◆ **Cedars of Lebanon State Park** – ~40-minute drive from Nashville

- ◆ 117 campsites with water and electricity hookups along with an additional 30 tent and pop-up campsites. There are no primitive sites. Sites cost between \$26-33 per night.
- ◆ <https://tnstateparks.com/parks/cedars-of-lebanon>

◆ **Edgar Evans State Park** – ~1-hour drive from Nashville

- ◆ Located on the eastern highland rim of Center Hill Lake.
- ◆ 60 tent and trailer sites with water and electric hookups. Sites range from \$26-33 per night.
- ◆ 9 gravel pad sites that are not directly accessible by vehicles. \$12 per night Su-Th and \$13 per night Fri/Sat.
- ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/edgar-evins>

◆ **Fall Creek Falls State Park** – ~2-hour drive from Nashville

- ◆ One of the largest and most visited parks in TN. It is located along the eastern top of the Cumberland plateau. This park boasts cascades, waterfalls, gorges, and streams. It is also home to its namesake, Fall Creek Falls, one of the tallest waterfalls in the Eastern US.
- ◆ 222 campsites in 5 different areas in addition to 16 primitive sites 9 of which are walk-in and 7 of which are park-on sites. Established sites range from \$26-34 per night and primitive sites are \$16 per night.
- ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/fall-creek-falls>



◆ **Great Smoky Mountains National Park** - ~3-hour drive from Nashville

- ◆ This National Park is the most visited in the nation and straddles the border of North Carolina and Tennessee.



- ◆ 20 front country campgrounds ranging from \$17-75 per night.
- ◆ <https://www.nps.gov/grsm/index.htm>
  
- ◆ **Mammoth Cave National Park** - ~1.5-hour drive from Nashville
  - ◆ Home to Mammoth Cave, the longest cave system in the world. To explore the cave, you need to go on a guided tour, but there are also 80 miles worth of trail for hiking as well.
  - ◆ 3 front country campgrounds ranging from \$20-50 per night.
  - ◆ <https://www.nps.gov/macac/index.htm>
  
- ◆ **Natchez Trace State Park** - ~1.5-hour drive from Nashville
  - ◆ Over 200 campsites approximately 17 of which are primitive. Sites range in price from \$16-36 per night.
  - ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/natchez-trace>
  
- ◆ **Rock Island State Park** – ~1.5-hour drive from Nashville
  - ◆ This park sits at the headwaters of Center Hill Lake and includes the Caney Fork Gorge.
  - ◆ 50 campsites that accommodate RVs and trailers. Sites cost \$34-35 per night depending on the day of the week.
  - ◆ 10 tent-only campsites located at a separate campground. Sites cost \$22 per night Su-Th and \$24 per night Fri/Sat.
  - ◆ <https://tnstateparks.com/parks/rock-island>
  
- ◆ **South Cumberland State Park** – ~1.5-hour drive from Nashville
  - ◆ This park boasts some of the best hiking in the state and is home to one of the most scenic waterfalls – Foster Falls.
  - ◆ Foster Falls Campground – 25 sites suitable for car camping without access to water or sewage hook ups. However, there is a restroom with heated showers on site.
  - ◆ Sites cost \$18 per night Su-Th and \$21 per night Fri/Sat.
  - ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/south-cumberland>



## Climbing

### ◆ Southeastern Climber Coalition

<https://www.seclimbers.org/>

### ◆ Indoor Climbing

#### ◆ The Climb

- ◆ <https://theclimbgyms.com/>
- ◆ 3 locations in Nashville offering lessons, memberships, day passes, and rentals for access to bouldering, lead, top-rope, and auto-belay routes
  - ◆ Climb East: Bouldering only
  - ◆ West: Top rope and lead emphasis with limited bouldering
  - ◆ Murfreesboro: Emphasis on bouldering also with ample top rope and lead routes along with a kids area
- ◆ Organize outdoor climbing trips several times per year
- ◆ Members get 2 free guest passes per month – reach out to fellow resident Climb members if you'd like to try!

### ◆ Outdoor Climbing

#### ◆ King's Bluff, Clarkesville TN - ~1-hour drive from Nashville

- ◆ Largely sport climbing routes
- ◆ <https://www.seclimbers.org/project/kings-bluff/>

#### ◆ Obed - ~2.5-hour drive from Nashville

- ◆ Lots of bouldering and sport routes
- ◆ Recommended route guidebook: <https://www.mountainproject.com/area/105891970/obed-clear-creek>
- ◆ Camp at Lilly Pad Hopyard Brewery: <http://www.lillypadhopyardbrewery.com/>

#### ◆ Red River Gorge - ~4.5-hour drive from Nashville

- ◆ The outdoor climbing Mecca in the US east of Colorado with thousands of sport and crag climbing routes spread over several small 'hub' areas.



- ◆ Routes are very well maintained and marked (name and grade of each route labeled at start)
- ◆ Recommended route guidebook: <https://www.mountainproject.com/area/105841134/red-river-gorge>
- ◆ **South Cumberland State Park** – ~1.5-hour drive from Nashville
  - ◆ <https://tnstateparks.com/parks/south-cumberland>
  - ◆ Home to many popular areas including Denny Cove, Foster Falls, and Stone door. Registration is required.

## Hiking

### ◆ Suggested Parks and Trails In Town

- ◆ <https://www.nashville.gov/Parks-and-Recreation/Outdoor-Recreation/Hiking-Trails.aspx>
- ◆ **Beaman Park**
  - ◆ <https://www.nashville.gov/Parks-and-Recreation/Nature-Centers-and-Natural-Areas/Beaman-Park-Nature-Center.aspx>
- ◆ **Bells Bend Park**
  - ◆ <https://www.nashville.gov/Parks-and-Recreation/Nature-Centers-and-Natural-Areas/Bells-Bend-Outdoor-Center/Bells-Bend-Park.aspx>
- ◆ **Edwin and Percy Warner Parks**
  - ◆ 12 miles of hiking trails. Mossy Ridge trail (4.5 miles) is popular for trail runners.
  - ◆ <https://www.nashville.gov/parks-and-recreation/parks/warner-parks.aspx>
- ◆ **Radnor Lake**
  - ◆ Approximately 8 miles of hiking trails. No trail running allowed.
  - ◆ <https://tnstateparks.com/parks/radnor-lake>
- ◆ **Shelby Bottoms**
  - ◆ <https://www.nashville.gov/Parks-and-Recreation/Nature-Centers-and-Natural-Areas/Shelby-Bottoms-Nature-Center/Shelby-Bottoms-Park.aspx>



### ◆ Suggested Parks and Trails Out of Town

- ◆ See Backpacking and Camping sections above for great options for hiking

### ◆ Waterfalls within 2 hours of Nashville

- ◆ **Rutledge Falls** - ~1 hour from Nashville

- ◆ **Burgess Falls** - ~1.25 hours from Nashville

- ◆ Located within Burgess Falls State park. This park is located along the Falling Water River and is home to 4 waterfalls that cascade down 250 feet in elevation. No camping allowed.

- ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/burgess-falls>

- ◆ **Cummins Falls** - ~1.25 hours from Nashville

- ◆ Located within Cummins Falls State Park, a day-use park home to the 8th tallest waterfall in TN. No camping allowed.

- ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/cummins-falls>

- ◆ **Fall Creek Falls** - ~2 hours from Nashville

- ◆ Located within Fall Creek Falls State Park. Ample camping and backpacking available as well.

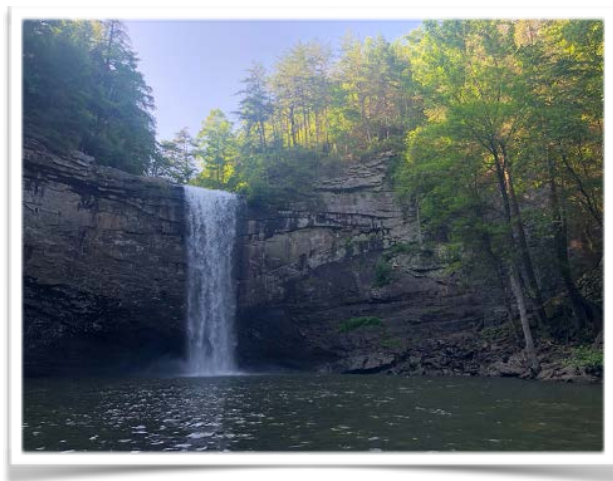
- ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/fall-creek-falls>

- ◆ **Foster Falls** - ~1.5 hours from Nashville

- ◆ Located within South Cumberland State park. Camping and backpacking allowed (see Backpacking and Camping above).

- ◆ <https://www.tnstateparks.com/parks/south-cumberland>

- ◆ **Greeter Falls** - ~1.5 hours from Nashville



- ◆ **Ozone Falls** - ~2 hours from Nashville
- ◆ **Twin Falls** - ~1.5 hours from Nashville
- ◆ **Virgin Falls** - ~2 hours from Nashville

## Kayaking, Canoeing, Paddle Boarding

- ◆ There are many outfitters and locations to choose from including the following:

- ◆ **Red River**, outside Adams TN (~45-minute drive from Nashville)
  - ◆ Run-a-Muck Outfitters: <https://www.runamuckoutfitters.com/>
  - ◆ Red River Canoe: <https://canoetheredriver.com/>
- ◆ **Harpeth River**, outside Kingston Springs TN (~30-minute drive from Nashville)
  - ◆ Foggy Bottom Canoe: <http://www.foggybottomcanoe.com/p/main.html>
- ◆ **Duck River** (~45-minute drive from Nashville)
  - ◆ River Rat Canoe: <https://www.riverratcanoe.com/>
- ◆ **Cumberland River**, downtown Nashville
  - ◆ Paddle Up Nashville: <https://www.paddleupnashville.com/>
  - ◆ Big Willie's Action Sports: <https://bigwilliesnashville.com/>
- ◆ **Percy Priest Lake**
  - ◆ Nashville Paddle: <https://www.nashvillepaddle.com/>





◆ If you have your own gear, take it out on Percy Priest Lake or Couchville Lake. You can also check out Long Hunter State Park for public boat launch ramps: <https://tnstateparks.com/parks/activity-detail/long-hunter-boating>

◆ Rent gear through Vanderbilt Outdoor Recreation!

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/recreationandwellnesscenter/outdoorrecreation/equipment-rental/index.php>

## Running

◆ Consider joining the Surgery Running Club

◆ Resident-endorsed routes:

- ◆ McCabe Park Greenway
- ◆ Shelby Bottoms
- ◆ Beaman Park
- ◆ Percy Warner Park

◆ Nashville Running Events

<http://nashvilleguru.com/15156/nashville-running-events>

◆ Great Runs in Nashville

<https://medium.com/great-runs/great-runs-in-nashville-ec453f7f91bd>

## Tubing

◆ There are many outfitters and locations to choose from including the following:

- ◆ Red River, outside Adams TN (~45-minute drive from Nashville)
  - ◆ River Adventures: <https://www.riveradventuresnashville.com/>

- ◆ **Duck River** (~45-minute drive from Nashville)
  - ◆ River Rat Canoe: <https://www.riverratcanoe.com/>

◆ **If you want to purchase your own tube, follow these instructions to float for free:**

<https://www.heywandererblog.com/2019/07/how-to-float-harpeth-river-in-nashville.html>

◆ **Harpeth River State Park Map:**

<https://tnstateparks.com/assets/pdf/additional-content/park-maps/36-harpeth-river-sm.jpg>

## Outdoors Retailers

- ◆ Cumberland Transit: <https://cumberlandtransit.com/>
- ◆ Music City Outdoors: <https://www.musiccityoutdoors.com/>
- ◆ Bink's Outfitters: <http://www.binksoutfitters.com/>
- ◆ Vintage outdoor clothing more your jam? Check out Orbital Outdoors: <https://www.orbitalclimbing.com/>
- ◆ REI: <https://www.rei.com/stores/brentwood.html>

## Miscellaneous

- ◆ Arrington Vineyards: <http://www.arringtonvineyards.com/>
- ◆ Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park: <https://tnstateparks.com/parks/bicentennial-mall>
- ◆ Centennial Park: <https://www.nashville.gov/Parks-and-Recreation/Parks/Centennial-Park.aspx>
- ◆ Centennial Sportsplex: <https://www.nashville.gov/Parks-and-Recreation/Centennial-Sportsplex.aspx>
- ◆ Cheekwood Estate and Gardens: <https://cheekwood.org/>
- ◆ Cumberland River Pedestrian Bridge
- ◆ John Steigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge
- ◆ Lucky Ladd Farms, AG-Venture Fun Park: <https://luckyladdfarms.com/>
- ◆ Nashville Farmers Market: <https://www.nashvillefarmersmarket.org/>
- ◆ Nashville Sports League: <https://www.nashvillesportsleagues.com/>
- ◆ Nashville Zoo: <https://www.nashvillezoo.org/>

## Other Resources

- ◆ Vanderbilt Outdoor Recreation: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/recreationandwellnesscenter/outdoorrecreation/>
- ◆ Tennessee State Parks: <https://tnstateparks.com/>
- ◆ Nashville Metro Parks and Recreation: <https://www.nashville.gov/Parks-and-Recreation.aspx>
- ◆ Vanderbilt General Surgery Resident Wellbeing: <https://www.vumc.org/gsr/52084>