

Hello, Kirby Community!

I know it's no fun being cooped up in your home waiting for the blessed day when we can once again come within a six-foot distance of each other. For those who are super-bored and looking for some way to make lemonade out of lemons, I've compiled a list of possibilities.

I. IF you can stand even *more* screen time...

- A. Participate in the Library of Congress' [crowdsourcing transcription project](#). You can help future researchers to find the documents they need by transcribing Rosa Parks' papers, Spanish legal documents, letters sent to Abraham Lincoln, documents related to the woman suffrage fight, and more.
- B. Take a [free online course](#) at an Ivy League University—offerings include subjects like Gamification, Algorithms, Contemporary and Modern Poetry, Ancient Philosophy, China's First Empires, and the Civil War and Reconstruction.
- C. Watch professional actors and experienced amateurs read each of William Shakespeare's [plays](#) in chronological order of authorship—or organize your own play reading online.
- D. Sign up for a free Cornell Lab account and learn to [identify bird songs](#), understand bird behavior, or learn about nature journaling and sketching.
- E. Explore archive.org or hathitrust.org for out-of-copyright works. It's kind of fun to go back and browse through a *Good Housekeeping* magazine from 1911 or an etiquette manual from 1756.
- F. Take a [virtual museum tour](#).
- G. Explore a [National Park](#) at Google Arts & Culture. For that matter, explore [LOTS of things](#) at Google Arts & Culture.
- H. Watch Oscar-nominated short films from this and past years (you may need to hunt a little to watch them all). Or check out the staff picks of the best videos of last year at [Vimeo](#).
- I. Explore the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History's Art of Nature [Exhibit](#).
- J. Virtually visit the [MAH](#).

II. Pen (or pencil) and paper...

- A. Go sketch your world—inside or out
- B. Start keeping a journal, if you don't already
- C. Write a haiku—or any other poem
- D. Write short stories
- E. Start working on that novel you know is inside you
- F. Write a tangible, pen-and-paper letter to someone you care about, and mail it.
- G. Create a crossword puzzle. You can find out more about how to do that [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

- H. Write a play
- I. Write a graphic novel
- J. Make a flipbook
- K. Create a D&D campaign
- L. Make a list of places you want to go when we're allowed to go to places again.

III. Get crafty...

- A. Create a board game
- B. If you have access to a sewing machine, make your next Halloween costume or make a quilt out of outgrown but still-loved T-shirts.
- C. Create a new garden or tend to an old one
- D. If you have access to tools and scrap lumber, build a [bird feeder](#) or [bat house](#).
- E. Take up [origami](#) and get inspired [here](#) and [here](#).
- F. Build a kite
- G. Make some puppets—you could be the next Jim Henson
- H. Make a [gingerbread house](#), and maybe get ready to enter the National Gingerbread House [Competition](#).
- I. Color in a coloring book—or create a coloring book for someone else
- J. Create a podcast or a “radio” drama

IV. (Semi)-Random acts of kindness...

- A. Help out with a chore, unexpectedly
- B. Create a scavenger or treasure hunt for a younger sibling
- C. If your family has to run an essential errand, see if neighbors need anything
- D. Think about people with upcoming birthdays, anniversaries, etc., and put some thought into a handmade gift
- E. Cook a favorite food for someone in your household
- F. Sew gowns or masks for health-care workers—just make sure you follow specifications and check with local providers to see what they need and will accept
- G. Show gratitude to someone
- H. Ask someone, “Is there something I can do to help you?”

V. More learning and creativity...

- A. Read a book purely for fun
- B. Learn a new language
- C. Compose a song

- D. Learn to cook—or, if you already know how, challenge yourself to use some oddball ingredients in the pantry in a creative way. Or learn to make something that’s a skills stretch for you.
- E. Learn how to change the oil in the family car or change a tire
- F. Learn to knit or crochet or embroider
- G. Film a short movie or stop-motion animation
- H. Write a computer program
- I. Play around with [codes](#) and [codebreaking](#)
- J. Draw the house you’d like to live in someday
- K. Create the perfect playlist
- L. Check out the museums of the [Smithsonian](#). You could lose yourself in here....
- M. Find everything from the Declaration of Independence to military records to WWII propaganda films at the [National Archives](#).
- N. [Expand your](#) vocabulary
- O. Check out your class P-Learning sites; some may have extended/challenge activities to deepen your understanding of these subjects

VI. Pure silly fun...

- A. Drag out the Legos and see how big a structure you can build
- B. Climb a tree
- C. Hold your own “Olympics”—each member of the family gets to create an event (the sillier, the better)
- D. Have Bad Manners Night at dinner, where everyone is encouraged to break all the normal rules of table etiquette
- E. Create your own croquet set and play in the backyard if you have one
- F. Participate in Kirby Spirit Days!
- G. Play charades
- H. Jump rope
- I. Camp out overnight in the backyard if you have one
- J. Make a [sock monkey](#)
- K. [Learn](#) to [juggle](#)
- L. Teach your pet a new trick
- M. Learn to do a cartwheel

VII. Human connection...

- A. Family stories: this is a perfect time to interview the people in your household. You can find some questions to ask [here](#), [here](#), and (if you want to be more scholarly about it) [here](#). You can make this informal, or you can record the interview for posterity.

- B. Check in, via videoconference, with distant relatives. It helps enormously for them to be able to see your faces.
- C. Thank someone (from a distance) who's making your life easier—your mail carrier, your grocery clerk if you have to go to the store, anyone in your life who's a health-care provider.

VIII. Stay calm...

- A. Meditate.
- B. Stretch.
- C. Watch [puppies](#) or an African watering hole at Explore.com; you can also watch live footage of [nesting bald eagles](#) or a [coral reef](#)
- D. Watch YouTube [videos](#) of [cherry blossoms](#) and cherry-blossom festivals
- E. Sit on your porch or at your window with a cup of tea, coffee, or cocoa, and just observe without challenging yourself to do anything else
- F. Play a card game! A deck of cards is the most compact and versatile bit of game equipment you can find. Learn to play bridge or gin rummy or poker.
- G. Declutter your room.
- H. Have a picnic in your outdoor space.