



## 15+ IDEAS FOR CABIN FEVER

*Compiled by Pastor Phil Maulding*

Cabin fever may not be a psychiatric diagnosis, but it is a real thing, clinical psychologist Joel Klapow told TIME magazine in 2014.

“Basically, it’s your mind’s way of telling you that the environment you are in is less than optimal for normal functioning,” he said. “It’s when you’re in a space of restricted freedom for a period of time that you can no longer tolerate.”

### WHAT IS CABIN FEVER?

Cabin fever can dampen your mood, energy level and motivation. Not sure if it’s happening to you? Here are some signs:

- You feel cooped up and restless.
- You have difficulty concentrating on what’s in front of you.
- You feel lethargic or simply unmotivated to do anything.
- You feel irritated and on edge for no apparent reason.

If you can relate to any of those signs...you’re probably dealing with cabin fever. But—before you take up permanent residence on your couch or start to sleep out of sheer boredom—we have good news. Check out this list of fresh ideas to help you (and the whole family) beat cabin fever, once and for all.

#### 1. **Change your diet**

Avoid high carb, high-fat foods, which can make you feel even more inactive. Instead, seek out lean proteins that contain a lot of omega-3 fatty acids. These can boost your mood, and often contain B12 and vitamin D, which help regulate your emotions.

#### 2. **Get outside**

You send the kids outside and burn off some energy. Why not do the same? Time in the sun – even if it’s just touching your face –and some fresh air will energize you. Go for a walk, even just for 15 minutes.

#### 3. **Start Baking**

In direct contradiction to idea number one... Cookies do a body good! (Though if you do this one...don’t overdo it, but be sure to use the next suggestion!) Do your childhood memories smell like homemade cookies and cocoa or lemonade? Ours sure do! Fill your kitchen and your belly with sweet goodness by pulling out the mixing bowls and cookie sheets.

#### **4. Get regular exercise**

You don't need to go to the gym. Anything you do to keep your heart rate up for 30 minutes a day will help your mood. Regular physical activity can help burn off any extra energy you have from being cooped up indoors. Indoor exercise ideas include workout videos, bodyweight workouts, and online workout routines. Or, you can just do some pushups, situps, or jumping jacks. In making small changes to your daily routine, you'll see big changes in your spirits!

#### **5. Have a game night**

Get your kids or roommates—and yourself—away from computer/tablet/phone screens for a few hours and bond over some board games.

#### **6. Throw a party**

Planning and preparing for the event will keep you active and help pass the time. Do a “date night” at home and get dressed up with candles and the works. Or, have a theme night for the whole household with special food, decorations, and music. Fiesta Night? Disney, Star Wars, or Harry Potter theme? “Visit” a country of your choosing—France, Italy, China?

#### **7. Change your décor**

Sometimes, all it takes to make your surroundings feel different is a new look. Rearrange your furniture or artwork.

#### **8. Take up a new hobby**

Being forced inside can give you time to catch up on work or tackle a home improvement project you've been putting off. But you've also been given a chance to try out a new hobby: knit a sweater, build a birdhouse, create a gallery wall or knock out the first chapter of the novel that's been rattling around in your head for the last year.

#### **9. Organize!**

Give yourself an hour or two to do one chore you've been avoiding or can't regularly find the time to tackle. Sort jewelry or perfumes on your vanity or organize that workbench in the garage.

#### **10. Play housekeeper**

“Spring cleaning” can happen any time of year. You'll have more time to enjoy fun things when the time comes to get out if you choose one room or even one area of a room to get your deep clean on. Tackle the entire kitchen (or maybe just the kitchen cabinets).

#### **11. Open the shades**

Take advantage of what light there is by keeping your shades open during the day. You'll not only make your surroundings feel brighter, but you'll also help warm your house. Once the sun has set, you may want to add ambiance, charm, and light by lighting a candle.

#### **12. Go play!**

Do an activity that maybe you have done for a long while. Throw a frisbee, jump rope, shoot hoops, hula hoop, hopscotch, lawn darts, etc.

#### **13. Hug a tree**

The simplest cure for cabin fever is getting outside and enjoying nature. Studies show that spending time in nature can improve cognitive functioning and overall well-being. Go out to the garden or backyard!

#### **14. Attend the top-rated spa just steps away (Hint: it's your bathroom)**

Pamper yourself in ways your day-to-day schedule doesn't normally allow. Take a bath instead of a shower, ignore the clock, and light scented candles or incense to transform the room into a dream spa. Finally use those White Elephant body scrubs and lotions, put on a face mask and/or hair mask, paint your nails or give yourself some root touch-ups. You can even take a nap (go ahead—we won't tell!).

### **15. Plan your next vacation.**

Thoughts of different days spent out are nice to look forward to!

#### **More ideas!**

- Break out a good book.
- Try a new recipe. The possibilities are endless on Pinterest.
- Start scrapbooking. Do a video of photos!
- Pull out some old board games or a deck of cards.
- Have a movie and popcorn night. Dig out an old favorite or stream or rent something new.
- Research your family history and create a family tree.