Memorial Day honors the heroes who died while serving our beautiful country. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important for everyone to be mindful that our collective health and safety is top priority. As communities across the country begin to reopen and more people go public spaces, we remind everyone to properly dispose of their trash and recyclables. Here are 10 tips to help you commemorate Memorial Day, while demonstrating your commitment to a clean and green environment.

1. **Leave no trace** – We remind you to ‘pack it in, pack it out’ whenever visiting public spaces. This means disposing of trash and recyclables when on the go or holding on to your items until you can get to the right bin. When visiting public spaces, look for bins on your way in so you know where you can dispose of your items at the end of your visit. Use ash receptacles such as pocket ashtrays to properly dispose of cigarette butts. To reduce waste, bring reusable dishes, cups, and silverware.

2. **Maintain physical distancing** – Physical and social distancing means keeping a minimum of six feet away from others unless you live or work with them on a regular basis; avoid gathering in groups; and stay away from crowded places and mass gatherings. Bring a blanket or items, such as pool noodles, to help you mark your distance from others. The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. We also recommend following your state and local guidance.

3. **Stay local** – Millions of people typically hit the road on Memorial Day weekend. But this year, the CDC continues to recommend that Americans stay home and avoid nonessential travel. The good news is that staying local can help you reduce your carbon footprint. Explore a different park in your community or bring the family on a bike ride in your neighborhood.

Please note: COVID-19 is reported to live on surfaces for an extended period of time*.

- As an aerosol, for up to 3 hours (e.g. sneezing, coughing, etc.)
- Clothing – several hours up to a day
- Up to 4 hours on copper
- Up to 24 hours on cardboard
- Up to 2-3 days on plastic and stainless steel
- Up to 4 days on glass surfaces like a Smartphone

**General health and safety:**

1. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, and before eating or preparing food. (CDC)
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. (CDC)
3. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. (CDC)

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4. **Honor fallen veterans** – Visit the graves of fallen heroes or local monuments in your community. There are also several virtual events taking place to commemorate the holiday, including the National Memorial Day Concert on PBS, the Memorial Day – Parade of Heroes on Facebook (hosted by Ancestry), and the Vietnam War Memorial celebration (streamed by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.)

5. **Bring the restaurant to you** – If you can’t dine out safely, bring the food and drinks right to you. Regulations during COVID-19 allow bars, restaurants, and other licensed retailers to sell alcohol in unopened containers. Be sure to follow your local guidelines. To reduce waste, ask for no single-use utensils.

6. **Go virtual** – **Participate in the Great American Cleanup Virtual Experience.** Earn points by walking, running, or completing activities, from gardening to taking out the recycling, and fundraise for Keep America Beautiful. Every action and dollar raised help beautify the virtual park. Once the goal is reached, an actual park will be transformed when it is deemed safe.

7. **Celebrate beautiful moments** – At Keep America Beautiful, we have been defining beautiful as “clean and green” for over six decades. But beautiful can be more than that. Beautiful is people practicing random acts of kindness. Beautiful is people coming together as a community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have highlighted that even in challenging times, people do beautiful things. Discover beautiful moments and share your own at dobeautifulthings.org.

8. **Get gardening** – Gardening is a perfect way to get fresh air, exercise, improve mental health, and connect with nature. Whether you have a small apartment balcony or a sprawling yard, you can add green to any space. Check out our [gardening tips during COVID-19](#).

9. **Join the movement** – Volunteerism is at the heart of Keep America Beautiful. When we can safely clean up and beautify communities across our country, we want you to join us. **Sign up to be a volunteer** at future events and activities.

10. **Stay in the know** – Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to stay in the know on upcoming events, announcements, and opportunities to get involved.

Memorial Day can still be commemorated, and the weekend can still be enjoyed safely with these tips. We recommend that individuals follow federal, state, and local guidelines when planning activities and going to public spaces, like parks and beaches. While the coronavirus pandemic poses unique challenges to us all, we remind everyone to keep trash and litter off the ground. We recommend that individuals exercise physical distancing and wear a face covering when interacting with others, wash hands often, and avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. In addition, used masks, gloves, and wipes should not be littered under any circumstance, and should be disposed of in secure trash containers. These items are not recyclable and should not be placed in recycling collection bins.