

Exercise Exploration Guide: Barry County Parks and Recreation

Head out to your favorite Barry County Park or trail, and enjoy this short exercise program as you explore. Feel free to do all, one, or none of the exercises. Just get out and get moving!

Warm-Up (Dynamic Stretch and Easy Movement):



3-5 Sky Stretches:

At the start of your walk, take a moment to do 3-5 sky stretches (pictured left) before you start. This will give you a chance to check in with your body, and notice how all your muscles are feeling.

Stand with feet hip with the part, then stretch your arms up to the sky. For an extra stretch, rise onto your toes. Hold for 2-3 deep breaths, then slowly lower your arms down.



Torso Twists:

Let your arms hang loose at your sides. Then, with your feet firmly planted, begin twisting your torso side-to-side, letting your arms hang loose. Increase the speed of your arm swings until you feel like one of the spinning scrub brushes at the carwash! Gradually decrease your speed to stop.



Arm Circles:

Stand comfortably with your feet shoulder with the part, then stretch your arms out side to side. Keeping your arms straight, move both arms in small circles, gradually making bigger and bigger circles. Once you've reached your full range of motion, reverse the direction of your arm circles, keeping them big, then gradually making them smaller.



Standing Leg Hugs 5-10 yards:

As you finish your warm-up, balance on one leg while hugging your opposite leg to your chest for a second or two. Release your leg, then hug the leg you were just standing on into your chest. Repeat this process for 5-10 yards.

Walk 3-5 minutes:

Walk for 3-5 minutes at a slow, easy pace. As you walk, practice taking long, slow deep breaths. Inhale for 4-5 steps, then exhale for 7-8 steps as you walk.

Next, pick a body part to pay attention to.

How does the trail feel underneath your feet?

What do your ankles and toes do to adapt to changes in the trail?

Strength & Stretch (Back and Arms):



Crab Walk 10-20 yards:

To crab walk, sit on the ground with your arms behind you and your legs in front. Push yourself up on your legs and hands so that your bottom is off the ground. Scuttle backwards in the direction of your arms for 10-20 yards.



3x10 Mountain Climbers:

Start in a push-up position on even ground. Bring one knee into your chest, then put it back in place, alternating between legs. For an extra challenge, see how fast you can go while still keeping your back straight!

Count how many times the leg you raise first comes up. Once you hit 10, take a break then repeat the cycle again two more times to complete the exercise.



2x5 Supermans:

Lie flat on your stomach, then raise your arms and legs up off the ground so only your stomach is touching. Inhale as you raise your arms and legs, exhale as you lower them. Pretend you are flying over a city just like superman!

Raise and lower your arms and legs a total of 5 times, then take a break. Repeat once more.



4 Arm Presses:

Put palms together in front of your heart, with your fingertips pointing upwards. Push your hands together as hard as you can for three deep breaths. Release your hands and shake them out. Repeat with fingertips facing downwards.

Do this twice, for a total of 4 presses.

Walk 3-5 Minutes:

Flex your “Spidey-Sense” as you walk and identify 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste (use your judgement on this last one, but sometimes you can “taste the air!”). Describe the things you see, touch, hear, smell, and taste to the people you are walking with. You may create this list together or do the activity separately and compare your lists after a couple minutes. Did you notice the same things?

Strength & Stretch (Legs and Cardio):

Pick a point in the distance to skip/ hop to. Race to see who can--

- 1) Get there the fastest
- 2) Take the most skips/ hops

You may also play a game like red light green light while doing your skips!

For extra fun, add in yellow light where you skip/ hop in “slow motion.” This will work on muscle coordination and balance while also enhancing the strength aspect of the skip.

***As these exercises can involve quick explosive movement, be mindful of your surroundings, especially where you’re landing. Try to do these exercises in a flat “soft” area like a grass field.*



Froggy Hops 10-20 yards:

Squat down low, then jump forward as far as you can, landing in a low squat with your arms on the ground in front of you.

Hop again, focusing on distance, and staying low to the ground.



Speed Skaters 10-15 yards:

Jump as far to one side as you can using one leg. As you land on your opposite foot, cross the leg you jumped off behind you for balance, lightly tapping the ground behind you. Swing your back leg out to the side and jump as far as you can back in the direction you started.

***Be mindful of your footing as you perform side-to-side motions like speed skaters and gallops, as it can be easy to twist an ankle.*



Gallop 30-50 yards:

Hop sideways “clicking” your feet together and landing on the same foot you hopped from. Make sure to switch directions halfway to work both sides of your body equally.



High Skips 15-20 yards:

Just like regular skipping, but each time you land jump as high as you can into the air!



Bear Walk 15-30 yards:

Form a triangle with your body, placing your hands on the ground and raising your bottom high in the air. Walk forward on your hands and feet, keeping your “tail” high!

Walk 3-5 Minutes:

Take a moment and put your hand on your heart and notice how your breathing and heart rate has changed from all the skipping. Take several long deep breaths, paying attention to your heart rate and breathing. How do you feel?

After this, start walking again, this time pretending you are on a safari. Try to see who can spot the most birds, bugs, and/or animals! Keep a tally individually, or split into bird/ bug/ animal teams. Try to walk as quietly as possible to see more creatures!

Strength & Stretch (Core and Arms):



10 Inch Worms:

Start standing up, then bend at the waist and walk your hands out in front of you until you are in a push-up position. Hold the plank for 2 breaths, then slowly walk your feet up to meet your hands. Repeat 9 more times.



3 Downward Dog to Cobra Poses:

Bend at the waist and walk your hands out in front of you until your body forms a triangle shape. Take 5 deep breaths, then keeping your feet and hands in place, slowly lower your torso down through a push-up position until your stomach and legs are touching the ground. Take 5 deep breaths, and on exhale raise your bottom back up, so you are in your triangle shape once more. Repeat 2 more times.



3 Side Plank Rotations:

Start in a push-up position on a level surface, making sure your back is straight. Slowly rotate the weight of your upper body to one hand, raising the opposite hand up towards the sky. Hold for two deep breaths, then slowly lower to your push-up position and switch sides. Repeat on both sides 2 more times for a total of 6.



3x10 Russian Twists:

Sit on the ground with your knees bent and your feet flat on the ground in front of you. Shift your weight backward, so you still remain seated, but it takes a little extra work from your core to do so. For an extra challenge, let your feet hover off the ground.

Raise your arms high above your head with your hands clasped together. Keeping your arms straight, lower them to one side of your body, holding your legs as still as possible. Raise your arms back over your head, then lower them to the other side. Repeat this back and forth motion 10 times. Take a break and repeat the cycle twice more.

Walk 3-5 Minutes:

Hunt for an item in each color in the rainbow as you walk! See how many red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet items you can find. Which color did you see the most of?

Cool Down:



Butterfly Stretch:

Sit on the ground with the soles of your feet touching one another, and your knees out side to side. Place your hands on your ankles and gently guide your heels towards your bottom while keeping your back straight. Hold for 3-5 deep breaths.



Happy Baby (or Dead Bug) Stretch:

Lay on your back and kick your legs up to the sky with your feet flexed. Gently grab the arches of your feet from the outside of your foot and slowly kick your legs in different directions to stretch the backs of your legs. This should feel really good after all the skipping! Hold for 3-5 deep breaths.



Cat/ Cow Stretch:

Kneel on the ground on all fours. Take a deep breath in, dropping your stomach towards the ground, while keeping your arms and legs in place, and lifting your chin up to the sky. As you exhale, draw your stomach to your spine and arch your back like a cat, drawing your chin into your chest. Repeat this cycle 3-5 times.



Child's Pose:

Kneel on the ground and slowly walk your hands all the way out in front of you so your head is touching, or almost touching, the ground. Take 2 deep breaths, then slowly walk your hands to the right and then to the left. Once you have stretched side to side, gently rest your forehead on the ground and stretch your hands all the way behind you towards your heels. Relax your arms and shoulders and take several deep breaths. When you are done, slowly sit up.

Walk 5-10 Minutes:

Continue to practice some of the mindfulness activities you learned during your cool-down, or shift focus/ conversation back to your day, what you enjoyed during your walk and what else you are looking forward to doing today.