

50 Free Fall Activities for Kids in NYC

Fall is my favorite season. I just love the crisp air and transitions that come along with autumn. There are also plenty of fun free family activities during this time of the year including numerous festivals, Halloween and cultural events. As such, I challenged myself to come up with 50 free fall (9/22/12 – 12/20/12) activities for kids in NYC. Do you think that I was able to meet my goal? Well actually, there are SO many more options than 50. Enjoy!

Part I

1. Fourth Arts Block (FAB!) Festival 2012 on East 4th Street between Bowery and 2nd Avenue:

Enjoy a variety of dance, theater and music performances by local artists and activities from FABnyc's partners. Local artisans and gourmet food vendors and hands-on activities for families are just a couple of the other things planned for this event.

9/22/12

Manhattan

2. Morningside Lights Workshops at Columbia University's Miller Theatre:

Creative workshop participants will be able to paint, craft, sew, and papier-mâché to create mobile sculptures and large-scale puppets.

9/22/12 – 9/29/12

Manhattan

3. The Bronx Native American Festival at Pelham Bay Park:

Visitors can enjoy music, storytelling, dance, children's arts and crafts, face painting and more at this annual family festival.

9/23/12

Bronx

4. Brooklyn Book Festival at Brooklyn Borough Hall and Plaza:

(See the MitC [event picks from this week](#) for more details.)

9/23/12

Brooklyn

5. Common Ground Festival at Morningside Park:

Face-painting, pony rides, balloon art and a variety of performances are on the schedule.

9/29/12

Manhattan

6. National Estuaries Day Festival at Alley Pond Environmental Center:

FREE boat rides, activities, entertainment, hands-on demonstrations, crafts, and much more is planned.

9/29/12

Queens

7. Atlantic Antic:

At the 38th year of this street festival on Atlantic Avenue, visitors can enjoy food, art, music and other entertainment. There is also an entire block that is totally dedicated to kid-friendly activities (pony rides, storytelling and such).

9/30/12

Brooklyn

8. Medieval Festival at Fort Tyron Park:

(See the site to see a video glimpse of the 2011 festival.)

9/30/12

Manhattan

9. South Street Seaport Children's Day:

This is one of New York's largest (and most anticipated) family festivals. The performers and schedule for this year's fest will be on their site soon.

9/30/12

Manhattan

10. Dutch Delights at Lott House:

Enjoy traditional Dutch food treats – Hot and Cold Cider, Zandkoekjes (Sand Cookies, Friese Dumkes (Frisian Thumbs), and Boterkoek (Butter Biscuits) – at this 1719 farmhouse.

10/6/12

Brooklyn

11. Czech Street Festival on East 73rd Street:

Celebrate the Czech Independence Day at this festival that features live music, a kids' tent, Czech food, a free raffle and more.

10/6/12

Manhattan

12. MJM Culture and Arts Festival at The Morris-Jumel Mansion:

The second annual Culture and Arts Festival (CAFé) will highlight the music, artistry, crafts and food of the Mansion's Washington Heights and neighboring communities.

10/6/12

Manhattan

13. Staten Island Annual Soap Box Derby:

Make your own derby in order to participate!

10/6/12

Staten Island

14. Open House New York:

Held at various locations in the five boroughs, this is a great opportunity to experience sites – that are normally “off-limits” – which have special programs that are open to the public during this weekend.

10/6/12 – 10/7/12

Multiple Boroughs

15. Apple Festival at Queens County Farm Museum:

Kids can learn more about apples and play free children's games at this fun annual event.(The nation's largest apple cobbler will also be baked on site!)

10/7/12

Queens

16. Columbus Day Parade on Fifth Avenue:

Celebrate Italian-American culture at this memorable parade featuring a variety of bands and floats.

10/8/12

Manhattan

17. Madison Square Park's Annual Fall Kids Fest:

Rain or shine, the Madison Square Park Conservancy will celebrate their 10-year anniversary at this festival dedicated to kids. The entire family will enjoy live performances, arts and crafts, a costume parade march around the park and much more.

10/13/12

Manhattan

18. Fall Festival at King Manor Museum:

Celebrate the harvest at this fest that features fall-themed crafts, activities, food and more.

10/13/12

Queens

19. Harmony on the Hudson:

This family festival at Battery Park City's Wagner Park will feature "The Complete Everything Everywhere Dance Circus" performed by Bread & Puppet Theater. Food, jump rope, art activities and more surprises are also on the agenda.

10/14/12

Manhattan

20. Halloween Harvest Festival at Socrates Sculpture Park:

Costume-making with Socrates Sculpture Park artists, live music, art-making and the annual Canine Costume Contest are just some of the planned activities.

10/20/12

Queens

21. Rockaway Fall Festival:

At Bayswater Park, this fest includes a pumpkin patch, free pony rides, a petting zoo and more.

10/21/12

Queens

22. Bats at Belvedere Castle in Central Park:

Recommended for families with kids ages 4 and up, this live animal encounter is a great chance for kids to learn about bats.

10/26/12

Manhattan

23. Halloween: Parade & Pumpkin Sail:

Bring the family (in costumes) and a carved jack-o'-lantern to Central Park's Dana Discovery Center to participate in the twilight pumpkin flotilla. There will also be "spooky" music, crafts, live entertainment and a parade.

10/28/12

Manhattan

24. Day of the Dead – Dia de Muertos 2012:

This tenth annual family celebration at St. Mark's Church in the Bowery offers a variety of events and workshops to celebrate one of Mexico's most important festivals. Mexican food and crafts will be available for purchase throughout the event.

11/1/12 – 11/4/12

Manhattan

25. Lincoln Center Local Final Series Performance:

This performance celebrates Latin culture with classical jazz and modern musical compositions along with ballroom dancers.

11/5/12

Manhattan

(Part I can be found at <http://www.mominthecity.com/wp/50-free-fall-activities-for-kids-in-nyc-part-i/>)

Part II

1. Free Museum Days

(See our “33 Free or Pay What You Wish Museums for NYC Families” post on Mom in the City.)

9/22/10-12/2012

Multiple

2. Saturday Family Program: Reggae! Calypso! Folk Music!

Families will enjoy this interactive West Indian and American song and dance performance with entertainer Conroy Warren at Brooklyn Central Library’s Dweck Center.

10/6/12

Brooklyn

3. 2012 Little Red Lighthouse Festival

Enjoy the 20th Anniversary of Little Red Lighthouse Festival in Fort Washington Park with your family. Celebrating the only remaining lighthouse in Manhattan, this event includes tours of the lighthouse, live performances, arts and crafts, fishing clinics and much more.

10/6/12

Manhattan

4. NewSong Music: Songwriting workshop with James Maddock

Songwriters of all ages can learn from British born singer and bandleader James Maddock.

10/6/12

Manhattan

5. Oktoberfest & Pumpkin Patch

Sunnyside Gardens Park (which is normally closed to non-members) is open to everyone for its sixth annual fest. There will be live musical performances, pumpkin picking and decorating, classic German style foods and raffles are some of the events planned for the festival.

10/6/12

Queens

6. A Clearing in a Forest: Wildlife

In honor of Halloween, biologist Bill Schutt will lead this session at Peter J. Sharp Children’s Glade focused on animals that suck blood – “the real vampires of NYC”. Please note that this program will be canceled if the weather is bad outside. P

10/7/12

Manhattan

7. McGraw-Hill CarnegieKids: Elizabeth Mitchell And You Are My Flower

Little ones (ages three to six) will enjoy this fun, interactive, 45-minute concert by children’s indie-folk music artist Elizabeth Mitchell.

10/10/12

Manhattan

8. Adaptive Sports Carnival

If you have a family member with disabilities, enjoy a day of adaptive sports (track, basketball and goal ball) at this event! Please call David Deas at 718-353-7853 for more information.

10/18/12

Queens

9. Harvest Festival

Bring the entire family to celebrate the fall season at this Harvest Festival on Pier 6. Plans for the day include pumpkin patches, musical entertainment, activities, crafts, fun workshops and much more.

10/20/12

Brooklyn

10. Jefferson Market Garden Children's Harvest Festival 2012

At this fun event, families will receive free kid-size pumpkins as well as the supplies to decorate them on-site. In addition to decorating pumpkins, there will also be entertainment, seasonal autumn crafts, treats and other simple fall pleasures (i.e. kicking leaves and rolling off bales of straw) that aren't common for city families.

10/20/12

Manhattan

11. Woodland Discovery Day

Bring the family for this guided intro to the new Woodlands exhibit. Starting at Charles A. Dana Discovery Center (inside Central Park at 110th Street between Lenox and Fifth Avenues), borrow a North Woods Discovery Kit and go exploring in the nearby North Woods.

10/20/12

Manhattan

12. Pooch Parade

If your family owns a dog, this will be a fun Halloween party for pooches. Prizes will be awarded for best costume, longest tail, and more.

10/20/12

Staten Island

13. Halloween Movie Night

Join the Trinity Church Halloween celebration with free movies for kids and grownups. There will also be an organ demonstration for children.

10/26/12

Manhattan

14. Halloween Weekend – Ghoul Pool

Halloween Pool Party anyone? If so, enjoy this family-friendly one at the Van Cortlandt Park Pool.

10/27/12

Bronx

15. Halloween Haunted Walk & Carnival

Rain or shine, this popular haunted hike leads to Lookout Hill. While very young kids might be too scared, children who come with a parent or guardian should be fine.

10/27/12

Brooklyn

16. Tricks & Treats

The family will enjoy this Halloween party at Le Carrousel in Bryant Park. Justin the Magician will perform illusions and kids will have the chance to ride on the carousel.

10/27/12

Manhattan

17. Creepy Crawly Halloween

Take the family to Prospect Park for some creepy critter (spiders, worms and such) fun. Crafts, live critters and hands-on experiments are on the schedule.

10/28/12

Brooklyn

18. The Friends of Washington Market Park Annual Halloween Costume Parade and Party

Attend this popular annual Halloween Party and Costume Parade. There will be a variety of family friendly events (i.e. Penny in a Haystack, a Bone Dig in the sandbox and a Hay Maze on the lawn) and arts & crafts at the party. In addition, Princess Katie and Racer Steve will perform a kids' concert.

10/28/12

Manhattan

19. The Greenbelt Monster Mash

This event (for families with kids ages 2 and up) is being held at Greenbelt Recreation Center. A haunted house, apple picking, games, arts and crafts and more are all on the day's agenda.

10/30/12

Staten Island

20. Village Halloween Parade

While it can be a little risqué, this parade is something that your kids will probably want to experience at least once! You will enjoy puppets, bands, dancers, artists and other costumed new Yorkers in this annual extravaganza.

10/31/12

Manhattan

21. Jogja HipHop Foundation

See this Indonesian crew promote diversity and pluralism with a combination of music, ancient Javanese poetry and literature at this event.

11/15/12

Manhattan

22. Family Volunteer Day

Meet inside Central Park at Duke Ellington Circle (110th Street and Fifth Avenue) for this families-only volunteer day to beautify Central Park. Tools and gloves will be provided for families with kids ages 4 and up. FYI: BE certain to wear closed-toe shoes.

11/17/12

Manhattan

23. Macy's Parade 2012

Don't miss the 86th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. In addition to the balloons, there will be exciting performance groups, marching bands, artists and more are on this year's lineup.

11/22/12

Manhattan

24. Grand Illumination

Celebrate the holiday season at Staten Island's Conference House at this Annual Grand Illumination ceremony. There will be caroling, homemade holiday cookies, hot mulled cider and more.

12/7/12

Staten Island

25. Hands-on History: Decorate the Manor

Decorate for the winter by bringing greenery inside. This winter decoration class for families will get you on your way.

12/15/12

Queens

(Part II can be found at <http://www.mominthecity.com/wp/50-free-fall-activities-for-kids-in-nyc-part-ii/>)