

# Four Reasons to Opt Outside on Black Friday

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As the holidays roll around, so does the challenge of juggling numerous things – from arranging airport schedules, to cooking the perfect meal and even planning for Black Friday shopping deals. But maybe it is time to take a step back.

For the third year in a row, the company REI (Recreational Equipment, Inc.), has done something unprecedented – they are giving all their employees a paid day off on Black Friday, the busiest shopping day of the year. They have urged consumers to go enjoy themselves outside, and have given suggestions on trails and activities in every state. In 2016, 1.4 million people and 170 organizations chose to #OptOutside. This year REI is releasing a new search engine that will go live Thanksgiving weekend. It will allow users to search for outdoor activities based on a specific location, type of activity or hashtag.

You may be thinking, so why should I opt to be outside when these are the best deals of the season? Consider the following.

1. Many Black Friday deals are no longer just on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Check your local ads and stores to see what and when the sales are. Many stores will have deals happening throughout the months of November and December.

2. Spend time with your family. Thanksgiving is a time to express gratitude. Why not show it by participating in a family activity outside? Go on a hike or play at a local park. These are things that can make lasting memories for your family.

3. You just spent Thanksgiving Day eating. Most families spend the morning cooking, then graze on the food all day. Being physically active the next day will not only make you feel better, but it will help create good habits before your New Year's resolutions.

4. We live in the beautiful state of Utah. Sometimes we forget to really admire the resources we have available in our state. Utah has 45 state parks and five national parks, all offering diverse recreational opportunities. If you do not want to drive to a state or national park, check out recreational opportunities in your county. Visit your local county website to see what is available in your area.

To share your own images and adventures on the search engine, snap a photo, share it on Instagram and use the #OptOutside hashtag. Maybe getting out and having an adventure will inspire others to do the same.

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