

Western Mass

FREE AND EASY IN WESTERN MASS

Free. It's a four-letter word. And didn't Mom always warn you not to use them? Well, when it comes to activities, (with or without young'uns in tow,) "free" is often a word we love to hear. Or even better, read on the sign out front.

So for this blog entry, we're going to point out a goodly handful of things to do in Western Mass that won't cost you a thin dime to enjoy. Some are more seasonal than others, so be sure to check ahead before visiting.

In no particular order of roaming round the Valley, [Yankee Candle Village](#) in Deerfield didn't become the second most-visited attraction in the state for nothing. Filled with fragrant candles and home décor items, (plus animatronic singing figures and a bunch more fun) it's worth a free shopping-optional look-see any time. Not far from Yankee, the [Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center](#) offers twenty-five miles of carriage-width trails; bubbling brooks, spring wildflowers and a mile-long nature trail.

Drop down to Hampshire County and discover the cool vibe of our two classic college towns, [Northampton](#) and [Amherst](#). The former is home of Smith College, the latter includes UMass, Amherst College and Hampshire College. With abundant free art galleries on and off-campus, plus a distinctly bohemian scene in the many coffee shops and eateries, a no-cost walk down the street becomes an adventure in itself.

Greater Springfield is filled with freebies, too! The [Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden](#) can be enjoyed free of charge during museum hours, and just blocks away, the [Connecticut River Walk and Bikeway](#) invites pedestrians and pedalers alike. In nearby Holyoke, the [Dinosaur Tracks Park](#) offers a fascinating opportunity to see hundreds of fossil footprints frozen in stone.

We're really just scratching the surface here. For more free (and low-cost) fun ideas, check out the website of the [Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau](#)!