

Let's Go Fly A Kite

A string of colorful kites (red, yellow, white) flying against a blue sky with white clouds. The kites are arranged in a line, with their long, thin tails trailing behind them. The sky is a vibrant blue with scattered white clouds, creating a bright and cheerful atmosphere.

Seize the breeze with twirls, whorls, and shapes in many colors.



If you're looking for a way to pass time with flying colors—look up. Naturally, kites take our feet outside and lift our gaze. Boundless, unpredictable, and ever so free. Lighter than air, yet grounded in safety. Kite-flying, for sport or play, is a whimsical way to make an afternoon event out of a windy day. So, here's inspiration to get a kite in the clouds and let it paint the wind. All that's required? Raise your sail to the sky and trust the tether. A sense of wonder comes with letting the line out and surrendering to summer's breeze. If you prefer company, we've got a few annual kite festivals worth penciling in. One may even be right in your backyard. Before you know it, you'll be up, up ... and away.

a cross-country field guide to flying with friends

IKEA FRANK MOTS INTERNATIONAL KITE FESTIVAL

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

A must-see: the 600+ kite launch each day of the weekend at noon. Named for a local kite enthusiast, the Frank Mots International Kite Festival closes out summertime with giant-size shapes flying 'round the shores of Lake Michigan.

CALLAWAY KITE FLIGHT

Callaway, Nebraska

Held each Labor Day weekend, this yearly flight is known for once hosting one of the world's largest American flag kites—a whopping 10,000 square feet and 575 pounds. Larger-than-life windsocks may also make appearances!

THE WASHINGTON STATE INTERNATIONAL KITE FESTIVAL

Long Beach, Washington

Spectators to the tune of 150,000 attend this weeklong celebration in Long Beach, Washington, which has been dubbed the kite-flying capital of America. The annual fest has claimed the third full week of August since 1981—and draws famous fliers from around the globe each year.

WRIGHT KITE FESTIVAL

The Outer Banks of North Carolina

Get a sail in the sky (and enjoy free kite lessons!) close to where the Wright brothers took their first successful airplane flight in 1903. Look up to see 100-foot kites dancing in the wind—then explore the local museum marking Wilbur and Orville's aviatorial adventures.

ABC KITE FEST

Austin, Texas

This long-standing tradition in Zilker Park was originally founded as a contest to help spark kids' creativity. This April marked its 97th celebration. The full day of fresh-air fun is filled with kites, contests, concerts, and some of Austin's finest foods at the ready from dawn to dusk. Proceeds benefit local charitable organizations.

LOS ALAMOS KITE FESTIVAL

Los Alamos, New Mexico

Calling all who are young at heart: This traditional spring festival offers complimentary kite-building workshops, plus plenty of time to ooh and aah over intricate shapes and colorful banners filling the Southwest sky. Break a kite? No problem. There's a team of "kite medics" ready to mend any injured sail.

NEWPORT KITE FESTIVAL

Newport, Rhode Island

This summertime festival is held at the southernmost tip of Newport, a landscape known for its sailing history and gusty winds at the mouth of the bay. Everyone is welcome during this iconic weekend of community and more-than-ideal flying conditions.

BONUS

Prefer a wintry backdrop? In February, the Color the Wind Kite Festival in Clear Lake, Iowa, boasts vibrant kites against blue skies and sparkling snow.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LEA JONES / STOCKSY