**Five Ways to Beat the Heat in Ottawa 2023**

When the temperature and humidity are high, our bodies can overheat, especially in the first few days of hot weather while our bodies adjust. Here are some ways to stay cool even if you don’t have air conditioning. Before you head out, check the linked websites for opening dates, locations, fees, and hours of service!

**1.Cool off with water**

Take cool baths and showers as often as needed or soak hands or feet in cool water to lower your body temperature. If you cannot shower or bathe easily, sponge often with cool wet towels. Focus on cooling the back of the neck, under the arms and groin area.

Drink plenty of water and avoid alcohol and caffeine.

Where to go:

* Find a local pool or beach. The [City of Ottawa](https://ottawa.ca/en/recreation-and-parks/swimming) has
* 55 wading pools and 145 splash pads
* 13 indoor pools and 9 outdoor pools
* 3 beaches (Westboro Beach closed in 2023 for redevelopment)
* Visit a local Provincial Park or Conservation Area beach
* [Rideau River Provincial Park](https://www.ontarioparks.com/park/rideauriver) and [Fitzroy Provincial Park](https://www.ontarioparks.com/park/fitzroy) beaches
* [Baxter Conservation Area](https://www.rvca.ca/conservation-areas/fee-required/baxter-ca) beach

**2. Cool off in the shade**

Shade from a tree is cooler than shade from a building that holds heat. Bring a parasol or an umbrella, sunscreen, and water in case you need to wait outdoors in the heat, such as in a lineup.

Where to go:

* Visit City of Ottawa [parks and greenspaces](https://ottawa.ca/en/recreation-and-parks/parks-and-green-space),
* National Capital Commission [urban parks](https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places/parks) and [Greenbelt](https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places/greenbelt) trails and spaces, Gatineau Park [parks, pathways and beaches](https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places/gatineau-park),
* Rideau Valley Conservation Authority [Conservation Areas](https://www.rvca.ca/conservation-areas)
* South Nation Conservation Authority [Alfred Bog and Findlay Creek](https://www.nation.on.ca/recreation/about-recreation) walks
* Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority [Morris Island and Carp River Conservation Areas](https://mvc.on.ca/)

**3. Cool off in an air-conditioned space**

If you have air conditioning, use it during a heat wave to keep your home cool. Heat that builds up in buildings stays for days, even when cooler outdoor temperatures arrive.

Where to go:

* [Ottawa Public Libraries](https://biblioottawalibrary.ca/en/library)
* [City of Ottawa facilities](https://ottawa.ca/en/recreation-and-culture/recreation-and-cultural-facilities#section-39291038-5dcc-41ba-ba58-813d4dfd64bd) including 64 [community centres](https://ottawa.ca/en/recreation-and-parks/recreation-facilities/place-listing?text=&place_facets%5B0%5D=place_type%3A4208&place_facets%5B1%5D=place_type%3A2235001), 8 [seniors centres](https://ottawa.ca/en/recreation-and-parks/recreation-facilities/place-listing?text=&place_facets%5B0%5D=place_type%3A4214) and over 12 [art centres, galleries and exhibition spaces](https://ottawa.ca/en/arts-heritage-and-events/art-centres-galleries-and-exhibition-spaces)
* 7 [National Museums/Gallery](https://ottawatourism.ca/en/ottawa-insider/ottawa-s-seven-national-museums) (check for free admission hours/days)
* Malls
* Movie theatres, restaurants, and other services

4.**Cool off with a fan**

Fans keep you cool by speeding up evaporation of your sweat. Fans do not cool the air; they just move it around. For this reason, use a fan along with windows or doors that are open to the outside or another space with cooler air. Drink lots of fluids so you perspire normally and wear minimal clothing indoors—cotton is a good choice in hot weather.

* Mist or wet your skin or clothing with water to help cool off faster when using a fan.
* Using a fan in a closed room without windows or doors open to the outside or cooler space is less effective.
  + If it’s hotter inside (and cooler outdoors):
    - Open windows when the outdoor air is cooler than the indoor air. Use a fan in or next to a window or door to bring in cooler outside air, especially at night or from a window on the shaded side of the building.
    - If you only have one fan but want cooler outside air to come in to more than one room, open windows in each of the rooms and use the fan to blow air out of a window in another room or hallway – air will be drawn into the home through the other open windows.
    - If a second fan is available, use one to bring air in and the other to blow air out of the home through a different window to help move cooler air throughout the home.
  + If it’s hotter outside (and cooler inside):
    - Close windows and window coverings, especially when they get direct sun. As the temperature drops outside, reopen windows that are no longer receiving direct sunlight. Note that fans may not be enough to keep you cool when the humidity is very high, it is very hot, or your body doesn’t produce enough sweat, and **you may have to seek a cool shelter. Call 2-1-1 or 3-1-1 to seek assistance in finding a cool indoor or outdoor place to go**.

5. **Prepare for a heat wave by planning ahead**

* Sign up for weather forecasts and alerts straight to your phone with WeatherCAN, Environment Canada’s weather app to find out when a heat warning or other extreme weather is forecast for our region. [**Download it now!**](https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-general-tools-resources/weathercan.html)
* Review your workplace health and safety policy for working in hot environments andfind out more about preventing[**heat stress at work**](https://www.ontario.ca/page/managing-heat-stress-work#:~:text=Encourage%20workers%20to%20wear%20suitable%20protective%20clothing&text=wear%20light%20and%20breathable%20summer,clothing%20for%20very%20hot%20environments)
* Take extra breaks from the heat if you are wearing a mask.
* Dress in light, light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing and wear a hat with ventilation holes when in the sun.
* Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day, preferably water, and limit or avoid caffeine and alcohol.
* Breastfeeding babies/children should be fed following the child’s cues. If breastfeeding, keep hydrated to produce a sufficient amount of milk.
* Prepare meals that don’t need to be cooked in your oven and serve foods with high water content like fruits and vegetables.
* Stay connected with people in your community who have a difficult time coping with hot weather and those who live alone and check on them regularly.

**Additional information**

* Check out more resources on the OPH website on [hot weather](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ottawapublichealth.ca%2Fen%2Fpublic-health-topics%2Fextreme-heat-and-humidity.aspx&data=04%7C01%7CMartha.Robinson%40ottawa.ca%7C5a9be6f4504f4539efdc08d91bca3cde%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637571377729936971%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=QwtPq%2FZRs2m9Z6H3FuXzaA0%2F5V9ZHWqe0nEcoVQPADY%3D&reserved=0), [sun safety](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ottawapublichealth.ca%2Fen%2Fpublic-health-topics%2Fsun-safety-and-tanning.aspx&data=04%7C01%7CMartha.Robinson%40ottawa.ca%7C5a9be6f4504f4539efdc08d91bca3cde%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637571377729946967%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=4CpWTg2GA0EYpb8S4gTtpXHLNOEQ60cPK9RdK6rgnZY%3D&reserved=0), and [water safety](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ottawapublichealth.ca%2Fen%2Fpublic-health-topics%2Fwater-safety.aspx&data=04%7C01%7CMartha.Robinson%40ottawa.ca%7C5a9be6f4504f4539efdc08d91bca3cde%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637571377729946967%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=PQ2Ynetbpeccx5xKNehnRwOadTbBWZLIfFKJ58uZCds%3D&reserved=0). The [Parenting in Ottawa](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.parentinginottawa.ca%2Fen%2Findex.aspx&data=04%7C01%7CMartha.Robinson%40ottawa.ca%7C5a9be6f4504f4539efdc08d91bca3cde%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637571377729956962%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=SZvmXVqkoUq7fYOIOy54OXRZbpiGlgh3hKTZmqVJBXw%3D&reserved=0) website has information about [keeping children safe during hot weather](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.parentinginottawa.ca%2Fen%2Fchildren%2FChild-Safety.aspx%23Keeping-children-safe-during-hot-weather-&data=04%7C01%7CMartha.Robinson%40ottawa.ca%7C5a9be6f4504f4539efdc08d91bca3cde%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637571377729956962%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=BbJYuQIl7pUUCf%2B8%2BLB0%2Fs0OMpsAnb32RikwHqBWhPk%3D&reserved=0) and the Ontario Ministry of Labour has information on managing [heat stress in the workplace](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.labour.gov.on.ca%2Fenglish%2Fhs%2Fpubs%2Fgl_heat.php&data=04%7C01%7CMartha.Robinson%40ottawa.ca%7C5a9be6f4504f4539efdc08d91bca3cde%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637571377729966960%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=qXHYRIGx3R3uaMkXA1u59AuHU1YVujCxdQsDsRLlwS8%3D&reserved=0).
* Call the Ottawa Public Health Information Centre at 613-580-6744 (TTY: 613-580-9656) or connect with OPH on [Facebook](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fottawahealth&data=04%7C01%7CMartha.Robinson%40ottawa.ca%7C5a9be6f4504f4539efdc08d91bca3cde%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637571377729966960%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=DdZT1ZImJFR4jT%2F9KLSmrHHG%2BP3xC6tTKComtUzkiJ8%3D&reserved=0), [Twitter](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.twitter.com%2Fottawahealth&data=04%7C01%7CMartha.Robinson%40ottawa.ca%7C5a9be6f4504f4539efdc08d91bca3cde%7Cdfcc033ddf874c6ea1b88eaa73f1b72e%7C0%7C0%7C637571377729976951%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=Tfrnm63eHUrxkj2XOEkJJpz4%2BOTj%2B%2FIom4RV3DQUgvU%3D&reserved=0), and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/ottawahealthsante/).
* For free medical advice from Health Connect Ontario, call 8-1-1 (formerly Telehealth Ontario)
* Medical emergency call 9-1-1
* Social Service resources call 2-1-1
* City of Ottawa services and facilities call 3-1-1