

Life
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Four ways to celebrate the Fourth of July even if local fireworks shows are canceled

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Macy's Fourth of July fireworks in 2019 light up the sky above the Brooklyn Bridge. This year's July Fourth celebration will go forward... (Frank Franklin II / The Associated Press, file) **More** ✓

By [Gemma Alexander](#)

Special to The Seattle Times

Celebrating Independence Day among the restrictions of pandemic prevention will require some creativity this year. The large fireworks shows are all canceled. And there won't be any big barbecues at the park with extended family or big beach parties with friends, either (at least, there shouldn't be). Celebrations may be smaller relative to past years, but you and your family can still have fun on the Fourth.

Virtual fireworks

By now our kids are used to doing just about everything online or by looking at a screen, and fireworks need not be an exception.

NBC is broadcasting [Macy's 4th of July Fireworks](#) from New York City at 8-10 p.m. PT Saturday, July 4; it will also be streamed at [nbc.com](https://www.nbc.com) and on the [NBC app](#). The show will feature performances by John Legend, Black Eyed Peas, Tim McGraw and more.

PBS is broadcasting ["A Capitol Fourth"](#) at 8-9:30 p.m. PT, with coverage of the fireworks at the nation's Capitol and pretaped concert performances from Patti

LaBelle, John Fogerty and others. It will also stream on PBS's [Facebook page](#), [YouTube channel](#) and [website](#).

If you would rather watch something from closer to home, KING TV will [re-broadcast previous Seafair Summer 4th fireworks shows](#) starting at 10 p.m.

In addition, the Port Angeles Regional Chamber of Commerce will livestream on its [Facebook page](#) a performance by local band Black Diamond Junction at 8 p.m., followed by a fireworks show at 10 p.m.

Also, [Seattle's fireworks shows from past years](#) can be found on YouTube.

Backyard barbecue

Gov. Jay Inslee's [Phase 2 reopening guidelines](#) permit gatherings of up to five people from outside your household. That's hardly a big party, but it's likely to feel like a crowd after months of social distancing. Whether you invite five guests or keep it in the family, a backyard barbecue is one Independence Day tradition that you can keep.

Drag the speakers outside and blast music while you fire up the grill, make a bunch of traditional side dishes, and set the kids to making red, white and blue decorations. Play soccer, badminton or, weather permitting, let the kids run through the sprinkler, and the day might end up feeling like, well, the Fourth of July.

Physical fun

If your family likes to get active — or is just really stir crazy — try a virtual 5K. Carnation's in-person event has transformed into the [Virtual Run for the Pies 5K](#). There are 30 divisions, so every family member can compete with a chance to win. Run your own socially-distant route and submit your documented time between July 2 and July 4. The winner of each division gets a Remlinger Farms Pie.

Of course, you can always [DIY an all-family run or bike ride](#) with medals and bibs purchased online or with whatever prizes are most likely to motivate the athletes in your family.

Make a difference

Learn about the origin of Black Lives Matter by watching Northwest Film Forum's [virtual screening](#) of "Whose Streets?" Then spend some time on the Fourth making protest signs (for your next socially-distant march or your front lawn).

Have a civic letter-writing party where you teach your kids how to write to their representatives about the issues they care about. Or make it more personal by crafting homemade cards for long-distance grandparents or seniors [isolated by COVID-19](#).

Although many volunteer opportunities have minimum age requirements, [United Way](#) can help you find family-friendly options like collecting diapers and other supplies, making home deliveries and sewing masks.

Gemma Alexander is a Seattle-based freelance writer; gemmaalexander.com.