

Freedom's Feast **LABOR DAY**

On-line resources to get the most out of your AMERICAN holiday celebrations.



LABOR DAY PICNIC FUN

Have your picnic and celebration too!

It's hard to say goodbye to summer. Happily, the Labor Day picnics and cookouts we love make the transition from summer to fall a little easier. Try these suggestions to help with your celebration.



Holiday Background

Labor Day was established to honor our nation's working men and women and the contributions their labor makes to our well-being. We take unions, workplace regulations, child labor laws, and other protections that make America a safe and fair place to work for granted. But it wasn't always that way and won't remain so unless we remember what others did for us and choose the future we want for ourselves and our children.

Use a Labor Day Theme

Consider the career diversity and job history of everyone attending. Ask guests to send in jobs they've had with their RSVP's. Create a display board listing all jobs on separate cards. List guest names on another set of cards and invite guests to try to match them up.

Go to the National Archives' [The Way We Worked Exhibit](#) and print out photos from different eras of America's labor history. Put in temporary frames to decorate tables, tape to walls, attach to trees, posts and other outdoor upright surfaces. *Celebrate your own family's work history.* Go back as far as you are able on your family tree and list all the occupations held by various family members. Share your family "work tree" with guests so they will want to make their own.

Play Games

Organize old fashioned lawn games for the children (and adults) including egg tosses, three legged races, potato carries, sack races (substitute old pillow cases), wheelbarrow races, cracker whistling contests. Include "worker dress-up race": have participants run from start line to marked destination with sealed costume bags or backpacks. At one end they open bags and dress in outfit of worker (think baseball player, banker, chef, rock musician, plumber, carpenter, doctor—any profession that has recognizable props and dress). Runners return to start line using props in a creative way.

Guess Who I Am

Ask participants to come dressed with one or two props that represent:

Version #1 *your favorite job ever* (for children: what you plan to be)

Version #2 *the job you've always dreamed of having* (for children, this may be different from what you plan to be; it may be a job that some don't think they can have but would still love to do)

Version #3 *the job my ancestor had*. Go back 1-2 generations representing jobs that may no longer exist. Kids will get a kick out of the history lesson and adults will enjoy the memories this exercise evokes.

Everybody gets to guess. Adults and kids love this game!



Do a Brief Ceremony

Print out copies or have participants use smart phones to go to www.freedomseast.us/labor-day and scroll to *Choose a Ceremony*. *Use the quick and easy Freedom's Feast Labor Day ceremony to learn about the history of labor day and gain a greater appreciation of how Americans view work*. Taking a few minutes to stop and think about the purpose of the holiday gives us a chance to share values and stories we care about with our children and grandchildren. Use the ceremony before eating or at another natural break in your celebration.

Sing

Enjoy the **Freedom's Feast Labor Sing-along** featuring songs and specially selected Labor Day readings. Find it in *Celebrate Your Way*.

Special Activities

Look at the Freedom's Feast Create a Keepsake for Labor Day.

Set up a crafts table for people to make their own Labor day work signs, inspired by the history of trade work signs.

Print out a few copies of *What Did You Do At Work Today* to give participants some great conversation starters about the work they do. Be sure to honor any elders present. They have important memories and stories to share with us. Ask them to share a story about their first job or the job that taught them their most lasting lesson.

Recruit Helpers

Don't do all the work yourself. It's more fun when everyone contributes to the celebration. www.perfectpotluck.com organizes helpers for the meal. Or have everyone bring their own picnic lunch or dinner and provide the dessert. Ask someone who enjoys games and coaching to oversee the games. Recruit a teacher or performer to lead a ceremony or sing along.



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