



Tips for beating the crowds at RMNP

Summer and fall are beautiful times in the park, but they're also extremely crowded. Some tips for fighting the hordes:

- RMNP runs an excellent free shuttle system in the peak season. Riding it is way less stressful than fighting traffic, and it's better for the environment. Use it to hike from one trailhead to another without backtracking to your car.
- Arrive super early. Most parking areas fill by 8 a.m. in the busy season.
- If possible, visit on a week day. Avoid long weekends and holidays.
- If the Glacier Gorge parking lot is full, continue to the much larger lot at Bear Lake. Then hike a 0.5 mi. connector trail to join the trail to Alberta Falls, Mills Lake, and The Loch.
- Most visitors won't get out of day hike range, so consider backpacking to a remote wilderness campsite. It's worth it even for just one night! Check the park website for rules and permitting info.
- Hike the less-congested trails in the western part of the park. You can reach this area by driving over Trail Ridge Road or from the park's western entrance near Grand Lake.
- For a really rugged backcountry adventure, hike or backpack into the park from the Poudre Canyon to the north. This option takes some extra drive time and planning. If you need to pick up permits, there's a small RMNP backcountry office located at the Colorado State University Mountain Campus.