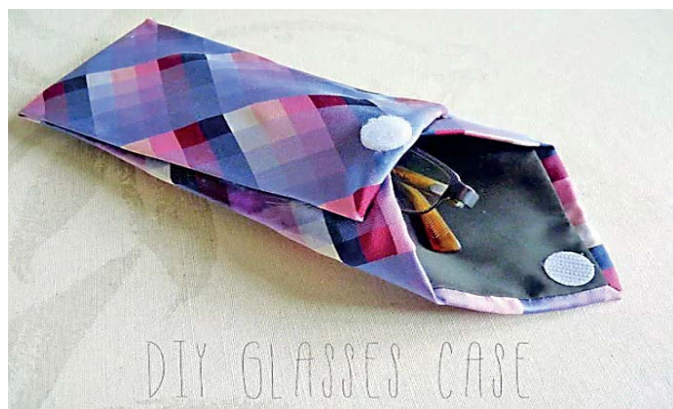


A hobby helps to relieve stress by keeping you engaged in something you enjoy. It can help you lead an active social life and create a bond with others.

Times NIE reports on a few interesting ideas for this holiday break – they can be enjoyed as a group or solo activity

Get a Hobby

UPCYCLE IS KEY



1 Crafting can be therapeutic, and upcycling means turning the trash that's sitting in your house into treasure. To get started, look through your house for items that have no current use. Instead of tossing them away, browse the internet for cute DIYs you can make with things in your recycling bin.



MAKE COOKING FUN FOR YOURSELF

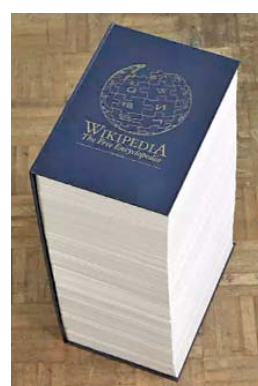
2 It's simple math – the more you enjoy cooking, the better your food will be. To get started, try simple recipes that make processes simple for you. There are many providers that deliver fresh ingredients and recipes for the meals of your choice to your home, and you can choose how many people you'll be cooking for (2 persons or family meals). If you know the kind of dish you want to make, online chefs will give you an instant list of recipes to choose from, complete with ratings and nutritional info.



Photo: GETTY IMAGES

BECOME A WIKIPEDIA EDITOR

7 History buffs, grammar gurus and people who have vast knowledge in niche areas are just the kinds of people who are ideal for editing Wikipedia. Anyone on the Internet can become a Wikipedia editor. The best part? You don't need to register. Any person can edit any unprotected page, no matter how big or small of an edit they make. By editing the



site, you'll be contributing to making Wikipedia what it is.

To get started, take a look at Wikipedia's Help: Editing page. There, you'll find guidelines on how to make edits, the kind of tone to use, adding references, and more.

Once you comb through Wikipedia pages you're interested in and you want to make edits, you can submit edit requests and get to fixing!

JOIN A COMMUNITY SPORTS LEAGUE



8 As an adult, it can be difficult to get all of your friends together for weekly ball games. But when you join a community sports league you'll get the thrill of playing without worry-

ing about not having enough people for a whole game. Pick a sport you love playing for fun, and find your local league. Bonus: You'll meet a bunch of new potential friends.

To get started, de-

cide which sport you want to play on a regular basis. Then look at the community leagues in your area to find the right fit for you. If you're intimidated by joining a league alone, ask a friend to join with you.

PAINT SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL

3 Paint a mug. Paint a canvas. Paint anything. The best part? You can make painting a big, messy, daylong event, or you can paint small details while



you listen to music. It's so much fun. To get started, familiarise yourself with brush charts and find the brushes you want to work with, based on the kind of painting you want to do. Acrylic paints are ideal for beginners because they dry fast and can be used either straight from the tube or thinned out with water. Next, grab the canvas size of your choice and go ahead.

HOBBIES BUILD SKILLS FOR THEIR FUTURE

One of the reasons hobbies are so important is because of their impact on overall development. Attention to task, fine and gross motor skills, sharing, imagination play, and planning are just a few of the lessons that we learn from a hobby. In this digital day and age, wouldn't we rather have fun with a hobby than spend time on electronics or sitting in one place for a long time?

TAKE UP HIKING



4 Hiking with friends (or solo) doesn't have to mean that you're a mountain climber. Tackle local parks that have hiking trails with your desired exertion level, or look into more challenging paths to make a day of it. Either way, you'll get some quality time with friends (and yourself!) and your body – and mind – will thank you. To get started, get yourself a well-fitting, sturdy pair of sneakers or hiking shoes, depending on how involved you want to be.

START A CLUB WITH YOUR FRIENDS

6 Whether it's a book club, a writing club, or anything else, getting a group of friends together regularly for something besides a party can be so much fun. To start, talk to a few of your friends and get a sense of what everyone would be interested in. Once you've decided on an activity, decide on the fre-



quency of meetings and block out your time.

For online resources take a look at your neighbourhood guide, a programme that simplifies scheduling problems for groups of people, to find meeting times that work with everyone.

TRY YOUR HAND AT CALLIGRAPHY

9 There's a deep satisfaction that comes from being able to scrawl incredibly beautiful lettering. Plus, it can come in handy when you're sending out invitations, cards, or letters.

To get started, you'll need a nib (the pointed metal piece of the utensil), a straight pen, black ink, some tracing paper, a prac-



tice grid, and any other kind of paper you want to practice with before you move on to heavier cardstock.

Read through Julie Blanner's 'How To Learn Calligraphy' blog series or take an introductory calligraphy class through Skillshare. Then, follow @Seblester on Instagram for inspiring calligraphy videos.

CHANNEL INNER PEACE WITH MEDITATION

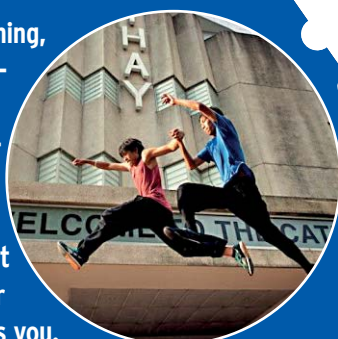


11 Meditation is shown to improve concentration, will power, and boost your immune system. Plus, it can decrease stress, depression, and anxiety, among other things. Basically, it's an excellent hobby to adopt for anyone who needs a little zen. To get started, set aside time for yourself to meditate. No amount of time is too small, so don't get overwhelmed by thinking that you need to devote an hour a day to meditation. Next, get into a calming environment to quiet your mind.

WHAT'S NEW

Bounce off the walls with the powers of parkour

If Marvel's recent movies have done anything, they have inspired us to pick up the gravity-defying moves of Parkour (a sport which combines gymnastics with acrobatics). Watch Captain America and his friend Bucky scale walls and perform impossible feats. Don't try these stunts at home without adult supervision. Enroll for professional parkour classes if it interests you.

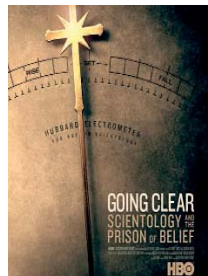


BECOME A DOCUMENTARY BUFF

5 Chances are if you have an interest in just about anything from religion to crime to women in the media (and anything in between), there's a documentary on the subject.

Once you start watching solid, compelling stories, your interests will expand and you'll become more curious about the world around you.

To get started, figure out what it is you're interested in, and search for a documentary on the topic.



ENROLL IN ONLINE CLASSES



10 Learning a new language or skill on your own can be daunting. Before you get it into your head, look into taking a free class online. If you have a larger goal in mind, enroll in credited classes to work towards a certification or degree. The options are endless! To get started, take a look at Skillshare,

which is a platform for learning for creators. Take classes in anything from DIY crafts to drawing faces to writing personal essays. For smaller online lessons you may be interested in, search YouTube for tutorials.

For more online resources, head to the Documentaries section on Netflix. For recommendations on which ones are worth watching, read up the internet.

Learn a whole new language with your hands

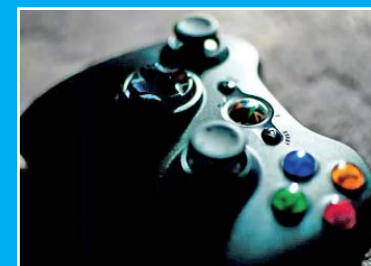
So you've mastered the Singlish Coxford dictionary. It's a sign to start learning something new: Singapore Sign Language. Get your most talkative friends onboard for Singapore Association for the Deaf's "no-voice" lessons. You not only get to rest your ears, but a chance to connect with a community that shows love through action, not speech.



BECOME A GAMER

Go old school with chess, get deep into the world of online gaming, or invest in a gaming system. Added bonus: studies have shown that casual gaming leads to reduced stress.

To get started, focus on one specific game that interests you and



learn the rules. Play chess against a computer online at SparkChess.com (this way, you don't need to rely on a friend to learn the game too). Check out the iTunes Popular chart for games you can play right on your smartphone.

For more online resources, go to the Subreddit /r/gaming for user recommendations on online games.