

At Umstead Park you can —

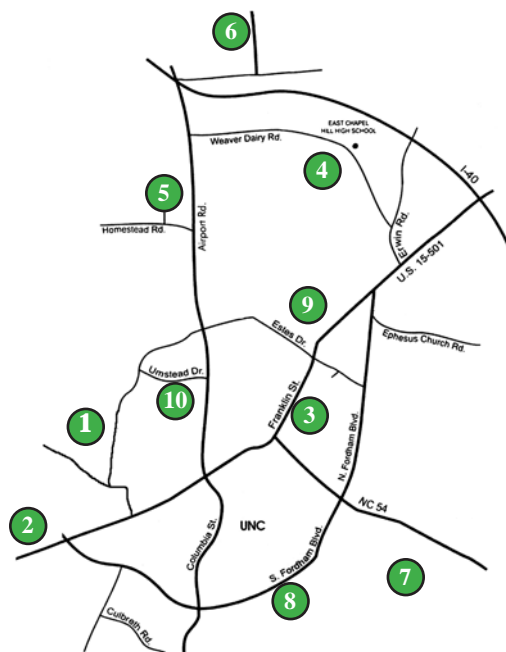
- » climb on rocks
- » look for wildflowers
- » build a dam across a creek
- » follow a trail up and down the hillside
- » toss leaves off a bridge and watch them float downstream

Usually when children visit the playground at Umstead Park, they are irresistably drawn to the creek just south of the playground. Take advantage of this natural inclination to explore the creek. Try dropping leaves into the current on the upstream side of a bridge and watch them come out on the other side. Or find a shallow place where the current is weak so children can dip their toes in the water. On another visit scramble around the rock outcroppings just south of the creek, building up eventually to a hike around the steep hillside.



Natural Areas of Chapel Hill

- 1 **Adams Tract**
Wilson Park, 101 Williams Street, Carrboro
- 2 **Henry Anderson Community Park**
302 Highway 54 West, Carrboro
- 3 **Battle Park**
Country Club Road
- 4 **Cedar Falls Park**
501 Weaver Dairy Road (across from East Chapel Hill High School)
- 5 **Homestead Park**
100 Northern Park Drive
- 6 **Johnston Mill Nature Preserve**
Turkey Farm Road
- 7 **Mason Farm Biological Reserve**
Finley Golf Course Road
- 8 **NC Botanical Garden**
Fordham Boulevard at Old Mason Farm Road
- 9 **Pritchard Park**
100 Library Drive (surrounding Chapel Hill Public Library)
- 10 **Umstead Park**
399 Umstead Drive



Explore . . .

UMSTEAD PARK



A Natural Area of Chapel Hill

One of 10 natural areas in the Chapel Hill area profiled by Boy Scouts of Troop 9 for Daniel Ripperton's Eagle Scout Service Project to encourage children to spend more time in the natural world.

Umstead Park

Straddling Bolin Creek as it flows between the Northside and Bolin Heights neighborhoods, Umstead Park offers a woodland setting near the center of Chapel Hill. In the grassy level area adjacent to the parking lot, there is a large playground structure, along with swings, volleyball courts, and picnic facilities. Two bridges cross the creek, one near the parking lot and the other at the western end of the park, just downstream from the place where Tanyard Branch flows into Bolin Creek. Hardwood trees line the creek on both sides, then continue up the steep hill which rises from the creek on the side opposite the playground. Beeches and oaks predominate, but there are some sycamore and ironwood trees near the creek and a few hickory and pines trees scattered about. The wooded area supports a good variety of woodland wildflowers.

Located on Umstead Drive between Estes Drive Extension and MLK Boulevard.

Parking available in parking lot.

Bus routes N, JN stop at the park.

Drinking water and restrooms available except in winter.

Park hours are dawn to dusk.

Dogs on leash permitted.

Administered by Town of Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Department.

Bolin Creek

A medium-sized creek flows through the center of Umstead Park. Though fairly shallow, with a depth of about one foot in most parts, the current is swift and rocks abound. In a few places the bank is shallow enough to allow easy access to the water. While this is a great place for older children to play in the water, building dams and so on, be mindful that all play by children in and around water should be closely supervised by responsible adults. For younger children the slower moving waters of Tanyard Branch, just upstream from the bridge near the picnic shelter, afford a gentler water play experience.



Rocks

Several outcroppings of rocks are visible from the trail along the south side of the creek, with large rocks as well as small. There are many places to sit and rest as well as opportunities for children to scramble around on the rocks, under the watchful eye of their caregivers.



Trails

A half mile trail encircles the heavily wooded slope on the south side of the creek. Cross either bridge to access the trail. The portion of the trail along the creek is broad and level, making it a good first hike for young children. The rest of the trail rambles around the hillside, ascending steeply with lots of protruding tree roots and sets of steps. Keep your eye out for wildflowers in bloom along this trail or the connecting Tanyard Branch Trail. Using the Tanyard Branch Trail you can follow Tanyard Branch upstream from where it flows into Bolin Creek to get to the Northside neighborhood.

