



# Unusual Pastimes

## Introduction

This resource is intended as a directory of unusual pastimes that might be used to create unique characters (either contemporary or historical). The accompanying definitions give a brief overview, but to really understand what each pastime involves, an internet search should give a much more detailed description.

### Niche hobbies

Adult spelling bees

Aquascaping = the craft of landscaping underwater scenes with rocks, aquatic plants and driftwood etc.

Bagpipes

Birdhouse painting

Bullfighting

Candle making

Card stacking = creating structures (towers etc.) by stacking cards

Cheese rolling = the 'sport' of chasing a rolling cheese down a steep hill

Cloud watching = observing the clouds and perhaps creating pictures or stories from their various shapes

Competitive dog grooming

Competitive duck herding

Conlanging = making up a language

Escapology = the practice of escaping from some sort of restraint or imprisonment (handcuffs, coffins, cages etc.)

Extreme ironing = the 'sport' of taking ironing boards to unusual or extreme locations and ironing items of clothing while you are there

Fantasy map making = drawing maps of made-up places

Ferret racing

Fire eating

Flugelhorn

Fluid art = a technique for creating art by pouring paint onto a canvas to create abstract images

Food-eating competitions

Foraging

Fossil hunting

Genealogy = the study or research of family histories

Geocaching = an outdoor treasure hunt using GPS devices

Ghost hunting

Historical reenactment

Ice sculpting

Insect taxidermy = the craft of preserving insects through pinning and drying

Juggling

Kintsugi = the Japanese art of repairing broken ornaments and pottery with urushi lacquer mixed with powdered gold

Metal detecting

News bombing = trying to appear in the background of 'on location' news reports

Polo

Quidditch = a sport derived from the Harry Potter book series which is played using broomsticks, balls and hoops

Quilling = craft technique that involves rolling, shaping and gluing strips of paper to create interesting designs

Recumbent cycling = cycling using bikes that put a rider in a reclining position rather than an upright one

Sandcastle building

Shadow puppetry = creation of theatre using silhouette figures

Soap carving = carving soap to create sculptures and images

Streaking = running naked through a public space or event

Tarot

Topiary = trimming hedges or trees into sculptures

Toy voyaging = sending cuddly toys off on holiday and seeing how far the toy might travel

Trainspotting

Train surfing = riding on the exterior of a moving train

Tree shaping

Unicycling

Upcycling

Urban exploration = the exploration of abandoned buildings (also known as 'Urbex')

Whittling = carving shapes or objects out of wood

Witchcraft

Worm charming = the 'sport' of enticing worms out of the earth

Yarn bombing = street art that involves decorating street furniture (post boxes, bollards etc.) with knitted designs

### **Historical hobbies**

Bear-baiting

Carriage driving

Cemetery picnics = having a picnic in a cemetery

Charades

Conkers

Crystal gazing

Falconry

Fern collecting

Going to the morgue

Hair jewellery

Hunting

Marbles

Mummy-unwrapping party

Seaweed scrapbooking

Spinning tops

Taxidermy

### **Things that get collected**

Accordions

Action figures

Air fresheners

Alarm clocks

Anchors

Apothecary jars

Ashtrays

Autographs

Badges

Barometers

Bars of soap  
Baseball cards  
Bells  
Belt buckles  
Blueprints  
Bookmarks  
Books  
Boxing gloves  
Brochures  
Butterfly specimens  
Buttons  
Calculators  
Calendars  
Cameras  
Candlesticks  
China  
Chocolate wrappers  
Cigarette cases  
Clothes hangers  
Coasters  
Coins  
Coke merchandise  
Comic books  
Compasses  
Corkscrews  
Cuckoo clocks  
Dentistry tools  
Dice  
Dinosaur bones  
Disney memorabilia  
Dolls  
Doorknobs  
Dried flowers  
Exotic fish

Feathers  
Figurines  
First editions  
Flags  
Fountain pens  
Garden gnomes  
Glassware  
Greeting cards  
Guitar picks  
Hair  
Handcuffs  
Hats  
Ice skates  
Keys  
Knives  
Lego  
Letter openers  
Licence plates  
Lightbulbs  
Lottery tickets  
Lunchboxes  
Magazines  
Magnets  
Magnifying glasses  
Maps  
Marbles  
Matchboxes  
Memorabilia  
Microscopes  
Mirrors  
Model cars  
Model trains  
Movie posters  
Movie props

Nails  
Newspapers  
Ouija boards  
Paperweights  
Pencils  
Pencil sharpeners  
Perfume bottles  
Picture frames  
Pin badges  
Pokémon cards  
Postcards  
Puppets  
Purses  
Radios  
Recipe books  
Remote controls  
Rubber ducks  
Saddles  
Safes  
Salt and pepper shakers  
Seashells  
Sewing machines  
Shoes  
Shot glasses  
Signs  
Skateboards  
Snow globes  
Spoons  
Stamps  
Suitcases  
Sunglasses  
Swords  
Tattoos  
Teddy bears

Teeth

Telescopes

Thimbles

Ties

Toasters

Toby jugs

Toothbrushes

Toys

Typewriters

Vinyl records

Wallets

Watches

Watering cans

Wedding dresses

Whisky

Wigs

Wine

Wristbands



# ENDNOTE

## Bio:

This resource has been created by Matt Kendrick. Matt is a writer, editor and teacher based in the East Midlands, UK. His short fiction has been widely published both online and in print. He has been placed or listed in various writing competitions including Bath, Flash 500, the Oxford Flash Fiction Prize, Reflex and Leicester Writes. His work has been included on the Biffy 50 list for 2019-20, in Best Microfiction 2021, Best Small Fictions 2022 and the Wigleaf Top 50 list for 2022. He has also been nominated for Best of the Net and the Pushcart Prize.

## Other Resources:

For links to other free resources, please visit my website: <https://www.mattkendrick.co.uk/resources>

## Services and Courses:

Information about my [courses](#) and [editorial services](#) can also be found on my website.



Support me on Ko-fi

As a workshop facilitator, I am committed to opening up writing opportunities to people from all backgrounds based on ability to write rather than ability to pay. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to finance pay-what-you-can and free spots exclusively from my own pocket. So, if you've downloaded this resource and are in a position to support narrowing the access gap to creative writing opportunities, I would be very grateful if you would consider buying me a virtual coffee\*.

*\*Any money donated to my [Ko-fi page](#) will be used to fund free and reduced-price places for my Write Beyond The Lightbulb courses, as well as to provide free editing and mentoring opportunities for low-income writers, and to support other opportunities that seek to level the playing field.*