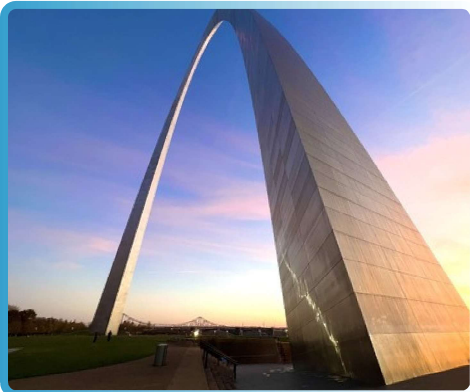
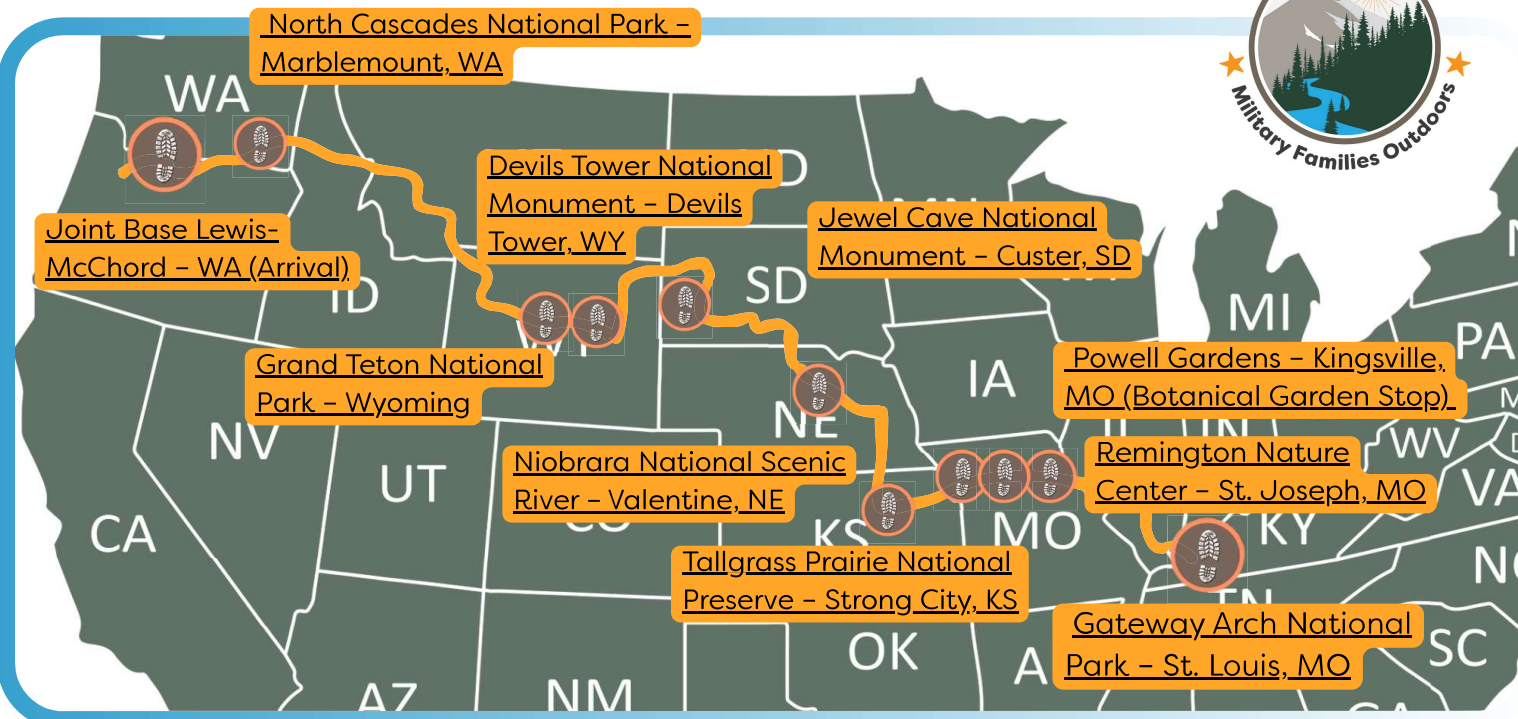


Fort Campbell, KY ↔ Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA

A cross-country PCS doesn't have to feel like a sprint, especially when you weave in nature-rich stops where your family can reset, learn, and explore. From prairie preserves to mountain peaks, each route is packed with peaceful pauses and wide-open skies.



📍 Gateway Arch National Park – St. Louis, MO

Iconic stainless steel arch, riverfront walks, and sweeping views of the Mississippi make this national park a memorable stop. Ride to the top for breathtaking vistas or explore museum exhibits below ground.



Family Tip: Pack a picnic and enjoy the grassy grounds while the kids stretch their legs.

📍 Remington Nature Center – St. Joseph, MO

Take a short detour to Remington Nature Center. Enjoy riverfront trails, local wildlife exhibits, and hands-on history displays. Kids can watch fish in the huge indoor aquarium, explore native gardens, or stroll the path along the Missouri River.



Family Tip: This site participates in Blue Star Museums, so military families enjoy free admission.



Powell Gardens – Kingsville, MO (Botanical Garden Stop)

Just off the highway east of Kansas City, this expansive botanical garden is a beautiful spot to recharge. Kids love the fountains and fairy-like landscapes, while grown-ups enjoy a serene wander.



Family Tip: This site also participates in [Blue Star Museums](#), so military families enjoy free admission.



Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve – Strong City, KS

Let the wind rush through the grass while your family hikes short trails or joins a ranger walk through one of the last stretches of tallgrass prairie in America. Take a moment to close your eyes, feel the breeze, and ground yourself in the quiet rhythm of the pristine plains.

Niobrara National Scenic River – Valentine, NE

Whether you spend an hour or an afternoon, the Niobrara offers refreshing waterfalls, scenic overlooks, and swimming spots ideal for a summer PCS. Stretch your legs at Smith Falls State Park and let the kids splash while you soak in a few mindful breaths by the water.



Pro Tip: Active duty military, Veteran, and Gold Star families enjoy special benefits, including a free America The Beautiful Pass, which can be obtained at most national parks that collect fees using a military ID.



Jewel Cave National Monument – Custer, SD

Step into the cool, mysterious depths of one of the longest caves in the world. While the full tours require reservations, there are also above-ground trails with beautiful Black Hills views. Take a short nature walk, or just breathe deeply and enjoy the mountain air.

Family Tip: While you're in the area, check out kid-friendly activities at nearby [Custer State Park](#) and [Mount Rushmore](#) and book your tickets ahead to make the most of your visit.

Devils Tower National Monument – Devils Tower, WY

This awe-inspiring geologic formation rises above the surrounding forests and grasslands like something out of a storybook. Walk the easy paved trail around the base and invite a quiet moment of wonder. It's a powerful place for a picnic, prayer, or a stretch break under the stars.



Grand Teton National Park – Wyoming

Towering peaks, shimmering alpine lakes, and wide-open meadows make this park a breathtaking highlight of any road trip. Stop for a family picnic with the Tetons as your backdrop, rent a canoe on Jackson Lake, or take an easy hike to spot moose and wildflowers. Even a short drive through the park delivers wow-worthy views that invite you to slow down and savor the moment together.



Family Tip: Visit one of the scenic overlooks at sunrise or sunset and capture a family photo.

North Cascades National Park – Marblemount, WA

Before reaching base, stop to explore this less-traveled Washington gem. With alpine lakes, glacier views, and peaceful trails, North Cascades is a wonderful final deep breath before unpacking. Even a quick stroll near the visitor center offers a beautiful welcome to your new home state.



Joint Base Lewis-McChord – WA (Arrival)

What an exciting place to call home! The PNW is rich with natural wonder. Be sure to mark your calendars now and set aside time for your family to explore new nearby nature escapes like [Mount Rainier](#) or [Olympic National Park](#).

Don't forget to share your PCS journey with [#MilitaryFamiliesOutdoors](#), and visit [MilitaryFamiliesOutdoors.com](#) for more ideas and wellness stops to make your move a little less stressful—and a lot more memorable.

