



# Winter wonder

Winter is a quiet time in the forest, as some animals are hibernating during the short days and colder temperatures. Did you know that many trees shut down and have a rest too? However, there is still lots to see and do, so have a go at these activities to make the most of the forest in winter.

**These activities are aimed at 4 to 11-year-olds but can be adapted for any age.**

## You will need:

- Winter clothing
- Small pot
- Water
- Ribbons

## Setting the scene

### Sensory wander

As you travel through the forest, take a few minutes to move silently and tune into each of your different senses in turn.

Look carefully, what can you spot deep in the forest? Smell natural things that appeal to you - wet leaves, tree bark and damp soil. Then see how they each feel between your fingers.

Stay still for a minute, close your eyes and listen carefully.

- Which sights, sounds, smells or sensations capture your attention?



**Touch**



**Smell**



**Look**



**Listen**

### Dark discover

Go out into the forest in the dark - don't forget your torch!



**Listen**

- What can you hear?
- Is there anything moving in the trees?
- Can you hear owls calling?



## Get creative



### Dressing up

We need lots of layers of clothing to keep us warm in winter, but the trees and plants don't. What would a tree look like if it were to dress up?

- **Choose a tree or branch. Lend it your coat, gloves, scarf and hat then take a photo.**
- **What will you call it?**

### Natural decorations

There are many natural objects that are really pretty and you will often find them in people's homes. Find some special pieces of wood, pine cones or fir cones.

- **Take them home and arrange them to make a winter table decoration.**
- **You could add coloured ribbons, wool or something sparkly.**

### Conifer potions



Conifer needles often have quite a strong smell. See if you can collect different conifer needles that have fallen or blown down in the wind.

- **Tear them and crush them with a stick in a little pot.**
- **Mix them together with a little bit of water to make a fresh-smelling winter potion.**



## Who is awake in winter?

### Tree explorer

During winter, deciduous trees lose their leaves to save energy and to survive the cold months. Conifers, however, keep most of their needle-shaped leaves over the winter. Their long, thin shape means they can cope with the wind and many of them have a built-in resin to stop them from freezing.

- **Find three trees that keep their leaves through winter (evergreen).**
- **Can you identify them?**

**Be careful, please don't touch as trees can be prickly and some have poisonous berries.**



## Seeking shelter

In winter, many animals hide away somewhere warm and cosy. Build a den that would keep a woodland creature warm, dry and safe during the cold months in the forest.

- **What can you add to create warmth and to keep the wind and rain out?**

## Wildlife trackers

Some animals hibernate in the winter, but others will still be out looking for food. Look for animal footprints in the snow or mud. Do you know who made the tracks?

- **Make your own footprints or use natural objects to leave a trail for your family to follow.**

## Get active

### Keep warm

It's important to keep warm during winter by putting on lots of layers and by moving around.

**To make sure you don't stay still for too long can you...**

**Hug the biggest tree**

**High-5 a branch that still has some leaves or needles on it**

**Dance around the shortest tree**

**Tickle the bendiest tree**

**Can you make up some of your own challenges?**

### Early risers

Get up before the sun and go into the forest at dawn for an adventure.

- **How does it feel to be there?**
- **Is there anyone else around?**
- **What sights and sounds do you notice?**

### Earn your stamp

To earn your stamp, fill in the worksheet or take photos and tell us about the activities, including which was your favourite. Email a copy of your work, along with your name, age and the place you visited, to us at [learning.english@forestryengland.uk](mailto:learning.english@forestryengland.uk).





# Worksheet

## Sensory wander

What have you discovered about winter through your senses?

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## Tree explorer

Which evergreen trees did you find? Tick the box for any you have seen and write in your own.



☐ Holly



☐ Fir



☐ Scots pine



☐ Yew



☐ Cypress



☐ Juniper



☐ Spruce



☐ Hemlock

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# Worksheet



## Wildlife trackers

Draw a picture or tell us about any tracks that you found. Did you make a trail for other people to follow?

Which was your favourite activity and why?

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