



# When I was young...

A family guide to a summer outdoors



Edited by Jonathan Elder

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While every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, Ordnance Survey do not guarantee the accuracy of any images, advice or notes in the publication.

While exploring the outdoors, please keep in mind your own safety and that of others. Follow the Countryside Code, obey local signs and assess the suitability of any activity for the participants, location and weather. Minimise the impact on the area by avoiding damage to both natural and man-made features and taking all rubbish home.

For far more ideas and suggestions for outdoor activities for all ages, see:

**getoutside.uk**

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Dedicated to all the amazing GetOutside Champions. Thanks for the inspiration!

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# Introduction

## Maps are for hardcore hikers, right?

*They are for big long walks that take hours and hours?*

in streams or finding lakes for wild swims. Maps are for discovering the places you never thought you'd visit and sharing the adventures you have there with family and friends.

But we've got much more than that. We've got the apps, safety & tracking tools, ideas for new memories and new experiences as well as the best sights and cheap days out. These fantastic tools can help you to live a healthy lifestyle, connecting your mind and body, whilst having fun at the same time. And it all starts here.

This book is your free 'cut out & keep' guide for fun adventures without breaking the bank. It will help you have days out with the family all summer wherever you are in the UK, teaching you that adventures can be big or small. Open the first page to begin your adventure.

**Think again!** Maps are the gateway to every adventure – they give you the freedom to find new places and explore awesome new areas. Maps are for running along beautiful beaches and investigating crazy castles, for discovering the secrets of forests and wandering through woodlands. Maps are for dipping your toes

*Adventures start with a map!*



## Why do we love getting outside?

Did you know that getting outside can be fun, exciting and super beneficial to your mental and physical health? Well it can!

There are hundreds of reasons to #GetOutside and the benefits are never-ending. We want the nation to be fit and active and spending as little as 15 minutes outside a day can really contribute to a healthy-active lifestyle.

Reasons why we love getting outside:

- It clears the mind
- It burns energy and calories
- It gives you fresh air which clears the lungs of nasty pollutants and toxins
- It allows you to spend time with family and friends
- It's good for the soul
- It encourages new adventures
- It allows you to discover new places
- It gives you opportunities to see new wildlife



This book was created with the help of the OS GetOutside Champions who have written some awesome 'how-to' guides which will help you enjoy the outdoors this summer. Find them at [GetOutside - Beginner's Guides](#).

Let us know what you love about getting outside by tagging us in your social media posts. If you're not sure yet... you'll know by the end of this book!

Facebook: [@osmapping](#)

Twitter: [@osleisure](#)

Instagram: [@ordnancesurvey](#)

Hashtags: [#getoutside](#) [#osmapping](#) [#ordnancesurvey](#)

# Make your own fairy trail

Making a fairy trail for your little ones couldn't be easier, all you need is green space - a park, an area of woodland or forest near you. Your fairy trail can take place anywhere whether it's a National Park (like the New Forest) or a small wood. Find your nearest woodland using OS Maps.



## To create a fairy trail

1. Find a woodland for your fairy trail walk. This can be near your house, near somewhere you're going on holiday this summer, or a little bit further afield if you're willing to drive a little.
2. Plan a short walk through the woods. You can find routes that already exist using OS Maps or plan your own using the app planning tool. Your walk can be as long or as short as you want it to be - but bear in mind the age of your child.
3. As you're on your walk, encourage your child to collect a selection of pretty looking leaves and flowers as these will come in handy later on. Be sure to get them to only pick flowers and leaves that have fallen on the floor rather than fresh ones to minimise damage to the natural environment.

4. On your walk keep a look out for interesting shaped trees which could be good for your child's imaginary fairy nests. Get the kids to look for ones with hollowed out trunks with little nooks and crannies and try and get their imagination going. Are the fairies hiding away in there? How many fairies would fit in these tiny holes? Encourage them away from just picking the first one you see, make sure you get them to scout out multiple trees and pick the best one.
5. Once they've picked their perfect fairy nest, get them to leave some biodegradable glitter in one. Biodegradable glitter can be purchased from [ecostardust.com](http://ecostardust.com). Be sure not to use normal glitter as this can be harmful to wildlife who may think it's food.
6. Get your child to be imaginative by making a fairy den. Help them find some moss and small twigs to use them as building materials. Stack the twigs in a tepee-like shape and fill in the gaps with moss for shelter. Use some water if you need to merge it together slightly. Pack it in tightly to build a wall and use dry leave to fill in any gaps.
7. Use the flowers and leaves your child collected earlier and encourage them to decorate their fairy den. Get them to place the leaves on top for extra shelter and flowers in a circle around the den.
8. Finish your walk and leave the fairies to find their new-found homes. The more imagination you can include in this walk the better. For an added bit of adventure you could print out a fairy story to read whilst you are walking through the woods.

## Where you can find wild fairies

Here's the top spots throughout the UK for fairy trails - although they can be done anywhere:

- Great Wood, Somerset
- Savernake Forest, Wiltshire
- Black Water Arboretum, New forest, Hampshire
- Dovedale stepping stones, Peak District
- Haldon Forest Park, Devon
- Woodland experience fairy trail, Loch Lomond – North Ballochruin Farm, Balfour Station
- Cardinham woods, Cornwall
- Bracknell Forest, Surrey



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# Travel Snooker

This game uses the rules of snooker to make car journeys a little more interesting – using cars instead of snooker balls.

The idea is each player takes it in turns to spot cars using the colours of the cars to score points in the same way that you would play snooker.

So, a **red** car must be spotted first, followed by a **colour** (black for seven points, pink for six, blue for five, brown for four, green for three, yellow for two), followed by another red, and so on. And, of course, the same car cannot be spotted twice.

You can set a time limit to the game or play the first to reach 147 points.  
(or whatever number you suggest)

- Red = 1
- Yellow = 2
- Green = 3
- Brown = 4
- Blue = 5
- Pink = 6
- Black = 7

# Why visiting a PYO farm is the best day out

One of my favourite childhood memories will always be picking fruit at the local 'Pick Your Own' farm. I say picking, what I actually remember most is the fantastic taste of the sweet, juicy strawberries and hiding with my brother between the giant rows of corn while my mother did most of the hard work. Filling baskets full of produce to take home and freeze, or turn into jars of wonderfully sticky and fragrant jam.



PYO farms started to pop up in the UK between the 1950's and 1970's as small farms diversified in response to the dramatic rise of supermarket shopping and imports coming in from abroad. Selling at the gate ensured their own survival while offering a lovely family activity which would become a treasured memory for many. As well as the beautiful soft fruits that they are famous for, many PYO farms also offer a fabulous range of vegetables, orchard fruits, flowers, pumpkins and Christmas trees, so it is worth checking your local one out.

## 10 Reasons to visit a Pick Your Own farm:

1. Children can run free and enjoy the rural surroundings
2. Kids will learn where their fruit and vegetables come from.
3. You can pick when the produce is at its best and perfectly ripe
4. Picking yourself means the freshest produce that hasn't be handled by anyone else
5. What you pick will be cheaper and far better quality than if you buy it in shops

6. Gives you the opportunity to pick the large quantities needed for jam making
7. Gives you access to varieties of fruit such as Loganberries, Tayberries, Gooseberries and Currants which often don't make it into the shops.
8. It's a great way to reduce food miles and support your local farmers
9. You can avoid all the packaging and chemicals involved with packing that the supermarkets use to keep their produce fresh
10. And most important of all, it is an experience your family will always have fond memories of.

## How to pick fruit

### Strawberries:

- Part the leaves with your hands to look for hidden berries ready for picking.
- Select firm, red berries. A little white is perfectly OK as the flavour tends to be a bit sharper and will last longer in the fridge.
- Grasp the stem just above the berry and sever the stem with pressure from your thumbnail. Pull with a slight twisting motion.
- Strawberries will keep refrigerated for about 3-4 days.
- To freeze - cut off the stems and green tops, quarter and freeze. They should keep for about 2-3 months although they may lose their shape once defrosted.



### Raspberries:

The best fruit is usually hiding under the leaves. Tying a basket around your

waist will leave your other hand free to brush the leaves aside while picking.

- Gently grasp the berry with your fingers and thumb, and tug gently.
- If it is ripe, it will come off easily in your hand, leaving the centre part attached to the stem.
- Raspberries freeze well and keep both flavour and shape.



### Gooseberries:

- Gooseberries are a sturdy fruit so you can pick them into any sized container.
- Wear gloves while you pick to protect your hands from the thorns.
- Gooseberries freeze really well. Don't bother to 'top and tail' the end of the fruit before freezing; it's easier to do so when they're frozen.



### Currants:

- Harvest whole trusses, rather than individual berries. They're ready to pick when they've coloured up but are still firm and shiny.
- Pick currants on a dry day, as wet currants will quickly go mouldy.
- Store unwashed bunches of currants in the fridge for up to five days. Blackcurrants, redcurrants and whitecurrants all freeze well.
- To prepare currants, strip them from the stalks by pushing a fork down the length of each bunch.

## Make your own strawberry jam.

- 1 kg strawberries
- 1 kg jam sugar (which has added pectin) or 1kg granulated sugar plus the juice of one lemon.



Place the fruit, sugar and lemon juice (if using) into a large heavy-based saucepan.

Heat gently to allow the sugar to dissolve. Once dissolved, bring to the boil and cook for 10-15 minutes until the jam has reached its setting point.

Turn off the heat and leave to stand for 10 minutes, before carefully pouring into warm, sterilised jars.

To test if you have reached the setting point: Place a teaspoon of jam onto a cold saucer and leave to cool. Push a finger gently through the jam – if the surface wrinkles then the setting point has been reached.

This recipe will make 4-5 jars of jam and raspberries can be substituted for the strawberries.

# Hug a Tree!

Find a tree and give it a hug! What does it feel like?  
All hold hands around a tree, can you complete the circle? Find a tree & guess how many people you would need to completely hug the tree, then have a go!

Can you find a tree that's too big to hug?



# Outdoor play: now and then

Think back to your childhood...the games that shaped younger years and created lasting memories. Remember what it was like before computers, Xbox's and phones? You played outside right? We've thrown it back to nostalgic games to see if we can get the kids of today playing some traditional ones. Some of the activities on this page don't necessarily mean putting down the phone or iPad, but incorporating them into outdoor activities to create a modern version of your childhood memories.

## Nostalgic activities that are still super fun

- **Hide and seek**- Hide and seek is still just as much fun as it ever was and your kids don't need any technology to have a good time. Simply get one of the group to count to 100 while the others hide before trying to find them. Your kids may have played this in the house before but try and encourage them to move the game outside and get the little ones to hide in slightly more wild and exciting places. Let's get them in touch with nature!
- **Piggy in the middle** – We're sure you'll agree, piggy in the middle is a classic. All they need is two friends or siblings, a ball and one person to be the piggy in the middle. Throw the ball between the two non-piggy's and let the piggy try and intercept and grab the ball. Choose a nice big area to play in and enjoy being in the outdoors.
- **Climb a tree** – I'm sure you'll have fond memories of climbing trees – some of you may well have lived up there! It can be so much fun and allows the kids to see things from a new perspective. Pick a nice low tree to help build their confidence and make sure it has big branches to make it super easy. Make sure you supervise your kids at all times to avoid any injuries. Fallen or broken tree trunks and logs in parks and woods are also good to climb on and are a little bit safer. Find your nearest woodland using OS Maps.



- **Jump rope** – Grab a long skipping rope and head into the garden or open space. Get the kids to take it in turns to jump in the middle and see how many rounds they can get in. Try this rhyme and encourage them to jump to it...can they get to the end?

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, turn around,  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, touch the ground,  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, show your shoe,  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, that will do!

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, go upstairs,  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, say your prayers,  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, turn out the lights,  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, say good-night!

- **Jacks** – You may know this game as Jacks or Knucklebones - a fun game with ancient origin. Jacks is a simple game that can be played outside, the kids will love it. It's super easy to do with very little resources as, if you don't have real jacks, you can use five small objects from around the house or from the shed. Use things like small plastic toys, building blocks and bean bags. It works best with a small group of two or more. Get them to throw the jacks (or small objects) down on a flat surface like a pavement or decking area and bounce the ball with their right hand. While the ball is in the air, they can pick up one jack with their left hand. From then on, they can pick up one more each time the ball is bounced until they get to five. If they miss, it's the other players turn.
- **Marbles** – We're sure that you remember playing this one. An old classic and an easy game to play with the kids, this will be great fun in the outdoors. Get a piece of chalk and draw a circle as big as you fancy on the ground. Get a slightly bigger marble as your shooter marble and get between five and ten smaller marbles - place them inside the circle. Get the kids to sit outside the circle and place your shooter marble between your thumb and forefinger. Fire the shooter marble into the ring and try to knock as many marbles out the ring as possible. If any other marbles are knocked out then pick them up and take another go, if not then leave the shooter marble in the circle until the next go.

## Outdoor activities with a modern twist

As we said, not all activities have to be classic and old fashioned. We've modified a couple of activities, loved by parents and grandparents alike to give them a modern twist. Check them out.

### THE OLD WAY

#### Landmark identifying

We're sure many mums and dads, grandmas and grandads out there remember going out on family walks with a good old paper map. A great skill was identifying where you were by using the contours and map symbols.

#### Hopscotch

Traditionally played by heading out with a piece of chalk and marking out a hopscotch path before jumping up and down it to a rhyme.

#### Treasure hunt

Before technology, kids had to be more inventive with their imagination and often made treasure hunts outside – traditionally writing clues to each other and hiding things in secret places for each other to find.

### ...and with a modern twist

#### Landmark identifying

Although knowing how to map read is still a really useful skill to have, there's a fun new way to identify where you are and points of interest.

Use the OS Maps app to identify peaks, points of interest and landmarks. Use the augmented reality feature and hold it up to the sky to view what's around.

This will get kids interested in map reading and locating without having to put down their beloved screens.

#### Hopscotch

Hopscotch is still a great game. A fun way to modernise it is to take a phone or tablet outside and use the timers in the clock function. Encourage the kids to time themselves and their friends by using the stop clock and see who can get the quickest time. Get them to keep practicing until they improve

#### Treasure hunt

You can still do a fantastic treasure hunt but nowadays it can be more virtual. Apps like Pokemon Go, Huntzz and Snatch use augmented reality to create a virtual treasure hunt. Find hidden parcels, points of interest and lost characters using the phone or ipad and children can enjoy being outside at the same time.

## Playing tag!

Play tag, but this time give everyone an object they must find and bring back to base.

It could be a pinecone, acorn, leaf or anything else from the local area.

Obviously, this game needs to be adapted to suit the ages of the children & boundaries need to be set, so everyone remains safe. You can also play this as a team, especially if you have very young children.



# Harvesting the woodland

## Common stinging nettle – a super food!

- It contains Vitamin A, C, iron, potassium, manganese and calcium in higher concentrations than most cultivated plants! In its peak it contains 25% protein.
- In Austria it is used for treatment of disorders of the kidney and urinary tract, gastrointestinal tract, locomotor system, skin, cardiovascular system, flu, rheumatism and gout.
- It can be used to make herbal tea and a variety of recipes to make polenta, pesto, purées and soup
- Other uses include producing string, and dye.



## Ground ivy

- Can be used to treat sciatica, kidney disorders, indigestion, coughs and tuberculosis.
- Use very young leaves as greens for soups or older leaves for herbal teas and medicinal uses.
- Used by the Saxons in the brewing of beer, for flavour, clarification and as a preservative.



## Wood sorrel

- All parts of the plant are edible. Can be eaten raw or cooked all year round.
- Very high in Vitamin C.
- Relieves indigestion, and can produce an appetite.
- Has a cooling effect – useful in treating fevers.



## Hedge garlic

- Has been used for cooking for almost 6000 years.
- Leaves give off a strong garlic odour when crushed, and have a mild garlic and mustard taste.
- Chopped leaves can be used as flavouring in salads and sauces (pesto) and as a stuffing in pork.
- The roots taste of Horseradish.



## Hawthorn

- Best known for its Haws in Autumn.
- Haws can be easily made into a fruit leather, jams, jellies and syrups.
- Used to promote the health of the circulatory system.



# Wildlife safari

From Amazing Family Adventures (National Trust books) by Jen & Sim Benson

## Parks and gardens



You don't need to venture far in order to have an amazing adventure when it comes to wildlife. It's there in every garden, park, grassy verge and leafy tree, and is often easy and rewarding to find, even for very small children. Get them to gently turn over a brick or a stone and see how many different creatures are making their homes underneath, from woodlice and worms to mites and millipedes. Pre-schoolers in particular are endlessly fascinated by these hidden worlds; so easily accessible, yet so different to their own home.



Parks and gardens – from the impressive landscaped ones to your very own back yard – are great places for wildlife watching. We keep a list of all the birds and butterflies we spot on adventures from our back door, either in the garden or in our local area. The variety is amazing and it's always exciting to add a new species to the ever-growing list.

Garden birds are a great place to

start for younger children. Hang a bird feeder from a nearby tree; stuff an apple with seeds; put out a bird bath or a bird table and watch birds flock to your garden. Even a small patch of ground with the right things in it can be a haven for birds. If you have a bird table, set up a smartphone next to some food and video your feathered visitors: an easy way for kids to make a great little wildlife film of their own.

Butterflies are another exciting and rewarding creature that you'll find in gardens and local parks. Find the sorts of flowers they collect nectar from – buddleia is a common garden flower that's often covered with butterflies. Wildflowers will attract species such as speckled wood, gatekeeper and meadow brown, whereas peacocks, red admirals, small tortoiseshells and commas love stinging nettles. Bees will head for



many of the same flowers too; if you have some garden to spare it's a great idea to plant some pollinator-friendly species and you'll be able to watch them visiting regularly to collect nectar. Many fruit, vegetable and herb plants are great for pollinators – and for us too.

Fortunately, many National Trust properties have glorious gardens filled with plants perfect for attracting insects. Great Chalfield in Wiltshire is one of our favourites, with its large borders filled with a dazzling display of colourful flowers and rows of lavender that buzz with bees in the summer.

### Fun Facts

- There are around 250 species of bee in the UK: 24 species of bumblebee; around 225 species of solitary bee; and just a single honeybee species
- Blue tits and great tits deliver around 10,000 caterpillars to their young each season
- A blue tit weighs about the same as a pound coin

## Woodland and forest



There's nothing like spending the day in the woods. Research – both scientific and anecdotal – has found that trees are good for all of us; even simply being able to see trees makes us happier. Woods and forests are a ready-made playground for children (and adults) of any age: climbing, playing with sticks, kicking through the leaves, balancing on logs, making dens – the list of potential activities is endless and unstructured, engaging creativity and inventiveness as well as physicality. There's so much to see and do and all in an environment that we find at once both exciting and calming.

A wildlife safari is a great way to get kids looking around them and naming the things that they see. It's empowering to know the different plants and creatures and even quite young children enjoy getting to grips with interesting-sounding names.

Woods are great places to spot birds, and they're often quite different from those found in gardens and urban areas. Start by listening to the birdsong, trying to identify some different sounds.

Look up into the leafy canopy and you might see jays, thrushes and blackbirds; further up still are the circling birds of prey such as buzzards and hawks; search the tree trunks for woodpeckers, tree creepers and nuthatches; robins love to perch on fallen trees and dippers love woodland streams.

See how many you can spot. The RSPB's online Bird Identifier is a great resource if you see any more unusual species.



Woodland is also literally crawling with insects. Gently lift up a piece of dead wood and see what you can see underneath – woodlice and beetles perhaps. You might hear a dragonfly’s distinctive rattling buzz as it ‘hawks’ past or find a delicate spider’s web strung between branches.

On a warm summer day you’ll spot butterflies: look for pretty brown speckled woods, colourful peacocks or even rare white admirals.

And then there are the mammals that make the forest their home: mice rustling through the leaves; acrobatic squirrels jumping from branch to branch; red and roe deer; bats; badgers; and – if you’re very lucky – perhaps even a snoozing dormouse.



## Fun facts

- 12% of the UK is covered with trees, a level that has been steadily increasing over the past few decades
- Trees create perfect habitats for hundreds of creatures, even when the tree is no longer alive

## Top tips

- Use a variety of methods to record your finds: drawings, photos, sound and video
- Wildlife spotting is a great activity for afternoons once everyone's had plenty of time to run around. Sit in one spot and be as quiet as you can... What can you see?
- Don't worry if you can't name every species you see – take a photo or a description and look it up when you get home
- Many National Trust places hold organised nature walks where you can learn from an expert as you go

## Lakes and ponds

Lakes and ponds make fascinating habitats for all kinds of wildlife. Because they're often 'closed' bodies of water they evolve into an ecosystem where each creature and plant plays its own important part. Interestingly, fish are often bad for ponds as they eat the water plants that would otherwise provide shelter for other creatures and disturb the mud at the bottom of the pond, creating cloudy water in which other species struggle to survive.

Areas around lakes and ponds are often havens for wildlife, providing drinking



water for animals such as deer and foxes and homes for the likes of ducks, herons and kingfishers, and it's always worth approaching slowly and quietly so you can spot any creatures in, on or around the water before they spot you. In early spring look out for spawn; frogspawn is laid in clumps whereas toads lay theirs in long chains. As the year progresses the tiny black dots will enlarge and become tadpoles, eventually turning into adult toads and frogs.

Pond dipping is a great way to take a closer look at some of the creatures living below the surface. You'll need a net to dip with and a shallow tray filled with water for observing your catch. Here are some tips for dipping success:

- Once you're at the water's edge, have a good look in to see where the best places to dip are.
- Carefully lower your net into the water and move it in a slow figure-of-eight motion.
- Gently lift the net out and place it inside-out in your tray filled with water.
- Have a really good look at your findings – you could use a magnifying glass. How many of the creatures on the spotting sheet can you see?
- Take photos or make notes on any creatures you find that you can't identify – you can always look them up when you get home.

Common Frog by Guido Gerding



## Top tips

To go pond dipping you'll need a net. These are available in shops or you can make your own using a wire coat hanger and a muslin or an old pair of tights

Combine this wildlife safari with a 'circumnavigate a lake' adventure for twice the fun!



## Make a daisy chain

1. Find some daisies in the garden. Pick ones with nice thick stems, and pick them with as much stem as possible
2. Make a small cut with your thumb or a plastic knife lengthways down the stem. Make sure it does not go all the way to the end
3. Get another daisy and thread the stem end through the cut until it reaches the flower head.
4. Make a cut in the stem of the second daisy and thread through a third. Carry on to make a daisy chain as long as you want
5. To make a loop, add an especially big daisy, make the cut in its stem and carefully push the head of the daisy on the opposite end through the cut

# Wildlife spotting

Wildlife spotting is something that's super easy to do and can keep your kids engaged and entertained throughout the whole of the summer. It doesn't have to be completed all in one go, but it's a good activity to keep the kids distracted when you're on walks.

If you're out on the bikes, make sure you get them to keep their eyes peeled. Wildlife spotting is a great way of encouraging them to go out on multiple walks over the summer holidays to see which ones they can tick off. If you see them more than once then that's even better! Happy wildlife spotting!

## Wood mouse

Wood mice live in a variety of habitats – some of which you are likely to come across when out and about. Keep your eyes peeled in woodland, open areas of grassland and even in your own back garden. You can recognise the wood mouse by its white under-belly.



## Magpie

Did you know that a group of magpies looking for partners is called a magpie Parliament? They come from the bird species of crows? They are found all across the UK on farmland on moors, although they are rarer in Scotland.

When you see a magpie say “hello Mr Magpie, where's your Mrs” for good luck.

## Woodlouse

Woodlice are possibly one of the easiest creatures to find so this could be one of the first you tick off your list. Simply look under any rock or log and they're likely to be under there! They mostly eat dead plants, so are an important part of any woods cleaning crew.

You may know the woodlouse by a different name, as there are a lot of local names for them across the country.



## Swan

Swans are found in lakes and ponds and can be easily seen in most lakes and parks. Look out for the males who are slightly larger and have a more swollen bill than the females.

There's several types of swan including the Black swan and Mute swan.

## Hares

Hares look like rabbits but are much larger, with longer ears and can run a lot faster (up to 45mph). Look out for the most common type of hare - the Brown Hare when walking through farm land or open fields.



## Barn Owls

Owls are quite rare to see as their amazingly sensitive hearing means that they hunt at night – most commonly for field voles. You could head out on a night walk to increase your chances of ticking this one off your list. Look out for their golden colour and impressive wingspan of 850mm.



## Deer

Deer are most often found in parks and woodland and the best time to see a deer is either at dusk or getting up nice and early and taking a walk through a woodland.

Deer are very sensitive to sound so the quieter you are, the more chance you have of seeing one.





## The great spotted woodpecker

The great spotted woodpecker can be recognised by the red feathers which lie underneath its tail and the white shoulder. If you want to attract great spotted woodpeckers to your garden, try hanging a peanut feeder – a partial favourite of theirs.

They nest in holes in trees. If you listen carefully you may be able to hear the distinctive drumming noise as they hammer their beaks on a tree.



## Slow worm

Slow worms are awesome as they look very like snakes, but are actually lizards with no legs. You'll often find them sliding around somewhere in your garden. They eat a crazy amount of slugs and insects – having the ability to eat as many as 20 worms in 20 minutes. Recognise their age by their colours – the younger are more golden in colour and they become more brown in colour as they get older.

They are completely harmless, and can be picked up (gently!), especially on a colder day when they will be slower.



## Grey Heron

Grey Herons are quite rare but can sometimes be seen near bodies of water, standing still waiting to catch fish.

If you are lucky enough to see one in flight then you can recognise them by their long legs held out behind them. They also sometimes wander into parks and gardens so keep your eyes peeled when out and about.

## Squirrel

Squirrels are also super easy to spot in the garden or any parkland and the best place to look is up in the trees! You'll often find them running up and down the trunk of trees or at the base of the trunk looking for food.

Red squirrels are smaller and redder than the larger Grey squirrel. You'll only find Red squirrels in a few places such as Scotland or the Isle of Wight.



## Duck

Ducks are easy to spot – they'll likely to be in your local pond or nearest stream. Try and get to kids to distinguish between the male and female Mallards Duck – males with a green head and females with a brown head and body.

## Fungi

The best place to find fungi is in woodland and forest where it's slightly damp. They will often grow from the ground or dead wood. Some last only a few days, while others can grow for several years.

Incorporate finding the fungi into your fairy trail and imagine fairies sat on them! See how many different types of fungi you can spot.



## Blackbird

The blackbird is the most common bird in the UK with an estimated population of 12 million. You'll easily be able to tick this one off your list, just look in your back garden or a park – you'll often find them singing in trees.

## Frog

Frogs like ponds, but can also be found in damp muddy spots like under hedges or in piles of leaves.

In spring, frogs lay their distinctive frogspawn in ponds and pools. Keep coming back to see it hatch into tadpoles, then the tadpoles to grow legs and eventually change into young froglets.

This is a Marsh Frog.





## Song Thrush

You'll be able to spot a thrush by its speckled underbelly and hear its beautiful song. The Thrush's song is easily recognisable as it is repetitive in nature.

They nest in relatively hidden places such as behind ivy or hidden in the branches of trees.



## Grasshopper

You guessed it...grasshoppers live in the grass! You'll often hear grasshoppers before you see them. Listen for a low buzzing and humming along hedge lines and grass verges to locate them before trying to spot one.

They tend to stop when they sense you approach, so stay still and wait for them to start again.



## Butterfly

Butterflies are all around and are often seen resting on flowers in the garden. Butterflies love buddleia plants, so have a look out for them and you're likely to be able to tick this one off your list.

This is the Peacock butterfly, one of the more spectacular examples, which can be found across most of the country.

## Dragonfly

There are 23 different species of dragonfly living in the UK and they appear in almost every kind of habitat.

You are likely to see them darting across ponds, rivers and streams but they also hover around grassland.

August is the best month to find dragonflies as they like the hot summer weather!



## Bat

You could see a bat anywhere, they live in the countryside as well as towns and cities alike.

The best time to see them is on a warm summer evening at dusk where they fly across fields and along hedge lines. You could also try and go out at dawn when they may be hunting for food.

There are around eighteen species of bat in the UK - this is a Pipistrelle, one of the more commonly seen species.

For more on how to spot bats, read on...

# Go on a bat walk



*Pipistrelle Bat*

Bats are unlike anything else – literally – being the only mammal that can fly. These curious creatures are fascinating to watch; venturing out just before darkness falls to witness their acrobatic displays as they chase insects for food is always a great adventure. In the past, bats roosted in trees and caves, but increasingly they can be found in the eaves of old buildings, barns, tunnels, churches and bridges. Bats are protected by law, so it's illegal to disturb their roosts in any way. Many National Trust places hold bat walks: group excursions to well-known bat habitats led by local bat experts.



We joined an organised bat walk on a visit to Malham Tarn Estate in the Yorkshire Dales. It was exciting leaving the campsite just as it was getting dark and meeting the throng of waiting families, ready to discover and learn all about the local resident bats. After a general talk on the UK's bat population we walked up a long, rocky track, the kids running around together, enjoying being out in the warm evening air. We arrived at the roost – an old barn high on the estate,

not far from Malham Tarn – just before the bats started to fly. Each of us was equipped with a bat detector: a small black box with a dial on it to change the frequency, set to detect the common pipistrelles we would be seeing. For the first ten minutes or so we stood around excitedly, pointing our detectors up at the eaves from which we'd been told the bats would emerge. Eventually, a bat crawled out, still sleepy and slow-moving. After a moment it launched itself into the night sky and flew in fast, high circles above our heads, catching its feast of flying insects. A few emerged more slowly, but, before long, there were hundreds popping in and out from the rafters, fluttering all around us, making the detectors click rapidly, almost wherever we pointed them.

There are organised bat walks at National Trust properties all over the country, throughout the summer months – search online for a comprehensive list or check in your local National Trust newsletter to find one near you. They're great for younger children, who seem to find everything hugely exciting before falling fast asleep! Due to their locations some may not be suitable for buggies (although they're perfect if you have a child-carrier), so check when you book.

### Fascinating facts

- Bats are the only mammals that can fly
- There are 18 different species of bat in the UK
- The common pipistrelle bat weighs an average of just 5g – that's about the same as a 20p piece!

### Top tips

- Bats are most active at night and don't like cold weather. The best time to spot them is a summer evening, just before it gets dark, near to water or woodland
- Different bat species communicate using different sounds – or frequencies. Using a bat detector device enables you to tell the difference
- Many National Trust places hold organised bat walks where you can go to spot bats with a team of experts – an exciting adventure for all age groups

# Fly a kite

Getting your first kite and learning to fly it is a rite of passage for many children. It's exhilarating and hugely enjoyable once you've mastered the basics. As kids we regularly headed out to a local hill on a dry windy day, traipsed to the top and let fly our assortment of kites, often those we'd made from tissue paper and dowelling. It's a tradition we're now enjoying passing on to our own kids – and it's still just as exciting!



There are many different kites available to buy – and it's fun to experiment and make your own too. Different types of kite fly best in different conditions. In general, diamond and delta kites fly best in light winds, hexagon kites in moderate winds and box kites in stronger winds. Always fly kites in wide, open spaces and be aware of what's around you at all times, including people, trees, cars, animals, horse riders, water, cliff edges and electricity cables. The Kite Society ([thekitesociety.org.uk](http://thekitesociety.org.uk)) has lots of useful information and guidance for those wanting to get into kite flying.

Here are our top tips for successful kite flying.

## Choose your kite

Choose a kite to match the wind conditions and the person flying the kite. A big, powerful kite may well be too much to handle for a smaller child, whereas a teenager will probably love a kite that can do stunts and fly in stronger winds.

## Choose your day

Choose a clear, dry day with a gentle breeze. If you're heading for a hill you'll find the wind often picks up the higher you go. Never fly kites in an electrical storm.

## Have a go ... and have fun!



Kite flying works best with one person holding the handle and line and another person holding the kite in the air with about 10m of taught line between the two. The person flying the kite should have their back to the wind. When the person holding the kite lets go, gradually unravel the line to around 20m as the kite rises into the air. Then it's a matter of pulling the line to make the kite go higher or releasing to make it drop.

The National Trust holds kite flying festivals, which are a great way to get inspired about the world of kite flying. There are professional displays, family activities, local artists and plenty of entertainment for all – and of

course a perfect opportunity to fly your own kite. The biggest UK kite festival is probably Bristol's International Kite Festival (not National Trust), held in August each year on Durdham Downs, a stunning green space close to the dramatic Avon Gorge on the northern edge of the city.

### Fun facts

- It's thought kites were invented in China in the fifth century BC. Early kites were made from silk and bamboo
- Kites are great fun to fly, but they've also been used for human flight, by the military, for science and meteorology, photography, generating power, aerodynamics experiments, and much more



*A Cody carrier kite from 1905 - image from Imperial War Museum*

# Home made perfume

You can easily make your own perfume at home! Try different flowers and leaves to see what scents you can make!

1. Collect some flowers or scented leaves. If you are in a park, make sure you only collect fallen ones
2. Get a jar with a lid, and put your collection in. If you crush them slightly it helps the scent escape
3. Pour on boiling water and put the lid on
4. After a few days, strain or sieve out the bits to create your very own perfume!
5. While it may smell nice, don't try drinking it. It may start to go mouldy after a short while, so use it quickly

# Teaching younger children about maps

Understanding how places relate to each other is a vital skill. Dr. Julie Dillemath, a children's author and spatial cognition expert says

“when you look at maps, you are building a mental map. Mental maps are really important because it gives you freedom to navigate where you want to go”.

Having a good spatial awareness helps in many other aspects of education, from maths to creativity. She says that children as young as three can enjoy understanding simple maps.

Here's a quick guide for parents keen to help younger children to understand maps.

## Start out small

Start out with a simple map of the room or floor of your home. Obviously with younger children written labels are not very helpful, so think about drawing objects from a childrens' view

Once you have a basic map, see if they can recognise objects and add items that are missing to slowly increase the complexity of the map.



Next, hide an object, such as a favourite toy in the room, and mark it on the map (such as a big pirate style 'X'). See if they can locate their toy using the map - you can give hints like 'it's near the window' if they are struggling.

### Drawing their own maps

Once your child is confident relating the real world to a map, encourage them to try and draw their own. Fictional maps can be great fun and good to practice with.

Encourage them to take pencils and paper and map to a real-life place, such as the garden, a local play-park or similar. Show them how you can use different colours to represent different things, such as green for grass and grey for pavements.

### Helping children use maps

Start encouraging your children to use maps. You can draw your route to the shops, park, nursery or school on a street map and encourage them to follow along as you walk (this works best on foot as the slower pace and ease of stopping are easier than in the car). While they may not be able to read the road names, they can still practice 'left' and 'right' or just 'that way' based on the map.



If you live in London, the tube map is a great resource for slightly older children as the simplified style makes it easy to ask questions like ‘how many more stops’ and ‘what line do we need to be on’.

### Maps in games

Children who like Lego, Minecraft or similar building toys and games can be encouraged to build their maps with these. Try building a copy of home or school to start with. You can then continue to expand, moving out to build the surrounding areas too.

Many games for slightly older children include maps as part of the game itself, which can be used to teach navigation skills in a way that will keep them engaged. See if you can set a challenge to plan a route from one point to another, or identify a feature shown on the map.



# Your giant summer fun checklist!

See how many you can check off!

Follow a fairy trail

Go on a woodland walk

Play marbles

Have a go at jump rope

Play jacks

Spend an hour outside

Go wild swimming

Paddle in the sea

Make a den

Go bug hunting

Make a sandcastle

Hug a tree

Count the rings on a tree

Get lost in a field of barley

Play hopscotch

Play 'What's the time, Mr Wolf'

Play Poohsticks

Go on a treasure hunt

Climb a tree

Do a bark rubbing with wax crayons

Collect leaves and fallen flowers for a collage

Play noughts and crosses in the soil

Go on a night bat walk

Eat an ice cream in the sunshine

Go on a bike ride

Go on a walk

Feel sand in your toes

Try some gardening

Visit a pick your own farm

Make a daisy chain

Take some scenic photos

Learn to read a map

Navigate a walk using a compass

Go bird spotting

Row a boat

Go wildlife spotting

Try archery

Play a game of rounders

Throw a frisbee

A scenic landscape featuring rolling green hills under a blue sky with scattered clouds. A large, leafy tree stands prominently on the right side. In the foreground, three hikers with backpacks are walking away on a dirt path. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

***When I was young...* was written to help families rediscover the joy of the outdoors and to reconnect with nature.**

**For more inspiration and ideas, go to [GetOutside.uk](https://www.getoutside.uk)**



**Ordnance  
Survey**