

Autumn Path Days

31 days of family fun




1 Capture the change of season	2 Spotting the signs of autumn!	3 Make a treasure trail	4 Nurdle hunt	5 Be wise outside
6 Take a picnic	7 Find some autumn wildlife	8 Photo hunt: Textures	9 Build a den	10 Make Space for Nature
11 Find the way home	12 Photo walk: make a toy story	13 Walk with me – invite a friend	14 Collect pinecones	15 Photo hunt: colours
16 Do a litter pick	17 Pebbles rock!	18 Bark rubbing	19 Walk to and from school	20 Tree ID
21 Photo fun: Shadow people	22 School step counter challenge	23 Nature art class	24 Left / right - you decide	25 Nature hunt: letter forms in nature
26 Fab farms!	27 Treasure map	28 Leafy Crafts	29 Go on a Night Torchlit Walk with Kids	30 Spooky Path Days



31
Halloween fun

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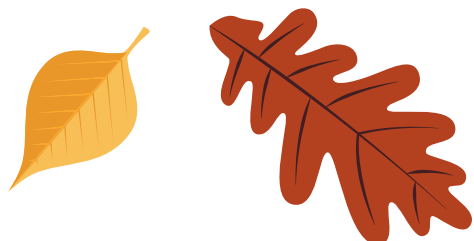
paths
for all

FOR A HAPPIER,
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

Explore our 31 ideas to keep your family entertained outdoors this autumn. These activities are designed for children aged 5 to 10, but can be tailored for the whole family.

#1 Capture the change of season

The most symbolic sign of the change of season! Share a photo of some beautiful autumn leaves.



#2 Spotting the signs of autumn!

Head out for some family time! After a busy time of school and work, take a breather and get some time outdoors together.

Notice the changes in nature, it could be migrating birds, darker evenings, conkers, or piles of crisp fallen leaves.



#3 Make a treasure trail

Mark out a trail in advance, you could use twigs, flour, chalk or small stones depending on where you are.



#4 Nurdle hunt

Nurdle hunting can be a fun activity for young and old when you are walking in coastal areas.

A nurdle is a small plastic pellet about the size of a lentil and can be any colour.

By getting outside hunting for nurdles and recording where they are, you can make a valuable contribution towards combatting plastic pollution and highlight the risks posed to wildlife.



#5 Be wise outside

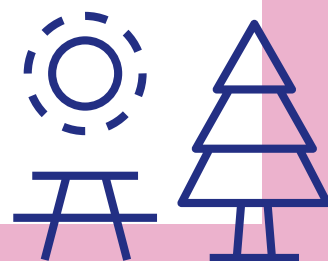
We're so lucky in Scotland to be able to access our countryside freely. So, when we do go out and about, we need to be wise - always taking care of ourselves, others and the environment. It's all laid out in the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) if you want to find out more.

Or you can [try our quiz](#) to see if you are wise outside!

#6 Take a picnic

Picnics are not just for summer! A crisp autumn day is perfect. Pack a rucksack with your favourite sandwiches and drinks and head off along a path for an alfresco lunch!

Remember to leave no trace. Be very careful not to leave any rubbish or food scraps behind.



#7 Find some autumn wildlife

You can spot wildlife all year in Scotland.

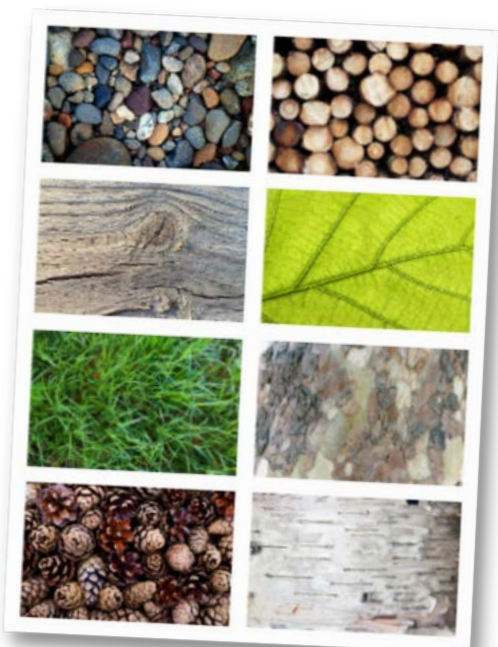
Maybe you'll see a squirrel scampering the forest floor or bouncing between branches.

Or look up and you may see large groups of birds as they twist swoop and fly together.



#8 Photo hunt: textures

Help your children to start noticing textures and detail in nature. Take photos of the textures you see - like ones you see in greenery, on tree bark, the ground, on rocks, paths or earth. Once you get home, crop each photo to show only the texture. You can then add into a grid and add the photo to an album to share with friends or family.



#9 Build a den

Building dens are brilliant for kids, in solving problems and working together creatively.

Woodlands are great for den building. Try finding large fallen branches and lean them up against a tree to make a teepee style den. You can weave smaller branches and moss in amongst the larger branches, to create more shelter. Then let little imaginations just have fun in their cosy hideout.

If you don't have space or big branches, try making a mini den, for 'fairies' or favourite teddies!

It's a good idea to take your den down before you go home – to leave the woods as you found them.



#10 Make Space for Nature

Learn about what you can do to make a home for nature this autumn. It could be leaving fallen twigs and leaves piled to create a habitat in your garden. Or you could leave food and water for birds as winter approaches.

There are lots more tips on the [NatureScot](#) website.



#11 Find the way home

An interesting one for kids who like a challenge!

Go for a walk with your children, taking a different route from your usual walks. Point out lots of features on the way – such as trees, signposts, big puddles, rocks, terrain, views or bends in the path.

Then, turn to your children and ask them to get you all home.

They might be surprised to be in charge, but you can help them out by pointing out all the features you noticed on your outward journey to guide you back.

#12 Photo walk: make a toy story

Get your children creative with favourite teddy or character on a walk.

Take a toy character on a walk and photograph them in different places like peeping through bushes, hiding up trees, pointing the way home, crossing bridges or sniffing flowers – see where your walk takes you!

Once home you can print out the photos and staple together to make a book. Your child can then write an imaginative story of the toy's walk! Noting what they did, saw and how they felt.

Maybe the toy enjoys a rest on the sofa at the end of the day.



#13 Walk with me – invite a friend

Invite a friend for a walk today and show them where you like to go and why.

Join Us!

#14 Collect pinecones

Pinecones fall in autumn, and are a great thing to collect on your next outdoor adventure.

Pinecones make great decorations and can be used for printing too.

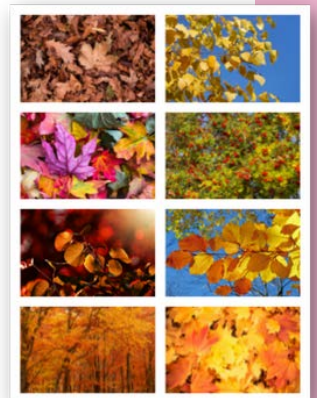


#15 Photo hunt: colours

Look carefully at colours you notice in nature. Take photos and see if you can create a colour theme. You could look at the sky, leaves, rocks, lichen or water reflections - everything around you for inspiration.

Once you get home, you could crop the photos and add into a grid design to share with friends or family.

Maybe these colours can inspire your next art project.



#16 Do a litter pick

Help to look after your favourite paths and places. If you've spotted some annoying litter – bag it up and take it home.

Don't forget to take a before and after shot!



#17 Pebbles rock!

Head to the coast and look closely!

The [Scottish Geology Trust](#) has some lovely ideas to help us appreciate the rocks around us and our changing coastlines.

You can sort pebbles by size, shape and colour and think about how they were made - were they once mountains, volcanoes, swamps or deserts?



#18 Bark rubbing

Grab some crayons and paper and head out to the woods to make some art.

Hold your paper over the bark and rub your crayon over the surface to reveal unique patterns. Compare textures and patterns you get from different tree species.

#19 Walk to and from school

When you go back to school after the October break, it's a great time to make a commitment to leave the car at home and walk to and from school every day.



#20 Tree ID

Find out more about the nature around you, whether that's in streets, gardens, parks or woods.

[Woodland Trust](#) has a free Tree ID app to help you identify the trees where you live.

Even if the leaves have fallen, you can still use bark and twigs to spot what species you've found.



#21 Photo fun: shadow people

Have some fun with shadows when you are enjoying a walk in the sunshine.

How tall can you be and what animals can you make with your hands and body?

Capture the moment on video on the family doing their favourite shadow.



#22 Paths to school

School step counter challenge.

Pick a different route to school and ask your children to guess how many steps they will take to reach the school gates. The winner gets to choose tomorrow's route to school.

#23 Nature art class

Look at artists who use nature in their work. [Andy Goldsworthy](#) creates stunning art from nature such as ice, leaves, slate, branches and rocks.

Can you go out for a walk today and do your own sculpture using natural materials?



#24 Left / right - you decide

Head for a park or woodland with lots of paths.

This is an opportunity for children to guide the walk and be in charge. At each junction of the path, hold a vote i.e. 'hands up' for left/ right/straight on.

The largest number votes decides which direction is taken. Occasional adult influence is required to make sure that everyone gets back to your starting point!



#25 Nature hunt: letter forms in nature

Can you look carefully to find natural letterform shapes as you look at what is around you while you walk along.

Or can you make letters or words from natural materials?



#26 Fab farms!

Get your wellies and head to a pumpkin patch if there's one near you!

[VisitScotland](#) has listed some fab farms to visit for seasonal produce and a day outdoors this autumn.



#27 Treasure map

You could draw a treasure map for your children to follow – noting on there lots of landmarks and points of interest to help them find their way.

You could invite a friend along to join in with the fun.

Or your children could design a treasure hunt for their friends.



#28 Leafy Crafts

Collect lots of dried leaves on your walk! Then check out the [Woodland Trust Leafy Crafts](#). There's lots of cool creative ideas here. Like leaf rubbings, pictures printing, crowns and autumn wreaths!



#29 Go on a Night Torchlit Walk with Kids

By late October it'll be darker in the evenings. Make the most of the darkness with a torchlit walk. You might even see bats as dusk falls.



#30 Spooky Path Days

Can you make skeletons, bats, spider webs, ghosts and pumpkins to put along a trail.

Then surprise your friends or family with a spooky walk. You could hide some treats too!



#31 Halloween fun

Will you be dressed up this Halloween? If you are planning to visit friends and family with a scary surprise, walk between houses if you can.

Walking is the greenest way to travel, much better than driving. It helps tackle climate change and pollution. We all know witches prefer flying in cleaner air!



Share what you've been up to for a chance to win one of 10 nature explorer kits. [You can enter here.](#) Closing date is midnight 31 October 2021.