



Activity Ideas

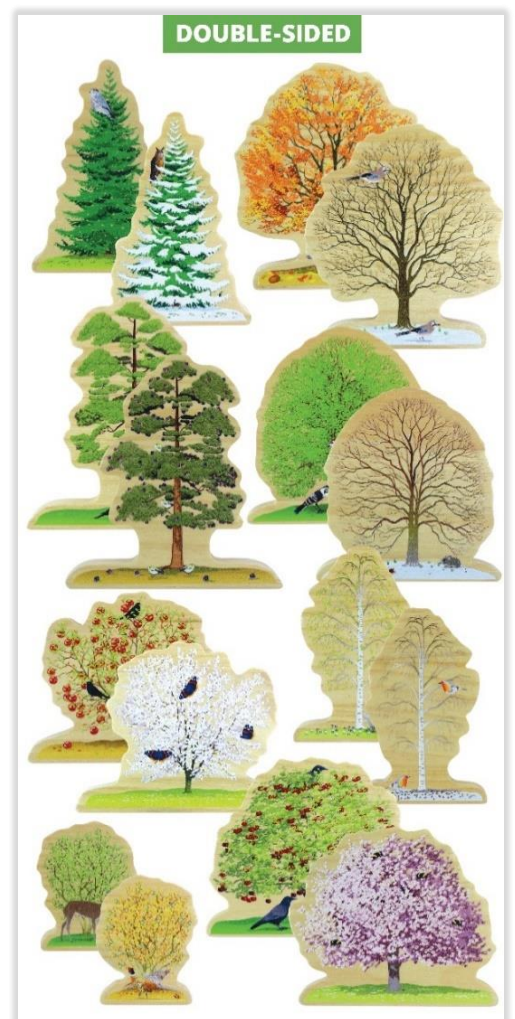
Four Seasons Trees Wooden Play Set

YD0200

This set of double-sided trees will develop children's observation skills as they study and compare the different sides of each piece. The trees can also be used to help children's language and storytelling skills as they use them for imaginative play, and the interactions this involves.

The trees are double-sided, showing the same tree in different seasons, with a total of four different trees per season. Matching base colours for each season help with sorting. The following trees are in the set: apple, beech, cherry, Douglas fir, hazel, oak, Scot's pine and silver birch.

Encourage the children to spot the seasonal details, including bee, blackbird, butterfly, crossbill, crow, deer, goldcrest, jay, long-eared owl, merlin, mouse, pheasant, rabbit, robin, squirrel and woodpecker.



Key vocabulary

- Autumn, winter, spring, summer
- Apple, beech, cherry, Douglas fir, hazel, oak, Scot's pine and silver birch
- Bee, blackbird, butterfly, crossbill, crow, deer, goldcrest, jay, long-eared owl, merlin, mouse, pheasant, rabbit, robin, squirrel and woodpecker.
- Sort
- Compare
- Similarities
- Differences
- Different from
- Similar to

Activity ideas

- Take the wooden trees to the local park and use them to conduct a survey of the trees there, making observations about the different trees' characteristics. Find ways to record your findings that can be displayed, using new vocabulary learned from the visit
- Sort the wooden trees by size or by season. Once sorted, discuss how the sets look when compared to each other. Use this knowledge to create seasonal small world play set ups. Include leaves, cones, nuts, and grasses.
- I-Spy: Lay out a selection of the trees. Choose a tree and say its initial letter/sound. Children then need to work out which tree it is. The same game can be played with the wildlife featured on the trees. If this is too difficult initially, describe the item you have chosen. Repeat the games with a child taking the lead role.
- Kim's Game: Show the children a selection of the trees before placing a cloth over them. Remove one of the trees in secret, take off the cloth, and ask the children to identify and describe which tree is no longer there. Swap roles so that a child leads the game.
- Use fallen leaves to create leaf people. The book *Leaf Man* listed below provides good examples.
- Make prints of leaves by painting them on one side and pressing this side down onto paper. Once removed, you should see a nice print. This requires children to have focused attention before and during the activity.
- Leaf rubbings are also fun to make
- Thread autumn leaves onto a length of string or florist's wire to make a wreath, explaining the decision about the sequence employed
- Apply thin lines of glue to the top of a flat leaf. Less is more for this activity, so following the veins of the leaf works well. Sprinkle environmentally-friendly glitter over the leaf and shake off the excess. Allow to dry before using the sparkly leaves for display purposes or a further creative project.



Extending the learning

- Children can use the findings from their park visit to create a tree identification booklet, showing an image of the tree, its leaf, and its name. This will help them to clarify their understanding by asking questions.
- Spend time spotting what birds visit your setting. If you are in the UK, you could join in with the Big Garden Birdwatch of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. This happens once a year, and full details can be found on their website: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>

Children's books featuring trees or the seasons

Trees, Leaves, Flowers & Seeds published by Dorling Kindersley

Leaf Man by Lois Ehlert

The Leaf Thief by Alice Hemming and Nicola Slater

The Magic & Mystery of Trees by Jen Green and Claire McElfatrick

A Walk in the Woods by Flora Martyn and Hannah Tolson

Seasons by Hannah Pang and Clover Robin

What's That Tree? by Tony Russell

The Book of Trees by Piotr Socha

Because of an Acorn by Adam and Lola Schaefer and Frann Preston-Gannon

Tree by Britta Teckentrup