



The ultimate A-Z guide to sticks,
adventures and the great outdoors



In partnership with





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Not all sticks are the same.

Some are good for building. Some can be used as magic wands. And some can turn an ordinary day into an extraordinary adventure.

The Stick-tionary is a simple and fun guide to help you make the most of time spent outdoors with friends and family — using nothing more than what's already around you.

Each idea is designed to be easy to start and open-ended, giving children the space to explore, play and create in their own way.

So, next time you're heading outside, bring this guide with you and try just one idea.

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A little note from The Rangers

When you explore outside, you're sharing the space with the plants, animals and tiny creatures, who call these places home.

A few simple rules can help keep these places protected:

- 1. We encourage looking rather than handling – don't disturb living creatures like insects or flowers**
- 2. Please stick to playing with 'loose' items that have already fallen to the ground, like sticks, leaves or stones**
- 3. Take your rubbish home or use a bin – it helps keep these places special for everyone**
- 4. We know sticks are the best! But, did you know that putting them back after play helps give wildlife a place to call home?**

By following these rules, you're protecting nature and making sure everyone can enjoy it.

A is for Alphabet

Try to find sticks that look like letters of the alphabet. Can you spell your name using sticks?



Ranger tip:

You can break sticks to make new shapes, but only ones that have already fallen to the ground.

B is for Build

With just a few sticks you can make all sorts of things. Use them to build a den, a tall tower or an insect hotel.



Ranger tip:

Short sticks are strong. Long ones give structure. Test different sticks to see which work best.

C is for Competition

Play a game with your friends or family to see who can find the longest, thickest or bendiest stick.



Ranger tip:

The best sticks are already on the ground.
Have a good look around before choosing one.

D is for Draw

Use a stick to draw your name, favourite animal or a stick family.



Ranger tip:

Look down. Wet mud or loose leaves make a great canvas.

E is for Explore

Exploring can be as simple as taking a new route. Follow a different path, go round a tree, see what's on the other side of a bridge.



Ranger tip:

You don't have to go far to explore. Even a few metres down a new path can help you see a place differently.

F is for Find

Look around you. Can you spot three birds, four sorts of sticks or five different leaves?



Ranger tip:

Ask your grown-up to take a picture and help you find out more about the birds or leaves you find by looking them up online when you get home.

G is for Games

A few sticks are all you need for a game. Use your sticks to play hopscotch, Poohsticks or noughts and crosses.



Ranger tip:

For Poohsticks, choose a light, straight stick without too many bumps — it's more likely to float smoothly and win.

H is for Hiking

Find a good hiking stick and take it on a walk. It can help with balance, making tricky bits easier to walk on.



Ranger tip:

Use your stick to test the ground before stepping on wet or muddy patches. See how deep or sticky the mud is.

I is for Identify

Learn more about the nature that surrounds you. Ask your grown-up to find a phone app that can help you identify birdsong, plants or insects.



Ranger tip:

When you spot something, notice its shape, colour or sound. This can give you vital clues to help find out what it is.

J is for Jump

See who can jump the furthest.

Use a stick to keep track of each other's distance.



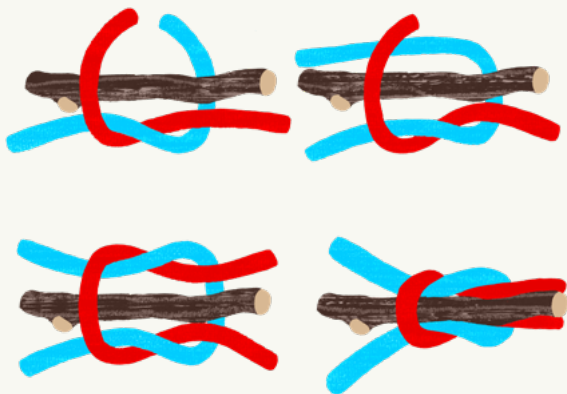
Ranger tip:

Think about animals that jump a lot.

Can you copy their technique?

K is for Knots

With some rope or twine, and a grown-up to help, try tying different knots onto a stick and see which ones hold best.



Ranger tip:

Use smooth, strong sticks and dry rope — it makes your knots easier to tie and hold.

L is for Listen

Stop and listen to the sounds around you. What can you hear? Birds, rustling leaves, running water? How many sounds can you notice?



Ranger tip:

Stay still for a moment. You'll hear more once everything else goes quiet.

M is for Measuring

Use one stick to measure your foot, the distance between two trees or the depth of a puddle.



Ranger tip:

Use the same stick each time and you'll start noticing all sorts of comparisons.

N is for Name

Can you name three trees,
three birds and three insects?
See if you can find more.



Ranger tip:

Say the names out loud.
It helps you remember them.

O is for Obstacle course

Create an obstacle course for you and your friends using the natural environment. How can you make it tricky, twisty or challenging?



Ranger tip:

Simple obstacles make play more exciting.
What can you go over, under or around?

P is for Pet rock

Find your favourite rock and give it a name. Then use sticks to make your rock a bed or a secret hideaway.



Ranger tip:

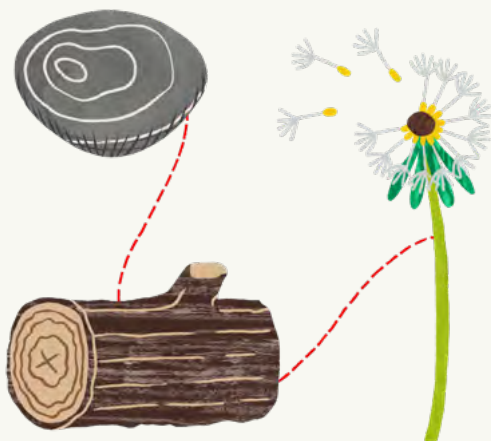
Rocks can feel different: smooth, rough, light or heavy. Try finding a few and notice their different textures, shapes and weights.

Q is for Quest

Your mission: can you find the following...
something rough, something shiny and
something that moves in the wind.

Bonus challenge:

Can you find all three in under 10 minutes?



Ranger tip:

Remember to look, but don't pick or remove,
and be gentle when exploring different textures.

R is for Race

Mark a start and finish line with sticks, then race your friends or family to the end. Who was the fastest runner?



Ranger tip:

Make sure your path is clear, so you don't trip.
Then it's: on your marks, get set, go!

S is for Story

Spend 10 minutes writing a short story about a bird, an animal or a stick.
Where does your story begin?
And how will it end?



Ranger tip:

Find somewhere comfortable to sit before you begin.

T is for Track

Look around you. See if you can find any signs of animals having been here recently. Are there prints, feathers, nibbled leaves or disturbed ground?

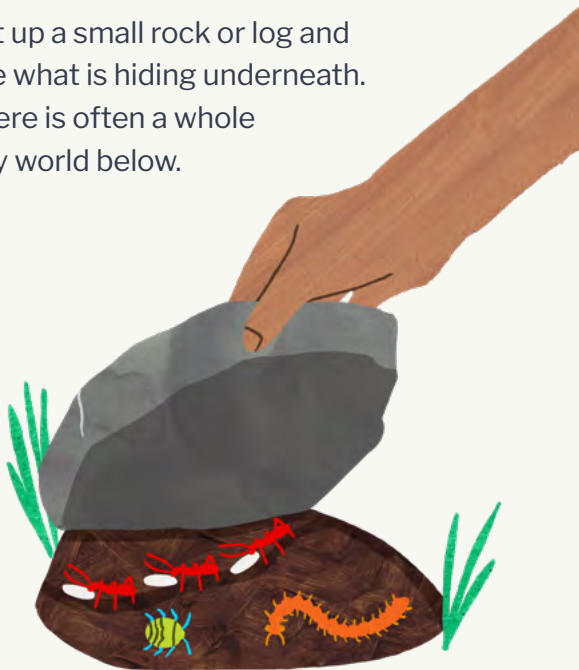


Ranger tip:

The ground holds clues if you look carefully enough.

U is for Underneath

Lift up a small rock or log and see what is hiding underneath. There is often a whole tiny world below.



Ranger tip:

Lift slowly and check carefully. Small creatures often shelter underneath, so remember to put it back gently.

V is for Villains (and heroes!)

Every adventure needs a hero and a villain. Your stick could be a brave explorer's staff, a villain's powerful laser, a rescuer's kit or a ruler's sceptre.



Ranger tip:

Pick a spot with objects to build your game around. Trees to hide behind, logs to balance on, leaves to race through all make a game more fun.

W is for Wand

Pretend your stick is a magic wand.
Now, cast a spell. What will happen?



Ranger tip:

Look around you before you wave your wand –
make sure you won't hit anyone or anything.

X is for Xylophone

Pretend your stick is a mallet and gently tap different surfaces, like a xylophone, to hear the sounds they make.



Ranger tip:

Before you test out the different sounds, check for wildlife, so you can avoid disturbing it.

Y is for Y-shaped stick

Find a forked stick and see what you can do with it. You could use it to prop up another stick, rake leaves into a pile, or create a marker for a game.



Ranger tip:

The oddest-shaped sticks are often the most interesting to play with.

Z is for Zoologist

Become a wildlife scientist for the day.
Find a comfy spot, keep still and quiet,
and watch for wildlife around you.
How many different kinds can you
spot, and what are they doing?



Ranger tip:

Watch closely to see how different animals
behave. How do they move? What do they carry?



Packed with ideas to encourage curiosity and adventure

This guide has been created by Vodafone and National Parks UK to help families make the most of being outdoors, while building healthy digital habits.

For more tips, resources and support, visit [Vodafone.co.uk/DigitalParenting](https://www.vodafone.co.uk/DigitalParenting)

To find out more about the incredible landscapes, diverse wildlife and the adventures to be had in the National Parks head to [NationalParks.uk](https://www.NationalParks.uk)



The mark of
responsible forestry