

# What to look for outdoors in Autumn

## Colours!

Wow! Aren't the colours of autumn amazing?

### What you need:

Your wellies – autumn can be wet and muddy, a bag or a bucket (ideally with a handle) and a pair of scissors or secateurs if you're happy using them (if not, take someone who is)



Do remember that leaves are a source of food and energy for a tree and its fruits are its babies so don't go stealing more than a tiny bit here and a tiny bit there. You will find masses on the ground that the tree won't miss at all.



*My boots, scissors, secateurs and an old paint bucket with a handle, now full of autumn leaves and berries*



Remember, too, that some berries are poisonous. One is called deadly nightshade, which says it all. Avoid those you are not sure of or, at least, put in a separate plastic bag the ones you are not sure of (so that they do not contaminate anything else) and wash your hands before you put your fingers anywhere near your mouth.



### You are in charge of your own safety.

It doesn't take long to find lots of leaves, berries, some sticks and pieces of wood – gather the ones that you like best in your bucket or bag.

### Do

Trying laying what you've found out on the ground – perhaps you can make a pattern like [Andy Goldsworthy](#) does with them or you can take them indoors and lay them out on bits of paper.

You can take photos of what you've done or glue your bits to the paper and keep it in a see-through plastic wallet. You don't have to only make one thing - have fun arranging things and then sweep them away ready to create something new!

The yellow cherry leaves had lots of holes in them and I put them on some shiny red wrapping paper so that the colour could show through the holes.



*Cherry leaves on shiny red wrapping paper - and two-and-a bit hornbeam leaves*

When I looked closely, I found that I had included 3 hornbeam leaves amongst the cherries. I had mistaken them for small cherry leaves – the leaves of both trees are so similar in shape!



If you look closely at the serrations (saw-teeth zigzags) round the edges of the leaf, you can see the cherry leaves have a simple in-out zigzag whereas the hornbeam has a double zigzag: each zigzag has a smaller zigzag within it.



If you have hornbeam and cherry leaves, have a closer look at the edges.

Beech leaves are a similar shape to cherry and hornbeam leaves but they do not have serrated edges.

Here is a photograph of a cherry leaf a hornbeam leaf and two beech leaves next to each other.



*Cherry, hornbeam and 2 beech leaves*



Looking at the photo, what can you say about the size, edges, colours, petiole (stalk) lengths, holes in, markings on, vein patterns, number of veins, of the leaves? There are lots of differences to spot! Is there anything else you have noticed about them?



It can be fun to make a note of what you discovered and what you want to remember to look for next time you are out amongst trees.



For more about what happens to our trees in autumn and more autumnal activities, see Hello Trees Resource Sheets at <http://hellotrees.co.uk/> and do share your pictures with us on our [Facebook](#) page.