

# Hello Trees Resource Sheet



## What to do outdoors in Autumn

### Seed gathering



Early Autumn is a good time to go seed gathering. The Tree Council has a special 'Seed Gathering Season' from late September to late October. There are fun events to join. See if there is [one near you](#).



Or go wild and do your own seed gathering. Why? Because it gets us out into the fresh air. Because it gets us looking at seeds. Because it gets us thinking about trees.



And you will be DOING SOMETHING IMPORTANT.



Trees are being attacked by imported pests and diseases. The seeds you gather will be from trees that are flourishing in your area:



If a tree is flourishing, it is coping with pests and diseases.

If your tree is flourishing, local wildlife is flourishing alongside it.

As the Tree Council says, 'Growing seeds from healthy UK trees is probably one of the best ways of taking out insurance that there will be strong saplings to plant where gaps appear.'



Take paper bags and a pencil or pen. Wear the right clothes for the weather. Wear trousers to protect your legs from nettles.

Go to where there are trees or hedges

- away from busy roads
- where no one will mind if you gather a few seeds



Keep your fingers away from your eyes and your mouth until you have washed your hands: some of the most attractive looking berries are poisonous.

On your packet, note

- The size of the tree: big, medium or small – or [estimate its height](#).
- The type of tree - or draw the shape of the leaf to help you identify it later.
- Where the tree is growing.



While you are gathering the seed and noting the height and location of the tree, think about where the seeds would fall or be carried if you were not gathering them.

Would a bird or mammal swallow the seed and poo it out somewhere else?

Spit it out where they eat it? Bury it for later?

Destroy the seed as they eat the fruit: a seed predator not a seed disperser?

[Hello Trees books](#) have examples of each.

Will the seed be carried away by the wind: lightweight, small, dry, spin as it falls?

See [Birch seeds vs conkers](#), [Wind pollination](#), [Tree seeds with wings](#), [Lesson plan November](#)

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Germinate: start to grow by sending down a root and sending up a shoot.



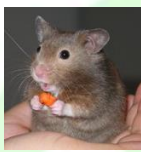
When do you think would be the best **time** for the seed to start to germinate?  
Now in Autumn? In Winter? Or in Spring?



When do you think would be the best **place** for the seeds to be between now and when they start to germinate?



Think of cold



Think of hungry animals:

- those who want to eat the seed
- and those who want to eat the new shoot.



What else can we think of that would make dangerous or advantageous conditions for germination?



Spring would be a good time to germinate when there are more hours of sunlight and warmth and animals can find lots of different things to eat.



Buried in the soil would be a good place to be.



Let's plant our seeds in soil in pots.



Shall we keep our pots indoors where they will be cosy?  
Or outdoors in the winter cold?



What would a seed need to be able to sense in order not to germinate until Spring?  
Time passing? Daylight length? Temperature?



Let's put some of our pots outdoors and some in a warm, light place indoors.  
Let's put some in a labelled bag in the fridge and plant them out in the Spring.

For the detailed advice you need on identifying, preparing, sowing, caring for and transplanting your seeds I recommend

- Tree Council webpage '[Tree gathering season](#)'
- Tree Council books '[Trees and How to Grow Them](#)' and '[The Good Seed Guide](#)'
- [The Conservation Volunteers website](#)
- Woodland Trust webpage '[How to grow a tree from seed](#)'



**Trees are our Future.**



**Enjoy contributing to making the world a better place!**



For more fun things to look for and do, see the [Hello Trees website](#)  
Do tell us on our [Facebook](#) page how you get on.