

SIMPLE FUN IDEAS



It feels good to slow down and savour the moment, especially as our lives become ever busier. Here are some of the simplest things you and your children can do to make your time outside fun and special, many of which are time-honoured Canadian favourites.

Autumn

- Rake leaves into a pile and jump into them.
- Search for dried milkweed pods and crack them open for the silky seeds.



Winter

- Build a snow fort.
- Catch snowflakes on your tongue.
- Make snow animals.



Spring, Summer or Autumn

- Roll down a **grassy slope**.
- **Play the tree or bush game!** Pull a wild grass-type seed head and ask your friend if it will be a tree or bush. Once they choose one, run your fingers up the stem to pull off the seed head. If they form in your fingers tall they are a tree, if they are rounded they are a bush.
- **Make a daisy chain** (you can make a Dandelion chain instead if it's easier). Take a few flowers with their stems and braid together to make a crown, decorate your door knob for the day or grace your dinner table.
- Play the buttercups and **butter game**. Hold a buttercup flower under your chin and see if your skin lights up yellow. If so, you like butter.
- **Paint with water**. Take a stick and dip in a puddle or container of water. 'Draw' with the wet tip, either letting the water drip off or move along a smooth surface (patio stones, large stone) to make pictures. The warm air will dry them fast which is part of the fun in finishing your picture before it starts disappearing.



- **Have a leaf race.** This is a game Winnie the Pooh played and is a race using natural items moving along running water (a stream, spring run-off in a ditch etc.). You and your friend take a leaf, stick or cone each, decide the finish line and at the same drop the items in the water further upstream. Watch to see your pieces float, encouraging them along as they make their way to the finish line.
- **Look for shapes in the clouds.** Savour the moment by lying on the grass and looking up at the sky. Notice the white fluffy clouds slowly floating by. What shapes can you see? A bear or dolphin or maybe a boat?
- **Braid long grass.**
- **Blow puff balls** (dandelion etc. seed heads).
- **Climb trees.**
- **Play grass whistles.** Lying down on your back, grab a tall piece of grass, then making whistling noises with it.
- **Splash in puddles** while it's still raining outside.
- **Gaze at the stars.** You may have to travel to your city limits to fully see and appreciate the show put on by our night sky.
- **Skip rocks on water.**
- **Build a tree fort.** It can be as simple as gathering fallen branches and propping them up carefully against a tree. Some can be tied with twine.
- **Pick wild blueberries** and raspberries. Make a pie or eat them fresh.
- **Watch fireflies** on a summer's night.
- **Watch bats** swoop for bugs at dusk.
- **Listen to frogs** and other critters at night– try to figure out where the sounds are coming from.
- **Find ladybugs** and other insects and watch them at work.
- **Burst impatiens pods.**
- **Make puppets** out of snap dragons and similar shaped flowers.
- **Look for insect** exoskeletons and snake skins that are shed.
- **Observe ant hills.**
- Search for **fallen chestnuts.**
- Dig in the garden to **find worms.**
- **Lie down** next to moss and pretend it's a forest.
- Make **mini log cabins** with sticks.
- Look for **four leaf clovers.**
- Have a **picnic in the garden.**