

Nature's Orchestra

Get musical with nature – can you play your favourite tune with items around you?

Time | 15 mins

Cost | Free

Location | Outdoors / At camp / At a centre

Group size | Whole section

You will learn

Value the outdoors

Enjoy being outside, feel comfortable in nature, and feel connected to the natural environment.

Try New Things

Find it easier to meet new people, go to new places, and do new things.



You will need

- Natural materials (for example, leaves, twigs, feathers)



Beauty

Use the art and music of nature to inspire creativity and celebrate what nature means to you.

[Discover the five pathways to nature connectedness](#)



Before you begin

- Choose an appropriate outdoor area such as a nature reserve, woodland area, riverside, canal, or park. If you're going to meet there (rather than at your usual meeting place), make sure parents and carers know exactly where you'll be, and what time to drop off and collect everyone.
- You'll probably need extra adult help for this activity.

Making music

1. Everyone should work together to name as many instruments as they can. Does anyone play an instrument?
2. The person leading the activity should explain that different instruments can be grouped together into categories called families. Can anyone name any of the instrument families?

We've included a list of the families and some of the instruments that belong in each one below.

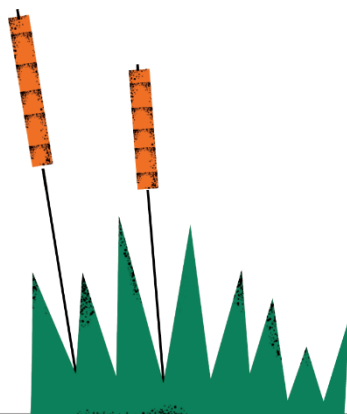
3. The person leading the activity should explain that everyone will make a piece of music using things they find around them.
4. Everyone should get into small groups.

Make sure each small group has an adult to go with them.

5. The person leading the activity should explain that everyone will be going on a short walk that passes by a variety of nature. They should also explain the boundaries and ground rules that will keep everyone safe.
6. As everyone explores, they should collect natural items of different shapes, sizes and textures.
Avoid removing any living branches or flowers – collect dead materials or ones that have already fallen to the ground.
7. Everyone should come back together as a group and use their natural materials to make a new composition or play a tune everyone knows.

People could:

- Blow on lengths of grass, choosing different thicknesses for different notes.
 - Hit different lengths of sticks together to sound different notes.
 - Scrape sticks together to make a rhythmic noise.
 - Rub sticks across other items such as trees or a gate.
 - Drop stones in different depths of water make different notes – these can be pre-filled tubs of water or ponds (just be careful not to disturb wildlife).
8. Once everyone has had the chance to practise their instruments, they could take it in turns to perform to everyone in the group. Can the other groups guess the tune?



Instrument Families

- Woodwind (including flute, saxophone, clarinet, recorder, bassoon and oboe).
- Brass (including trumpet, trombone, tuba, French horn, cornet, and bugle).
- Voice (just like playing a piano or guitar, the voice can sing in different notes. When people sing, they're making music. You can help people understand this by asking them to try singing a high note and a low note. They don't need to sing a whole tune – realising that voices can sing different notes will help them understand how the voice is an instrument).
- String (including guitar, violin, viola, cello, bass, harp, and dulcimer).
- Percussion (including drums, piano, cymbals, triangle, glockenspiel, timpani, bells, and xylophone).



Reflection

Time	Activity
5 mins	This activity offered a chance to spend time in nature and experience it in a different way. Which sounds did people find the most interesting and why? What other sounds are there in nature?
	Experiencing the world around us through sound is just one way to look at it, we could also look at the colours, smells or the way things feel. Take the time to think about the different ways we can interact with our environment next time you are out and about.



Change the level of challenge

To make this activity easier, allow the group to come up with their own composition and name. If people are up for a challenge, ask them to try to play a specific tune with their natural instruments, for example, a pop song or the EastEnders TV theme.

It's up to you how much support you provide in step seven. You could suggest ways people could use their natural materials, or you could leave it to people to use their imagination and come up with their own ideas.

Make it accessible

- Make sure the area you're exploring is accessible for everyone in your group.
- Consider collecting up some items before the session for people to use.

All Scout activities should be **inclusive and accessible**.

Safety

All activities must be safely managed. Use the [safety checklist](#) to help you plan and risk assess your activity. Do a [risk assessment](#) and take appropriate steps to reduce risk. Always get approval for the activity and have suitable [supervision](#) and an [InTouch](#) process.

- **Gardening and nature**

Everyone must wash their hands after the activity has finished. Wear gloves if needed. Explain how to safely use equipment and set clear boundaries so everyone knows what's allowed.

- **Visits away from your meeting place**

Do a risk assessment and include hazards such as roads, woodland, bodies of water (for example, rivers, ponds, lakes, and seas), plants, and animals.

- You'll probably need more adult helpers than usual. Your risk assessment should include how many adults you need. The young people to adult ratios are a minimum requirement; when you do your risk assessment, you might decide that you need more adults than the ratio specifies.
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- Think about extra equipment that you may need to take with you, for example, a first aid kit, water, and waterproofs.
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- Throughout the activity, watch out for changes in the weather and do regular headcounts.

- **Outdoor activities**

You must have permission to use the location. Always check the weather forecast and inform parents and carers of any change in venue.

