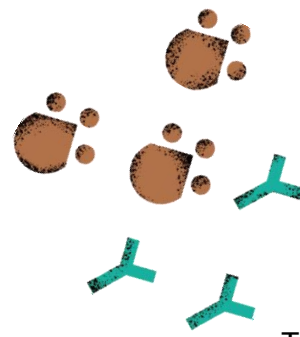


Tracking



Create a trail for others to follow using tracking signs and symbols.

Time | 45 mins
Cost | Free
Location | Outdoors / At camp / at a centre
Group size | Pairs

You will learn

Value the outdoors

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

Communicate

Learn to express your own views, listen to others, and understand what they're trying to tell you.

You will need

- Natural materials (for example, leaves, twigs, feathers)
- Tracking symbol sheets



Meaning

Notice how nature appears in songs and stories, poems, and art, and celebrate the mystery, signs, and cycles of nature.

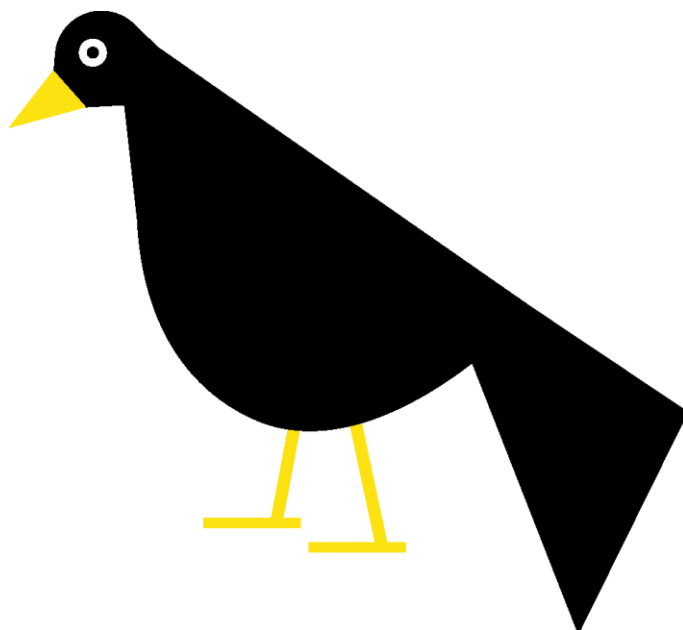
[Discover the five pathways to nature connectedness](#)

Before you begin

- Consider running this activity outdoors. Find a suitable location.
- Print out or create different tracking signs and symbols and put them on the ground. You could use any materials to hand for this.

Time to track

1. Introduce the art of tracking to the group. This means using of signs and symbols to leave a trail for other people to follow.
2. Everyone should split into pairs or small groups. Each group needs a sheet to help them identify different tracking signs and symbols.
3. Each group should work to identify what all the signs and symbols on the floor mean.
4. Once everyone has finished, two pairs or small groups should join together. One pair should plan a simple trail for the other – one they can actually follow.
5. Everyone should think about what they could use to make the signs – this could be anything from chalk to sticks to grass to crisp packets – almost anything will work!
6. Each team has five minutes to lay out their simple trail, before testing if they can follow the route.
 - Good tracking means you have to be observant and pay attention to your surroundings. This is a good game for people to look around them and observe and appreciate the area around them.
7. Swap over so the pair laying the trail now get the chance to follow a trail.
8. Follow up this activity by asking the group to look for natural track and signs, and thinking about what these might be. This could be something out of place, where an animal has disturbed something looking for food, or where a plant has been crushed by a foot, for example. Everyone should look for a natural track or sign, and try to work out what caused it.





Reflection

Time	Activity
15 mins	This activity gave everyone a chance to enjoy being outdoors. What did you enjoy about making and following the tracks? Did you find it easy to spot and follow the tracks once you knew what you were looking for? Did you feel comfortable being outside to lay and follow the track?
	This activity needed everyone to communicate. When might you use a tracking sign or symbol to send a message to someone else? You might want to think about alerting someone to a hazard up ahead, or letting someone know where the camp or base is. When might laying a track be more useful than having a mobile phone? It might be useful when you don't have signal, or you wanted to communicate with people you don't know – or it might just be that laying a track is fun!

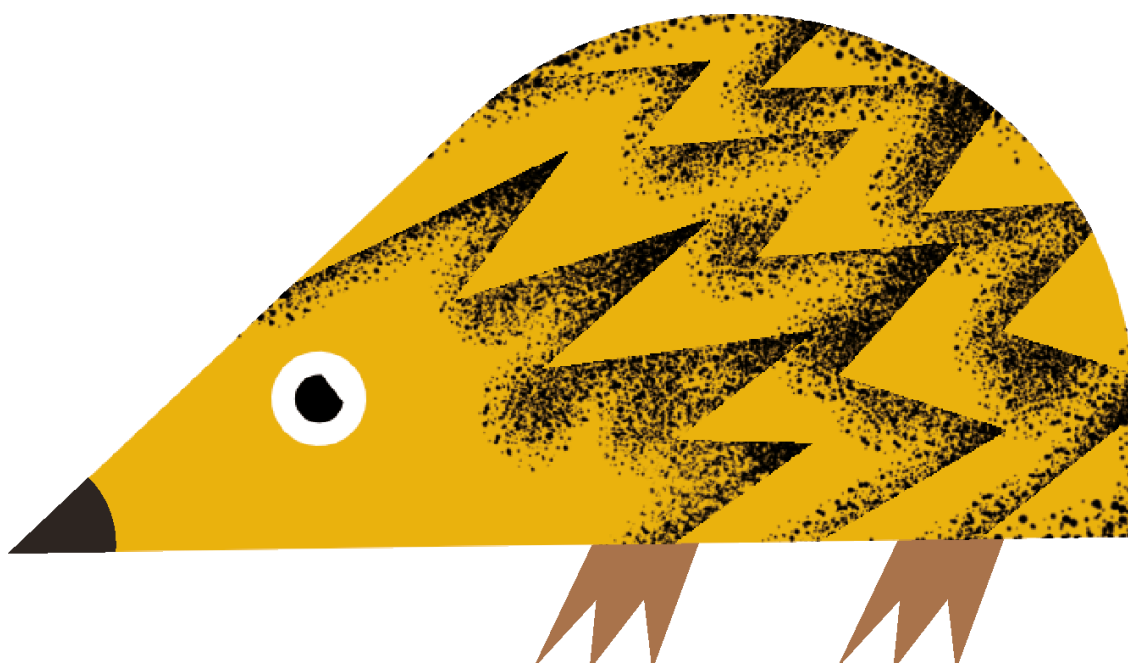
Change the level of challenge

Start with just a few tracking signs and add more as the group becomes more confident. Put tracking signs at different levels – try on logs or chairs as well as on the floor. You could also print out the different tracking symbols, if that makes them clearer to see.

Make it accessible

Make sure the trails are placed in areas accessible for everyone in the group.

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.

- **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.

- **Active games**

The game area should be free of hazards. Explain the rules of the game clearly and have a clear way to communicate that the game must stop when needed.

- **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.

Think about extra equipment that you may need to take with you, for example, a first aid kit, water, and waterproofs.

Throughout the activity, watch out for changes in the weather and do regular headcounts.

