

Sorting and Ordering: Collect Autumn Leaves!

Here's an easy and fun fall activity to do with your preschooler. Enjoy the outdoors and the fall season by taking a nature walk with your child, collecting pretty leaves, and sorting them. Not only will this simple project help your child learn valuable math and science concepts of sequencing and size, but she'll also get a chance to appreciate the beauty of nature and its changing seasons as she creates a pretty leaf collage.

What You Need:

- 4-5 different-sized leaves
- 12" x 18" construction paper or two 8.5" x 11" papers taped together
- Glue

What You Do:

1. Take a nature walk. Gather four or five of your child's favorite colored leaves from a park or your backyard. If you live in a four-season climate, take advantage of the brilliant crimson, gold, and brown leaves. If you live in an all-year sunny climate, just collect interesting leaves of various types and sizes.
2. When you get home, spread the leaves around your work table. Point out the different sizes of leaves to your child, small, medium, and large. Ask her to put the leaves in piles of small, medium, and large. For very young kids, you can sort into just small and large leaves.
3. Put your large piece of construction paper on the table. Tell your child she can line the leaves up from smallest to largest. Have her put the smallest leaf to the left and the biggest leaf on the right side of the paper. Continue asking her questions such as "Which leaf comes next? Which leaf is the next biggest?"
4. Once she has them lined up correctly, show her how to make small dots of glue on the backs of the leaves. She can then glue the leaves on the paper from smallest to largest. (Make sure she glues them back on in the right place.)
5. Have her write her name on the paper and lay it aside to dry.

When it's finished, you now have a wonderful, autumn leaf collection to hang on your wall as a decoration. Refer back to this helpful visual whenever you ask your child questions about relative size. You can also use it to discuss with her the four seasons and how the trees change with each season.

