

Make an Outdoor Fairy Dwelling

The idea that magical creatures inhabit our world fascinates children. And what better way to nurture your child's imagination than by making a fairy house out of materials found in nature! Like DIY in miniature, this activity calls upon your child's creativity and problem solving skills, while also getting him out in nature.

This activity works best in a wooded area with lots of different kinds of leaves, twigs, underbrush, grasses, and other natural materials. Try to find a unkept setting full of fallen trees, stumps, and overgrown bushes. Bring nothing but yourselves (and possibly a camera) into the woods with you. The point is to make a fairy habitat using only what you can find in the natural world.



What You Need:

- Nothing -- just a wooded area to explore

What You Do:

1. Find a spot for your fairy dwelling. Remember fairies prefer to live where they cannot be seen. Fun fact: Do you know that when people "knock on wood" it harkens back to the belief that fairies lived in trees and liked to cause mischief? If you knocked on the wood of the tree, the fairies wouldn't be able to hear your wishes and concerns.
2. Fallen trees with hollowed centers, nooks underneath bushes, and tight corners between large rocks make great living quarters for a fairy. Your child could also make a tent-like structure with a few large leaves.
3. Now that you have secured a location, it's time to figure out what kind of fairy you have on your hands. Here are some questions to get your child thinking:
 - What is this fairy's primary occupation--collecting nuts to sell to squirrels, documenting the wishes of humans, collecting things that humans leave behind in the woods?
 - What does the fairy like to do for fun--knit, cook, read, build things?
 - What does the fairy eat?
 - Does the fairy have any pets?
 - Who are the fairy's friends and family? Does she live alone?
 - What is the fairy's name?
4. The answers will help to determine what kind of living situation the fairy requires. If this fairy is a forager, she'll need plenty of storage space. If she documents wishes, she'll need a desk.
5. Now it is time to search the forest for materials that can serve as decoration, furniture, plates, silverware, etc.. Anything you find is fair game, even if it's a candy wrapper or a bottle cap. Unfortunately, this is a realistic part of the forest floor. Bring your collections back to the site and get creative! Encourage your child to imagine that she's only two inches tall: what would she want to sleep on, cook with, and do for home entertainment.
6. After your child is done, have her explain all the various features of the fairy dwelling. In a few days, go back to that location-- has anything changed?

This is a memorable activity that provides the creative play crucial your child's development.