



Foraging

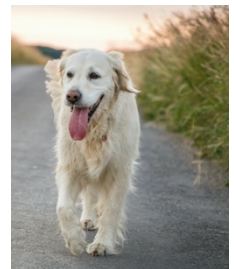
1. Be PREPARED



- Allergy or food sensitivity check
- First aid kit: open wounds covered prior to foraging
- Container or bag for collecting
- Fresh water available for thorough rinsing of gathered food
- Children wash hands prior to eating, in line with HPS advice

2. Check WHERE the plant is growing

- Away from roadsides
- Away from land used for growing farm crops
- Away from areas commonly used by dogs – above their height



3. Can you IDENTIFY the plant?



- Look at whole plant: see, feel, smell check
- Compare with field guide or ID app
- No signs of contamination (e.g. bird droppings, insect munching)
- Gather and use only if beyond doubt: 100% certain

4. CARING for plants and places

- Harvest sensitively to avoid damage to plant or surrounding area
- Model how to pick a bramble or similar from a thorny plant
- Gently move any little creatures out of the way, if safe to do so
- Leave plenty for wildlife. They depend on plants for survival
- Scatter seeds, if present and sensible to do so
- Remember to thank the plant afterwards



Notes for adults

A common-sense approach includes:

- Teaching children not to eat anything outside unless a practitioner tells them it's safe.
- Try and identify the plants in your site or public space – you can ask the landowner or local ranger. You may need to increase your own knowledge to do this.
 - Learning about life cycles and witnessing this in foraged plants can deepen children's understanding of how plants grow and give us food.
 - Ensuring children can grow food for harvesting and eating. They also need to visit shops. This helps children develop their understanding about the food they eat and where it comes from, and making connections.
- Do not assume all potentially harmful plants must be removed. They are an opportunity for children to learn how to be safe. Instead take simple measures such as:
 - Showing children and modelling how to accurately identify a plant
 - Providing sensible strategies such as raising hands above head when walking near thistles, nettles and brambles.
 - Telling stories and learning the folklore around plants including their benefit and need to exist. They will be providing food and shelter for wildlife.

Remember to follow the advice in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code when off-site. Don't sell anything you pick!

Customary picking of wild fungi and berries for your own consumption is not affected by the legislation. Care for the environment by following any agreed guidance on this activity. However, being on or crossing land or water for the purpose of taking away, for commercial purposes or for profit, anything in or on the land or water is excluded from access rights.

Other useful information

Remember foraging is more than about collecting to eat with young children. It's about exploring in a sensory way the properties of a natural item.

- A useful book is *Foraging with Kids* by Adele Nozedar
- More simple foraging information is on the Muddy Faces website:
<https://bit.ly/3m67gst>
- Out to Play also has foraging guidance. See p66 and Appendix 4
<http://bit.ly/2WXuYKJ>
- Wild Food UK <https://www.wildfooduk.com> has lots of information but bear in mind their Foraging Code is not entirely applicable to an ELC context.