



NATURE PATTERNS

There are all kinds of patterns in the world! Patterns in shape, color, and size... even patterns in sound and movement! How many different kinds can you find?

Do it yourself!

Time: 10-15 Minutes

Materials: Nothing needed, several containers or paper and drawing tools for optional extensions.

What to do:

1. Go outside together. Take a moment to observe your surroundings.
2. Talk about what you noticed and compare things. Some examples of descriptive words are rough/smooth, green/beige, loud/quiet, smelly/odorless.
3. Help your child find natural items they are excited about. Let your child take the lead and group the items.
4. After the groups are created, explore them with your child. "Why did you group them this way? How else can you group them?"
5. Take turns arranging nature items into a pattern. If some items cannot be moved, look for patterns that already exist.
6. Repeat steps 3-5. You can make new groups from the same objects, or you can choose new items. Can you find patterns of sounds or movements?

Describing and classifying the same object in multiple ways promotes flexible thinking.



Play for all ages!

For ages Birth to 3, Use containers to sort items and encourage your child to put items in and take them out however they choose. Help your child describe their actions to promote language skills and pattern recognition.

For ages 3 to 8, Draw some of your favorite patterns or make sound patterns by tapping or humming. Encourage your child to guess what might come next. Don't worry if the pattern doesn't end up the way you expect!



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Adult Guide



Take action! Did you find any plants or animals during this activity? You can identify living things and collect your observations using the Seek app.

Seek is an easy and child-friendly version of iNaturalist (www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app).

What is my child learning?

Young children are learning about their world at incredible speed! The [Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines](#) (**Bolded** below) help us see what they're learning and how the adults in their lives can maximize their potential.

Your child may observe that natural patterns don't always follow our expectations!



Taking a close look at nature and identifying the characteristics of objects will help your child **learn about their world**. Sorting and classifying objects is an early mathematics skill. You may also learn about how children understand the world as you watch them learn. By interacting with your child while they explore, together you **build relationships** through your shared experiences. Describing objects expands your child's vocabulary, linking concepts to words, which builds a framework for literacy. Even if your child is not yet using words, when you talk about what you are observing and doing together, you model **communication** skills they can practice.

Teaching standards met by this activity:

This activity supports the following Common Core Mathematics standard: [CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.MD.A.1](#)

Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object.

To connect to this standard, extend your discussions:

- Arrange a collection along a gradient, such as shortest to longest, heaviest to lightest, and so on.
- Pick two objects and describe their characteristics using comparative language.
- Ask your child to find and collect objects that fit a criterion such as "shorter than your thumb" or "heavier than this pebble".