

Tree Trust Walk



This is a good activity to do while you are hiking, as a backyard game, or as part of a tree, habitat, or bird lesson. It is a good introduction to becoming familiar with trees and practicing using your senses in nature. You can talk about branches, sizes of trees, bark textures, and more. It is a good sensory experience and a teambuilder.

Getting Started- It's Easy!

Who: all ages (young children should have supervision)

Where: any outdoor area that is safe and you are allowed to be, has more than one tree

Materials: enough blindfolds for half the people participating

Length of time: 30 minutes

Note Be sure the area is safe from major tripping hazards and you are allowed to be there.

Let's Begin:

Pick an area that has at least a few trees. You can do this in your backyard or on a hike. This is an activity that is as much about learning the habitat as it is for discovering your senses and building trust.

Directions

- When choosing a place to play this game make sure that there's a limited number of rocks, stumps, and changes in elevation on the forest floor, tripping hazards, as well as low branches.
- Work in pairs or small groups
- Set up area boundaries before beginning
- One partner will be responsible for safely guiding their blindfolded partner to a tree of their choosing within the boundaries
- The participant who can see should already have a tree in mind, but the blindfolded partner should only know the area, not the tree.
- One partner is blindfolded and the other has their hands near or loosely touching the shoulders of their partner. The partner who can see verbally describes how and where his/her partner should move to safely reach the tree they are destined to meet. The blindfolded partner should have their arms out in case they fall or to stabilize themselves.
- Once at the tree the blindfold should stay on as the blindfolded partner touches and makes observations about the tree, but no peeking. Smelling and touching are acceptable.
- Once a minute or so has been spent at the tree, the partner who can see leads the blindfolded partner safely back to the trail or starting point. Along the way one partner may gently spin the blindfolded partner to slightly disorient him/her.
- Once back on the trail/ at start the blindfold can be removed. Using the observations about the tree in-mind visually guess, by pointing at which tree they met and why they think that is the one (this can be done as a group, one at a time, or in pairs).
- Then the other partner has a turn being blindfolded.

This is a great activity to have in your back pocket when hiking with kids as it can break up the trail and keep children motivated. It is also a great way to get in touch with nature and talk about different types of habitats, especially if you play this game in more than one area. Always be safe and have fun.