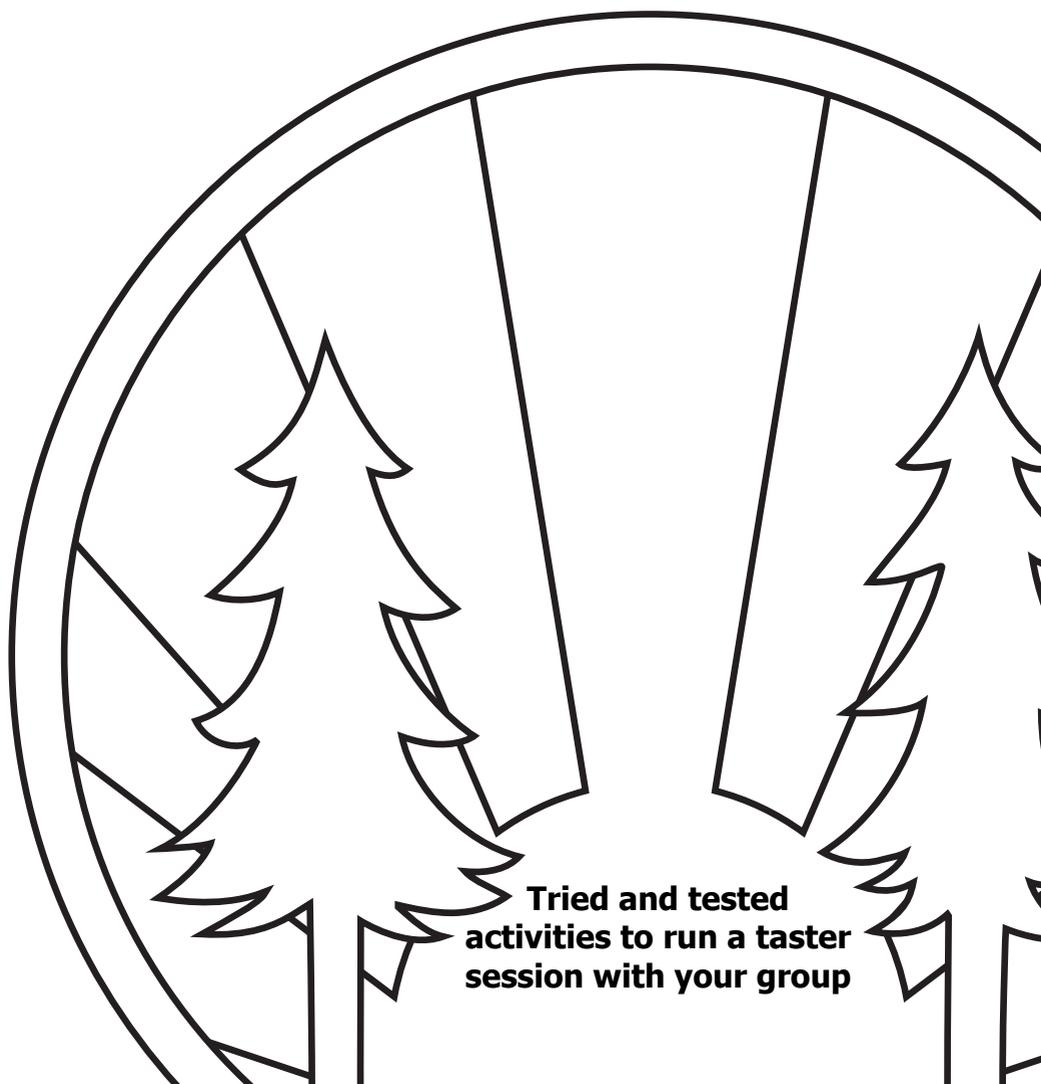


# Run Your Own Taster Session Activities



**Tried and tested  
activities to run a taster  
session with your group**



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These activities have been selected to enable groups of all ages to run a taster session which invites new children and young people to participate in their group. They've been assembled as part of the #EverybodyWelcome campaign which runs from May to September 2019. They link to the key messages of the campaign and provide simple ways to help welcome new children and young people. Therefore, you can keep using them long after the campaign is over!

We would love for groups to organise a taster session and share their fun online in June and September 2019, but feel free to run a session wherever you can fit it within your programme. We've included a session planning template so that Elfins, Pioneers or Venturers can take the lead and plan a session for their peers!

Take a photo of your group taking part in any of these activities (ensure you have photo permission for all children in a photo) and share using #EverybodyWelcome and tag @WoodcraftFolk on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.



# Session Outline

Use this template to help plan your taster session!

**Age Group(s):**

**Length of Session:**

**Location:**

**Resources needed:**

**Time:      Activity:**

\_\_\_\_\_      Game on arrival =

\_\_\_\_\_      Opening circle and icebreaker =

\_\_\_\_\_      Main activity/activities =

\_\_\_\_\_      Closing circle =



# Icebreakers

When new members join, it's important to help them get to know everyone's names in a fun way!

**Time:** 5 mins + (depending on size of group)

## 1. Me Too!

In a circle, one person starts, introduces their name and pronouns and says something about themselves e.g. "My name is Sam, I use they/them, and I have a pet dog". If this is true for anyone else in the group they shout 'Me Too!' and race to swap places with someone else in the group. Then the next person introduces themselves. This can also be played with a parachute.

## 2. Invisible Ball

Start with one person holding an invisible ball. Go round the circle and get everyone to briefly say their name and pronouns. The person with the ball then repeats their name, describes the ball they holding and says who they are going to pass it to e.g. "I'm Alex, and I'm going to pass this basketball to Anush." Continue until everyone has had a go.

## 3. I'll Get That For You

In a circle, one person starts, introduces their name and pronouns and says something they are going to get from a shop that begins with the same letter as their name e.g. "I'm Jas, I use she/her, and I'm going to buy jam". The next person says "I'll get that for you. I'm Mo, I use he/him, I'm going to buy some jam for Jas and matches." The list continues round the circle adding a new item for the person who is speaking each time.

## 4. How many facts?

Ask each person to take however much they want of a particular resource - this might be sweets, pieces of fruit, tokens, sheets of toilet paper or something else. Then ask the group in turn to introduce themselves, and share a fact about themselves for each of the items they took.



# Activity Ideas For Woodchips & Elfins

## 1. Teddy Bear Camp

**Time:** 20 mins +

**Resources:** newspapers, string or tape, cereal packets and other recycles, scissors

Work in small groups to turn the hall or field into a mini-campsite! Each group is challenged to make a tent or shelter for their teddy bear from the materials on hand. Explain that the 'best' group is the one that works well together. They might want to add features to suit the personality or needs of their particular toy. Once everyone has made their shelters, take a tour to see what all the other groups have created!

## 2. Recycled Games

**Time:** 20 mins +

**Resources:** plastic bottles, water, balls

Using plastic bottles and some balls, encourage the children to think of games to play with these recycled materials. You could part fill them with water and set up your own bowling alley, or use

them as bats and bases for a game of rounders. See how creative the children can be with inventing rules for their own games. Follow with discussion of what else we can do with plastic bottles instead of throwing them away such as making plant pots or bird feeders.

## 3. Parachute Games

**Time:** 10 mins +

**Resources:** a parachute

With a parachute you can play all sorts of co-operative games. Two you might like to try include:

- Fruit Salad - give everyone the name of a fruit (e.g. apples/pears/oranges). When their fruit is called children must run under whilst the parachute is in the air. If you call fruit salad it's everybody's turn to run!
- Mushroom - Lift the parachute together and then sit down on the inside quickly to make a mushroom over your heads with the whole group on the inside!



# Activity Ideas For Pioneers & Venturers

## 1. Tower Challenge

**Time:** 15 mins +

**Resources:** spaghetti, marshmallows or blu tack

Working together in small groups, co-operation is vital to build the tallest tower. Give each group the same amount of spaghetti strands (uncooked) and a supply of marshmallows or blu tack. Set a time limit for tower building with the aim of reaching as high as possible. At the end reflect on which designs worked best and how they shared out roles amongst the team.

## 2. Sharpie Tie Dye

**Time:** 10 mins +

**Resources:** White cotton fabric, permanent markers, cardboard, surgical spirit, pipettes

Decorate a t-shirt or make a colourful bandana with this technique. Put a piece of cardboard behind your fabric. Make a small circle of dots in one or two colours on the fabric with a sharpie (about 2cm across). Then

carefully drip surgical spirit, into the middle of the circle, It will dissolve the ink and the colour will spread to make patterns. Once dry, rinse in cold water. Works well outside or in a well-ventilated room. Newcomers have a souvenir of their first session to take home!

## 3. The Box Game

**Time:** 10 mins +

**Resources:** Cereal boxes

Place a cereal box in the centre of the circle. Everyone takes it in turns to try and pick up the box with their teeth - they mustn't use their hands and only their feet can touch the floor. Once successful, they rip off the piece of card they lifted it with and put it back for the next person. The group can help each other by advising on good positions and approaches!



# Circles

**Groups have many different traditions for how you open or close a group night. Think about what you do and how you might be able to adapt it to ensure new members feel welcome and included.**

- Do you say the Envoi together as a group? Could you make a poster or hand-held cards to help new members to learn the words?
- Do you sing 'Link Your Hands Together'? Could you sing it through once as an example and then invite everyone to join in? You can download a copy of the sheet music from: [woodcraft.org.uk/resources/link-your-hands-together](http://woodcraft.org.uk/resources/link-your-hands-together)
- Does your group have a object or signal you use to decide whose turn it is to speak? Make sure you explain how it works to any newcomers.

Your closing circle is a great time to share what's happening next week or any special events, trips or camps that might be coming up and encourage new children and young people to come again. Create a flyer with future dates and activities for everybody to take home with them.

Closing circles are also an opportunity to evaluate the session and see what people liked or disliked. This might be sharing a favourite bit, placing stickers on a target or scale to show how much they liked an activity, or asking them to use their bodies to show how much they liked different parts of the session (e.g. touching toes for dislike, reaching in the air for liked).



# Safeguarding & Accessibility

**We want everybody to feel safe and able to participate in Woodcraft Folk activities, so there's a few things you might want to consider whilst planning your taster session.**

- **Emergency contacts:** in case of an accident during the night, it's important to collect an emergency contact for each child if parents/guardians aren't staying for the duration of the activity.
- **Allergies and health conditions:** with new people attending the group you might not know about any allergies or health conditions in advance. Try to avoid common allergens such as nuts or latex and ask on arrival if there's anything important you should know.
- **Assess any risks:** is your taster session taking place in a new venue, or are you trying an activity you've never done before? Think about the risks involved and how you can mitigate against them.
- **Making it accessible:** be flexible and think ahead of time about different ways you might be able to run an activity to make it accessible to everybody who attends. Think about how much running, sitting still, speaking, listening, reading or writing might be involved. Also think about the spaces you use - are there steps? Is there a quiet space? Is it easy to get to from public transport? You could share your session plan with anyone who might be reassured by knowing what is going to happen, or think about creating a social story for your group (see: [woodcraft.org.uk/resources/woodcraft-folk-social-story](http://woodcraft.org.uk/resources/woodcraft-folk-social-story))