

**Topic: Forest School – Den building**

**Year 1**

**Prior learning**

- Role play – create magical hideouts using a variety of materials
- Play – use equipment to make dens

**Key knowledge I will understand**

- Learn how to build a mini fairy shelter
- Hibernation homes
- Know how to build a lean-to shelter

**Key vocabulary**

- **Shelter** – a place giving temporary protection, used for safety and retreat
- **Structure** – a specific arrangement of things
- **Camouflage** – to hide or disguise something
- **Lean-to** – a lean-to shelter is a structure that leans on an existing building, against another wall/fence or against a tree
- **Hibernation** – a way animals conserve energy to survive adverse weather conditions or lack of food. Commonly occurs during winter months.

**How I will investigate**

- Look at bird houses and hedgehog houses.
- Build a lean-to shelter - finding the right location can make all the difference
- Build a mini shelter -
  1. Build a shelter for the characters in The Gruffalo, e.g., a house for a mouse.
  2. Create a hibernation hotel with a variety of materials.
- Create a fairy tale village (link to fairy tales).

**How to build a lean-to shelter**

Find something solid to be the structure support; use a tree trunk, fence, log or rock.

Next, find branches or twigs long enough to lean against this support.

Prompt questions:

Is their support strong enough? Is it wide enough?  
How will they get their branches to stay in place?  
What about if it gets windy? How can they stop rain getting in? Can they camouflage it?



**Den building rules**

- Be careful with your materials – safety first!
- Do not put your hands in your mouth or eat any of the plants!
- Watch out for stinging nettles, etc.
- Avoid damaging the plants or trees – never deliberately break or damage living branches on trees.
- Show respect for our natural environment.
- Use only fallen debris.
- Dismantle your den afterwards (depending on location).