

# Lots of Leaves

Think about some of your favorite fall activities. Maybe you enjoy hayrides on a farm and munching crunchy apples. Or riding your bike in the chilly fall air and eating fresh donuts and cider after dinner.

One of my favorite fall activities as a kid was jumping in the gigantic piles of leaves my dad used

to rake up. The pile seemed as high as a mountain! Once the leaves were raked just right, my brother, sister, and I pretended the huge piles were swimming pools—and we took turns diving right in!



ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT HOLLADAY

## Thanks for Leaves

Leaves are lots of fun to play in, but leaves are also very good for the earth. We can thank God for the loads of leaves around us. Here are just some of the reasons why.

### Good Air

Leaves give us good air to breathe each day. As leaves make food for the rest of the tree or plant, they also help clean the air we breathe. It would be a lot harder to breathe if we didn't have leaves!

### Good Homes

When leaves fall to the ground each year, they make great homes for bugs and animals like mice, chipmunks, salamanders, turtles, toads, and earthworms. Many animals lay eggs in leaves and even find food from the leaves. Squirrels use dried leaves to build their nests in trees. The leaves keep those nests warm during the winter months.

### Good Dirt

As dried leaves break down into smaller pieces during the fall, they make the soil healthier. Many people use chopped leaves from lawn mowers to help their yards grow better. It's kind of like giving the ground good vitamins!

# FuN Facts

Check out these cool facts about leaves—and then quiz your family!

The food that leaves make is a sugar called **glucose**—leaves actually make and eat their own sugar!

The average 60-year-old oak tree grows around **200,000** leaves each year!

Dead leaves also make great **compost**. Compost is made up of leftover vegetable parts that gardeners use to make garden soil healthier. Adding dead leaves to your compost will actually help your garden grow even better!

The leaves from a large tree give off 260 pounds of **oxygen** per year!

The leaves from two large trees provide a year's worth of clean air for a family of **four!**



## Leaf Projects

Try some of these fun leaf activities with your family and friends!

### Leaf Wreaths

Make an awesome wreath to hang on the door of your room or the front door of your house!

#### What you need:

- Paper plate
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Construction paper
- Glue
- String

#### What to do:

Cut a large circle out of your paper plate.

Cut colorful leaves out of construction paper. If you like, collect some real leaves and trace around the outside edges, then cut out. Glue the leaves around the paper plate to make a leaf wreath. You could even write the words of Psalm 1:3 on your wreath!



### Thankful Tree

Since Thanksgiving is right around the corner, make this tree as a way to thank God for all of his blessings.

#### What you need:

- Construction paper, different colors
- Scissors
- Markers
- Glue or tape

#### What to do:

Make the trunk of the tree out of two pieces of brown construction paper. Use another piece of brown construction paper to cut out branches. Draw and cut out leaves of different colors like yellow, red, and orange and write down something that you are thankful for on each leaf. Tape your thankful tree on your wall for everyone to see!



## Leaves That Never Fade Away

Did you know that the Bible says we are like leaves? It's true! Psalm 1 says that people who love God are like leaves because they obey his commands and are filled with joy. Let's have a listen:

*They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season without fail. Their leaves never wither, and in all they do, they prosper.*

—Psalm 1:3, NLT

Those who honor God and listen to what he says are like mighty trees planted by clear, flowing water. They are strong and happy. Their leaves are always healthy and green because the sunlight of God's love never stops shining!

How about you? Are you like the leaves on a tree firmly planted in God's Word? The next time you see a leaf fall to the ground, remember that God loves you—and your leaves will never fade!



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