

Make a Plant Pal

From the tallest tree to the tiniest flower, plants are an incredibly diverse group, and people and animals all around the world rely on them for food, medicine, and shelter. Use this guide to practice the power of observation, and make friends with one of your plant neighbors.

Materials

Nature journal (or blank paper)

Pencil, pen, marker, or crayon

Flat surface to draw on, like a clipboard or cardboard (optional)

Directions

1. **Watch** the "[Meet a Plant](#)" video for a guided experience.
2. **Choose** a plant. It can be a tree, a flower, a bush, or even a houseplant. Find a comfortable place to sit near your plant.
3. **Observe** the leaves of your plant, noticing as many details as you can.
 - a. How big are the leaves?
 - b. What shape are the leaves? Do they have any veins?
 - c. What color are the leaves?
4. **Sketch** a leaf. Nature sketching helps us remember what we noticed.
5. **Use your senses!** Gently touch the leaves. What do they feel like? What do they smell like? Does your plant rustle in the wind? Are there pollinators buzzing in your plant?
6. **Sketch** the other parts of your plant. Look for patterns in how the branches or stems grow.
 - a. Does it have flowers? Are they blooming? Can you count the petals?
 - b. Does it have fruits or berries? *Note: Never eat a plant you find without asking an adult who knows exactly what it is.*
 - c. Does it have cones?
7. **Photograph** your plant using the [Seek](#) or [iNaturalist](#) app on an adult's phone to find out more about it, or use your photo and drawing to find your plant in a guidebook.
8. **Extension:** Do this activity with friends or family members, with each person observing a different plant. When you are finished, trade notebooks for a plant scavenger hunt!