











Have a go at pond dipping


Educator Notes

Age				
Early Years	4-7	8-12	12-15	16+
				

Time				
> 10 mins	> 30 mins	> 60 mins	> 2 hours	Long term
				

Season				
All year	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
				

Curriculum Links	
Expressive Arts	
Health & Wellbeing	
Literacy & English	
Mathematics	
Sciences	
Social Studies	
Technologies	

Location		
Indoors	Outdoors	Either
		

Equipment list
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A light-coloured shallow tray or container • A few teaspoons • Printed spotter sheet and pens/pencils • Nets (a small aquarium net is ideal). You could make own net too (see next pages for our guide)

Instructions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put a small amount of pond water into your tray. Now dip your net in the pond and pull it through the water – try a figure of 8 movement! Always have children kneel when doing this. 2. Empty your net into the tray, wait for the water to settle and look carefully – some creatures are very small! You can use a spoon to scoop up any creatures for a closer look – don't use your hands. 3. Use the identification sheet to help you record what you find. When finished, gently empty trays into the pond. Wash all hands afterwards and disinfect your nets and trays. <p>Your group could also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw pictures of the creatures they found • Write a short story or poem about their experience • Research a creature and its lifecycle under the water and present findings to the group



Pond Dipping: Safety and Top Tips

Before pond dipping, it is important to have a complete a comprehensive **risk assessment** before carrying out your pond dipping activity.

If you are looking for somewhere to pond dip, try your local park or other green space. Some places even have special pond dipping platforms. Always **remember to get permission** before pond dipping.



Things to keep in mind before and during your pond dip:

- Make sure you are **always supervising children** while pond dipping.
- Applying a kneeling rule ('when nets are in the water, knees are on the floor') can help ensure children **don't lean too far over** the water and exercise more caution.
- Pond water contains bacteria so make sure any **cuts are covered** by watertight plasters. Always **wash hands** thoroughly after this activity. Avoid touching nose, eyes and mouth when you have wet or dirty hands.
- For ponds which are too deep for an adult to perform a wading rescue, **suitable rescue equipment** such as a reach pole or a throw line should be provided. Never enter the water if you drop something – the pond may be deeper than it looks.
- Dress appropriately for the weather and outdoor work. Children and adults should wear **appropriate footwear** – we recommend wellies or sturdy shoes.
- Any adult acting in a supervisory role should be **adequately trained**, including the use of rescue equipment, and ideally first aid.
- If your pond isn't **physically accessible** for everyone, fill up a bucket from the pond so it can be transported.
- Return all creatures **back in the pond** once you are finished and **do not take any home** with you. Remind everyone to be careful when putting them back... tipping the tray can be like a massive waterfall for the creatures!
- Afterwards, **wash all trays and nets** you used before using them for different activities or in a different pond – this helps limit the spread of disease.



Pond Dipping Spotter Sheet

Use the pictures below to try and identify the creatures in your pond

How many can you spot?
Tick them off as you go!



Stickleback



Pond Skater



Pond Snail



Frog and spawn



Great Diving Beetle



Newt



Leech



Dragonfly nymph



Backswimmer



Water Boatman



Toad and spawn



Seen something else? Draw it here!

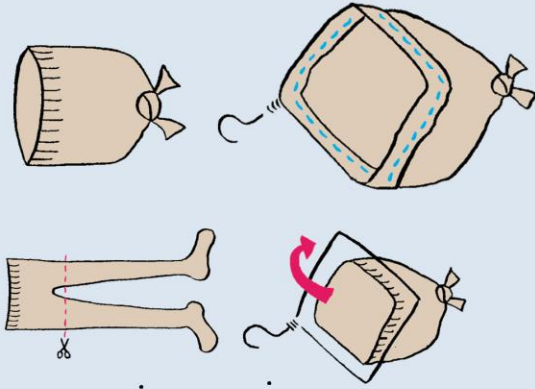
How to make a pond dipping net



You will need:

- wire coat hanger
- pair of tights
- scissors
- needle and thread
- strong duct tape
- garden cane
- white plastic tray

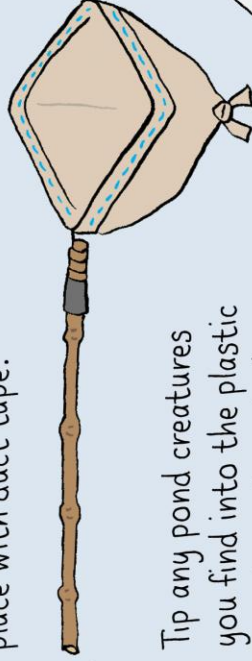
1 Cut the legs off a pair of tights where the tops of the thighs would be. Tie the loose ends together in a tight knot to form the net.



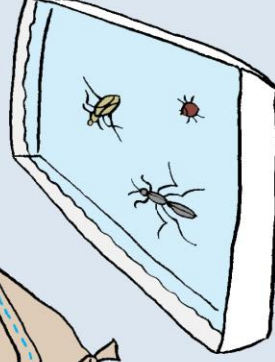
2 Bend a wire coat hanger into a diamond shape. Place your net in the middle of the diamond and fold the waistband over. Sew the hem.



3 Stretch out the hook of the hanger and secure to the garden cane and secure in place with duct tape.



4 Tip any pond creatures you find into the plastic tray for a closer look.



Remember to return creatures to their homes.