



# Cutting and Drying Herbs

Description of activity	PAL
Cutting and drying of garden and potted herbs to hang or use in the kitchen	All
Time of Year	Time needed to complete activity
Early Summer to Late Summer	1 hr +

## Preparation

1. Assess the weather, is it too bad that people will not want to go out? Refer to weather contingency.
2. Gather materials and have the newspaper ready on a table.

## Tools and materials

1. Secateurs
2. String
3. Scissors
4. Newspaper
5. Gloves if desired but not necessary
6. Trug



## What to do

1. Identify the herbs large enough to remove from.
2. Take the secateurs to cut < 6 inches of growth.
3. Pop herbs neatly in a trug (it's easier to gather with string if all the stems are facing the same way).
4. Take to a table and place on newspaper.
5. Gather the string around the handful 1 inch from the base. Tying the string around a few times and finally knotting off leaving a long bit to use to hang the herbs.
6. Hang indoors to dry with newspaper on the floor to catch falling seeds or leaves.



This activity requires some preparation, where to dry the herbs needs to be established, as well as identifying which of the plants are herbs and which of the herbs can be cut. For some people this part of the task may not be enjoyable or bring value, so marking the plants with a stake beforehand may be helpful. Dried herbs can be used for cooking, tea, pot pourri or simply left to hang.

## Extras

Most herbs are being dried for their leaves, if camomile or lavender are being harvested, one can dry the flowers as well. This is suitable for people able to stay with the task for longer. The flowers once fully dried can be used for tea or made into lavender bags for clothes and pillows. This can be a future task for a rainy day and as it's a craft activity, and may interest people who don't have an interest in gardening.

## Adaptations and variations

For people with reduced cognitive capacity, touching and smelling the herbs will be stimulating and provoke a reaction. The smell receiving centre in the brain is next door to the long-term memory bank, smell can cue memories and its really worth supporting people to express these memories, the smell may be associated with a person, place or thing.

## Weather contingency

Once cut herbs can be brought inside to be tied, potted herbs can be brought straight in.



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