

Find a Sit Spot

All Ages

A sit spot is merely a favourite place to sit regularly and connect with nature. It can be out in nature or simply by a window with a view of nature. Making nature-time a routine part of your family lifestyle is one of the best things you can do for your children's health and your own. The routine practice of sitting in mindful awareness has well documented mental and physical health benefits. Just 20 minutes in nature measurably reduces stress hormones in the body. A sit spot is a simple way to counter the stress of our busy lives.



Parents, here's a gift to your children for life. Choose a sit spot that is close by and easy to reach year-round. Using the same spot creates familiarity with the plants and creatures that share the space. Observing the patterns and behaviors of the plants, birds, animals, and trees expands your senses and increases focus. Awareness and familiarity deepen our connection to the living things that share our world. Time in a sit spot resets our perspective and restores our sense of wellbeing.



What to do in a sit spot.

Activities you and the children can do together or alone.

Be sure to sit comfortably. (See our *Sit Upon* activity under Projects Things to Make.)

LISTEN—What do you hear? How many sounds do you hear? Can you identify them?

SCAN—Look for movement. What do you see? Can you see birds, or tiny bugs, or the passing of a breeze through the leaves?

LOOK—What is in your field of sight? Is there something new today, like a bird feather or a bud that has opened? What can you see from here in the distance?

SMELL—The plants around you, even your houseplants, filter and clean the air. Breathe in that clean air and soak in the aromatherapy of nature.

REFLECT—As you engage each sense it helps bring your brain into the moment. This is a wonderful opportunity for quiet reflection. Consider keeping a journal and write about or draw what you experience in your sit spot each day. Include observations like the weather, the sounds you heard, the wildlife you saw, the colours, textures, and patterns you noticed. Jot down what you were thinking about. What do you notice outside that you wonder about? (See *Nature Journaling* under *Creative Ponderings*.)

Using a sit spot regularly increases your awareness of nature, encouraging a deeper connection, and strengthening the bond that restores us. For adults, nature-time has positive effects, including a healthier heart and immune system and reduced stress. More nature-time for children results in playing more cooperatively, better communication skills, less aggressive behaviour, improved self-esteem, increased resilience against stress and more.

Get Outside! Refresh your mind and reset your outlook.

Tip: Practice the **54321** grounding exercise to relieve anxious feelings and overwhelming thoughts. Try it anywhere, anytime: What **5** things do you see? What **4** things do you hear? What **3** things do you touch? What **2** things do you smell? What **1** thing do you taste? Tuning in to your surroundings with all your senses calms and resets your mind.

