



Identifying wild herbs safely – four edible plants

AT A GLANCE



Place

Outdoors in a meadow away from roads, fields and dog-walking paths



Key idea

Identifying four easily recognised wild herbs safely, preparing them and thanking God for his provision



Effort

Materials 10 min · Preparation 30 min



90 minutes



teams of 3–4



12–16 years



only with a knowledgeable leader



Materials

- ☐ fact sheets on the four herbs: stinging nettle, dandelion, daisy, ribwort plantain
- ☐ quark or soft cheese (or a plant-based alternative), salt and bread
- ☐ baskets or cloth bags, gardening gloves for the nettles
- ☐ a rolling pin and a tea towel
- ☐ a bowl of clean water, chopping boards and knives



Schedule

0–15'	Introduction and rules – The golden rule: we only eat what you know one hundred per cent – and what a leader has checked.
15–35'	Fact sheets – Look at, touch and smell the four herbs. Look for typical features: stinging hairs, milky sap, leaf rosette, parallel leaf veins.
35–55'	Gathering – Gather in teams: only small amounts, only clean leaves and flowers. A leader checks every single plant.
55–75'	Preparing – Wash everything, roll the nettle leaves in a tea towel with a rolling pin, then chop finely and stir into the quark.
75–90'	Devotion and eating – Psalm 104:14: God makes grass grow for the cattle and plants for people to use. Give thanks and eat together.



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How it works – simply explained

- 1 Introduce each herb with its fact sheet and show a real specimen.
- 2 Nettle: wearing gloves, pick only the young top leaves.
- 3 Dandelion: recognise it by the leaf rosette and the white milky sap; young leaves taste milder.
- 4 Daisy and ribwort plantain: gather flowers and young leaves; ribwort has long, narrow leaves with parallel veins.
- 5 Before preparing, each team lays out its harvest – a leader removes anything uncertain.

 **Example:** "Nettles sting because their tiny hairs are like miniature syringes. When we roll the leaves, the hairs break – and then you can eat them. God came up with something clever there."



Safety

- We only eat what a leader has checked one by one; the leader must know the four herbs well.
- In this session do not gather any plants of the carrot family (umbellifers), wild garlic, berries or mushrooms – they have poisonous look-alikes.
- Only gather away from roads, sprayed fields and dog-walking paths, never in nature reserves; wash everything thoroughly.
- Ask about allergies: anyone who reacts to the daisy family (e.g. chamomile, mugwort) does not eat dandelion or daisies; note dairy allergies for the quark.



Variations

- Without eating: herb bingo – find and identify plants without tasting them.
- Herb salt: mix dried herbs with coarse salt and fill small jars.



Something to think about

What in God's creation are you especially thankful for today?