

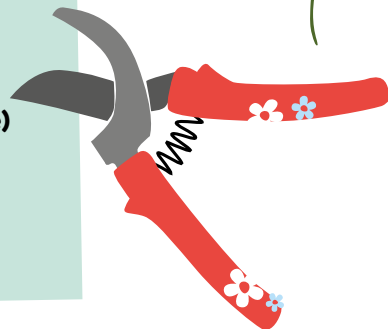
Make your own natural festive wreath

Making a wreath base from willow sticks may look complicated, but it's actually really easy and a wonderful way to decorate your home festively and naturally.

You will need:

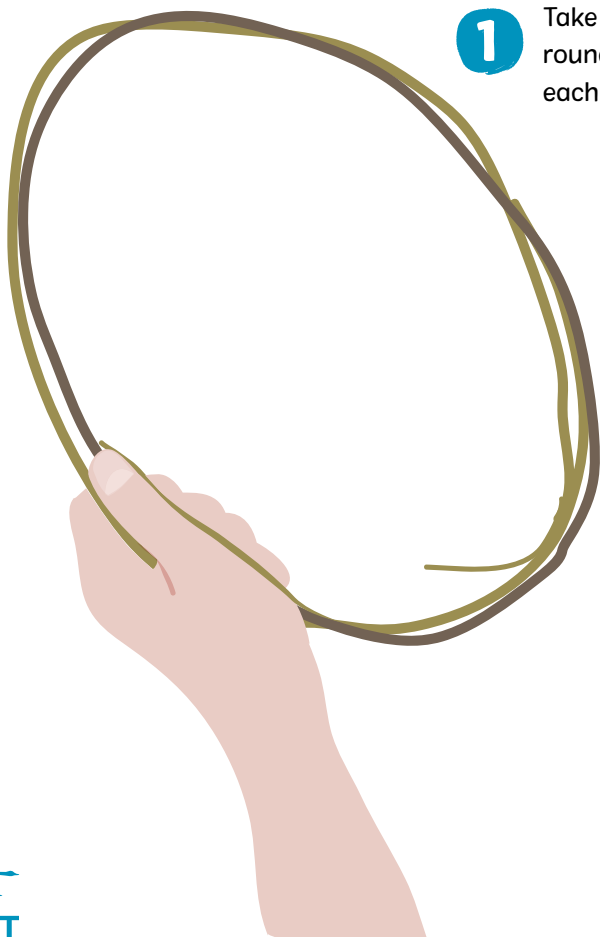
- A selection of bendable willow sticks
- A pair of secateurs
- Decorations of your choice (maybe holly, ivy and yew, old seed heads or dried reedmace)

Top tip: If you're using dried sticks soak them in water for a few hours before use. (Overnight is even better!)

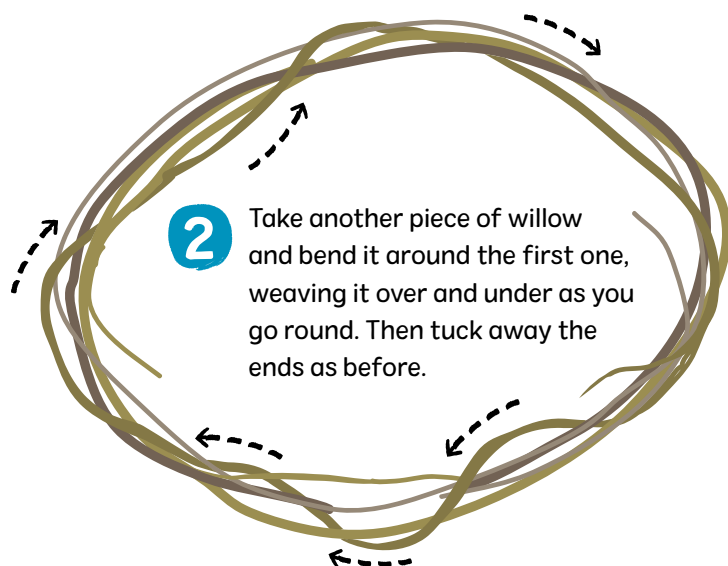


Top tip: Have a look at our 'how to' [video](#) from our willow-weaving experts at Steart Marshes to help you get started.

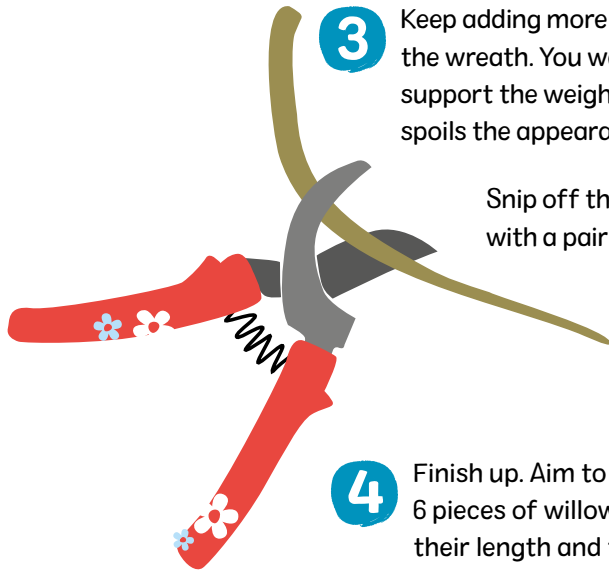
What to do:



- 1 Take your willow piece and bend it round into a loose circle, tucking each end under so it stays in place.



- 2 Take another piece of willow and bend it around the first one, weaving it over and under as you go round. Then tuck away the ends as before.



- 3** Keep adding more pieces and testing the strength of the wreath. You want it strong enough so that it can support the weight of the foliage, but not so thick it spoils the appearance.

Snip off the excess ends as you go with a pair of secateurs.

- 4** Finish up. Aim to use around 5 or 6 pieces of willow, depending on their length and thickness.

Continue to shape and snip your wreath to your taste.



- 5** Weave evergreen foliage such as holly, ivy and yew into your wreath (remember to wash your hands after handling). Or for a more neutral look, you could use a few old seed heads or dried reedmace.

Just remember to leave some for the birds as they provide a winter snack when food is scarce.

Wonderful willow

We all love using natural materials to decorate our homes. It brings a welcome dose of nature inside through the darker winter days and is a great alternative to unsustainable plastic tinsel or decorations. However, our wetlands are nature reserves and foraging for materials there is not allowed except in the case of supervised tours. Wherever you get your natural materials from, please make sure it's done sustainably. You can also source your willow from a sustainable supplier.

Share the fun

We would love to see a photo of your wreath. Tell us what makes it special to you.

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