

# Leprechaun Shelters



Enjoy a little whimsy while exploring the outdoors by making Leprechaun Shelters! This activity can be done in any outdoor environment, and provides opportunities for children to take a closer look at the nooks and crannies of the natural world around them – A charming way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day while exercising imaginations, flexing creativity, and practicing empathy.



## Who Are The Leprechauns?

In Irish folklore, leprechauns are mischievous male fairy creatures that enjoy playing tricks on those they meet.

They are fabled to live in nature, deep in underground caves with entrances hidden as rabbit holes or in places like the hollow trunk of a fairy tree, where leprechauns find safety away from humans who seek to capture them to be granted 3 wishes or to steal their gold.

It is said that every leprechaun has a pot of gold that he hides deep in the Irish countryside. According to legend, the leprechaun must give his treasure away to anyone who captures him. But this little fellow won't let his treasure slip away easily, and usually fools his captor into looking away before he vanishes with his gold.



## Why Do Leprechauns Need Shelters?

Leprechauns are shoemakers by trade, and spend most of their time out in nature tinkering with shoes for other leprechauns, fairies, and animals. They often have to walk several miles across fields and through woods to find the tools they need to mend and make shoes.

During the winter and spring months, these journeys can be difficult on cold and rainy days. Leprechauns often find themselves getting caught in rainstorms with nowhere to take shelter. When this happens, it's very easy for them to catch colds or have to walk long distances home in uncomfortable, wet clothes. What's more, each St. Patrick's Day, humans set traps to try to capture them, making their long journeys even more dangerous.





## This St. Patrick's Day

Instead of making traps to capture leprechauns, you can make shelters to help keep them safe! All you need are a few natural materials, a little love, and your imagination.

Go outside and collect things like sticks, leaves, bark, and other natural items. Leprechauns also love things like colorful flowers, fragrant herbs, and shiny, sparkly rocks.

Begin to design and build little structures that will safely house leprechauns and help them to stay dry if they are caught in a rainstorm, and to hide from humans who are trying to capture them. You can decorate your structures, create comfortable little beds for leprechauns to nap on, and add little accents you think will make them feel at home.

You can build them on the ground, in trees, or anywhere you think they'll like!

You might just make a leprechaun friend! With so many humans always trying to trick and trap them, a little help from a kid will really mean a lot to them. They may even reward you with a piece of their gold to thank you for your kindness!



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