

Preschool Activity: Pine Needle Hedgehog

What covers the body of a hedgehog, and what does it feel like?

Pre-Activity Questions

- Compare the pictures below of a hedgehog and a close relative to the hedgehog, the shrew. What is the same about them? What is different?
- How do you imagine each animal would feel if you touched them?



Activity

- Both the shrew and the hedgehog are covered in fur because they are mammals. However, the hedgehog's fur looks different! It is thicker, hollow, and pointed at one end. It uses its fur as protection from animals that might want to eat it. When scared, it curls up into a ball, which makes the pointy fur, or spines, stick out! Ouch!
 - The spines of the hedgehog are made out of the same things our fingernails are made of: keratin.
- Pretend to be a hedgehog! Tuck your head into your belly, and make your hair stand straight up! When the coast is clear, let your hair relax flat and untuck.

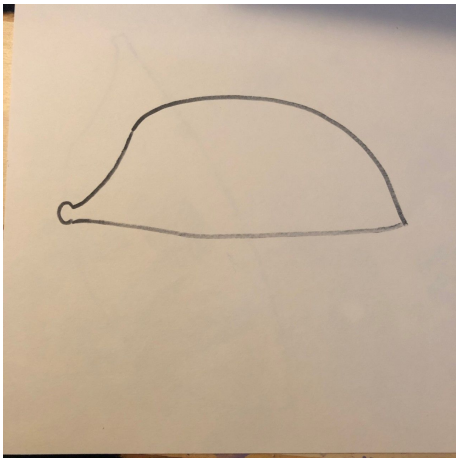
Pin the spines to the hedgehog!

Materials

- Paper
- Markers
- Pine needles (or toothpicks if there are no pine trees near you)
- Glue (Elmer's glue preferred)

Steps

1. Go outside and collect **pine needles**.
 - a. Toothpicks can be used in lieu of pine needles.
2. On your blank piece of **paper**, draw the outline of a hedgehog (seen in pictures below).
3. Use **markers or crayons** to decorate your hedgehog any way you want.
4. Once you are done coloring, take the **glue** and spread it over the back of the hedgehog.
5. Arrange your pine needles on the part of the back where you spread the glue.
6. Press the pine needles into the glue.
7. Let your hedgehog craft dry before hanging it up.



Hedgehog outline



Colored hedgehog



Toothpick hedgehog

Post-Activity Questions and Activities

- Look at pictures of a snake and a bird, and compare them with the hedgehog. What is the same about them? What is different?
- Can you think of any other animals that protect themselves with sharp fur?
 - HINT: One is on the Oakland Zoo [website!](#)
 - What is the same or different about those animals and a hedgehog?