

Beltane Challenge



The May Day festival marking the beginning of Summer!
Beltane is one of 8 seasonal festivals observed by modern Pagans; marking the midpoint between the spring equinox and the summer solstice.

For even more programme ideas check out our 'Beltane' board over on
www.Pinterest.com/PawprintFamily

#AdventureForAll
www.PawprintFamily.com

Meet the FAMILY

Hi there! We're Charlotte & Jamie, the husband and wife team behind the Pawprint Family and we believe in #AdventureForAll.

It's our mission to help leaders, teachers and parents save time by providing ideas and opportunities to help them deliver everyday adventure and skills for life. We do this through our family of brands; find out more below and head to the website for your next adventure!



PAWPRINT BADGES

Pawprint Badges provides thousands of free activity ideas and resources to help leaders, teachers and parents deliver fun and adventure.

Every activity helps you share skills for life and is linked to one of our pawesome embroidered badges. Build your collection and celebrate adventures, new skills and knowledge gained.

PAWPRINT TRAILS

Pawprint Trails are treasure-hunt style walks around locations in the UK. Solve puzzles, track down the answers and explore everything our great country has to offer.

From historical sights to popular culture discover something new or rediscover a love for where you live then collect the badge to remember your adventures!

Whether you're looking for the perfect addition to your next family holiday or a few hours of fun with friends; each trail can be completed in a few hours or extended with our activity suggestions in to a weekend or a week's worth of fun!

PAWPRINT TALES

Pawprint Tales are fully illustrated stories that can be enjoyed by the whole family. Join Alfie (our fox-red Labrador) on his adventures around the UK – solving puzzles, turning detective and making new friends. With twists and turns, every tale is an opportunity to discover new places, people and history without needing to leave the comfort of your own home.

Enjoy Pawprint Tales alongside your Pawprint Trails or as a standalone adventure!

PAWPRINT TRUST

Every brand in the Pawprint Family supports the Pawprint Trust with a percentage of profits from every sale providing grants to young people. We're passionate about enabling young people to access life changing adventures.

Share your adventures and join us over on our social channels for even more adventures and a nosy behind the scenes at Pawprint HQ!



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PAWPRINT BADGES

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Craft

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- ⬠ Create your own flower crowns with fresh blooms or thread a daisy chain.
- ⬠ Make your own May Baskets to give as a gift.

What?

As the month of April draws to a close, gather up fresh spring blooms in preparation for 1st May. Create a cone of paper and fill it with flowers (and sweets if you like) before hanging it on the door of a friend or neighbour on May Day. Traditionally, in some communities, hanging a May basket was a way of expressing a love interest.

- ⬠ Beltane marks the wedding of the May Queen and the May King. Decorate or make crowns fit for kings and queens using natural materials.
- ⬠ The May King is also known as Jack in the Green or the Green Man, representing the cycle of new growth. Create a Green Man mask.
- ⬠ The name Beltane means 'bright fire' and bonfires are a key part of celebrations and rituals. Where bonfires are not suitable, torches or candles are used. Make your own candles.
- ⬠ Make a miniature Maypole.

What/Why?

Maypoles are one of the many rituals associated with Beltane, consisting of a tall wooden pole, crowned with a floral wreath from which coloured ribbons hang. The ribbons are woven around the maypole in dances where each person holds one ribbon and the dancers weave in and out in formation, encasing the Maypole in colour.

- ⬠ Weave and braid ribbons in patterns like those created around a Maypole.
- ⬠ The marriage of the May Queen and May King represents the union of the earth and sky. Paint a sunset and celebrate the beauty of the meeting between the sky and the land.
- ⬠ Create a wreath of spring flowers like those found atop the Maypole.
- ⬠ Decorate a May Bush (a small branch of hawthorn, rowan, holly or sycamore) with flowers, ribbons, painted shells and decorated eggshells. It is considered bad luck to cut or disturb a hawthorn tree other than on Beltane.
- ⬠ Homes are often decorated with equal-armed rowan crosses, bound with red thread, believed to protect family and livestock. Make your own.



Food

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- ⬠ Bonfires are a key part of Beltane rituals and celebrations, cook on a fire and spend time with friends and family eating together.
- ⬠ Feel the heat of the fire festival with some spicy foods. Make your own curry from scratch or have a go at growing your own chillies.
- ⬠ Bake your own Beltane Bannock, eaten on Beltane morning traditionally to ensure the health of your crops and livestock.
- ⬠ Use spring vegetables to make a salad.

Why?

As Beltane is celebrated on/around 1st May, foods that are in season/plentiful at that point in Spring are those that have traditionally been associated with it. Seasonal produce may include; asparagus, new potatoes, blueberries, carrots, celery, garlic, green peas, edible flowers, honey, leeks, spinach, strawberries, spring onions and dairy products.

- ⬠ Bake and decorate some Green Man biscuits, why not flavour them with some seasonal herbs such as lavender, rosemary or lemon balm.
- ⬠ Discover some of the edible flowers in bloom at the time of Beltane celebrations and use some of them in a recipe or for decoration.
- ⬠ Make some edible equal-armed crosses using chocolate sticks or savoury twigs. Bind them with edible 'rope' such as strawberry flavoured laces.
- ⬠ Mix your own caudle.

What?

A caudle is a hot drink, typically made from milk thickened with flour, oatmeal and egg which was then sweetened and spiced. For some it is part of the Beltane celebrations, made over the Beltane bonfire.

- ⬠ Use seasonal produce to make a dish of your choice.
- ⬠ Food is often cooked on the Beltane bonfire and traditionally this may have included a lamb. Try cooking your own lamb dish over an open fire such as a BBQ or campfire.
- ⬠ Forage for wild herbs and edible flowers. Make sure to take care when foraging as some plants are poisonous.
- ⬠ Bake and decorate your own edible Beltane bonfire cupcakes.



Games

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- ⬠ Have a go at long jump between two broomstick handles.

Why?

Beltane marks the wedding of the May Queen and the Green Man and is a popular time for Pagan weddings. A common element of Pagan weddings is 'jumping the broomstick'. Traditionally the broom marked a threshold between the couples old life to a new one together and couples literally jump over the broomstick laid on the floor.

- ⬠ Beltane is a time for courtship and new relationships. Have fun 'speed dating' and getting to know more about the people in your group. Ask each other questions or try and discover 3 things you have in common.
- ⬠ Race to light a fire with flint and steel. Remember! Fire is dangerous so do take all necessary safety precautions and keep a bucket of water to hand.
- ⬠ Handfastings, a traditional betrothal for 'a year and a day,' are popular at Beltane. The couples hands are bound together in a figure of eight. Try completing some tasks as a pair whilst one of your hands are tied together.
- ⬠ Have a go at hoopla over a mini Maypole. Why not set Maypoles at different heights and score different points for each?
- ⬠ Make the longest daisy chain you can in 3 minutes. The daisy chain is the simplest flower crown to make for Beltane celebrations.
- ⬠ Gather May dew in a water relay race.

What?





Traditionally it is believed that women who wash their faces with the first dew of May will have good fortune for the rest of the year. The dew is also believed to bring beauty.

- ⬠ Race to decorate a May Bush with flowers, ribbons and coloured eggs.
- ⬠ Get outdoors on a scavenger hunt to find flowers for your May basket. Maybe you could find pictures of flowers that have been hidden and score points for each one you return to your basket.
- ⬠ The author and Druid Priestess, Danu Forest encourages walking barefoot in the first dew of May. Walk barefoot over different surfaces whilst blindfolded and see if you can guess them correctly.
- ⬠ Go on a faerie hunt in the dark. At Beltane the faeries are thought to be especially active.



Other

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-  In some communities all fires in the home are put out at Beltane and re-lit using the communal Tein-eigen fire. Hold a bonfire for your local community and use it to light candles to bring back to your home.
-  People jump over the Tein-eigen fire to purify themselves and bring fertility of body and mind. Allow your mind to get creative and conceive a new project for the coming months.
-  Beltane means 'bright fire'. Have a go at changing the colour of your campfire/bonfire flames in a science experiment.
-  Celebrate Beltane with a Maypole dance or visit a Maypole celebration.
-  Hang ribbons in trees and make wishes. Green, purple, pink and white are all colours associated with Beltane and can be seen in nature at the time of Beltane celebrations.
-  As Beltane is a popular time for Pagan weddings and Handfastings, attend a ceremony as a visitor or take part in the celebration of someone you know.
-  Morris dancers are traditional on May Day and have their own rich history. Take part in some Morris dancing and have a go at decorating your own hat.
-  Discover the language of flowers and the meanings of some of the blooms you have gathered for your May basket.
-  Traditionally cattle were driven between two bonfires on Beltane to protect them before putting them out to open pastures for the summer. Learn about cattle care, speak to your local large-animal vet to find out more.
-  Beltane Fire Festival is held in Edinburgh, Scotland each year. Visit Edinburgh and watch the celebrations of the festival.
-  Take a walk and see if you can find some faeries. At Beltane many Pagans believe that the veil between this world and the spirit world is at its thinnest. A bowl of milk and honey is believed to attract the faeries but you can do your own research.
-  The tradition of going A-Maying on Beltane Eve goes back centuries. Head to your local woodland to find and gather some of the first May or hawthorn blossoms to decorate your home/meeting place for Beltane.
-  Re-enact the marriage of the May Queen and the May King as has been done by people for centuries.

Adventure Complete?

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