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Beautiful tree bark

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## Bark - a protective layer of skin

Trees can be identified by looking at their bark. You can see variations in the colours and textures that are distinctive to individual species.

This willow was planted in the 1930's and over the years has developed grooves and ridges.



Similar to skin, bark is the outer covering of a tree. It protects the living tree from the environment, diseases and insect attack.

It is composed of non-living tissue on the outside and living tissue on the inside. In some species the bark looks similar throughout the life of the plant, while in others there are dramatic changes with age.



# ID parade



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Black poplar, cherry, walnut and birch.  
Willow and leylandii

These trees are all found in a local park within a few meters of each other.

Take photos of trees in your garden or street and make an id parade.



# What's there?

Can you see anything in the patterns in the tree bark?





# Aspirins to cinnamon via cricket balls

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Cinnamon scrolls look like tree barks, but what has a cricket ball or your gin and tonic got to do with tree bark?



Cork oak, is a medium-sized, evergreen oak tree from the Mediterranean. It is the primary source of cork for wine bottle stoppers, cork flooring and as the cores of cricket balls.



Willow bark has been used for centuries as a pain reliever. The active ingredient in the medicine made from willow bark is called salicin and can be found in aspirin.



Tonic water was traditionally made using quinine from the bark of *Cinchona pubescens*. Originally a tonic for malaria, quinine is still used today to treat malaria.

# Bark as a habitat



Cracks in bark provide great habitat. The deep fissures and crevices in the bark of an old oak is a haven for many species of insects, and spiders. The invertebrates attract birds, you can often see a woodpecker peeling off bark looking for the insects underneath.

Even after a tree has died, bark can be a home for all sorts of wildlife. Bats sometimes roost beneath loose bark and a multitude of invertebrates also live out their lives in this hidden world.



## Cinnamon toast

2 slices white bread or a tea cake  
2 teaspoons butter  
2 tablespoons white sugar  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Toast the bread to desired darkness.

Spread butter onto one side of each slice.

In a cup or small bowl, stir together the sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle generously over hot buttered toast.

Briefly return to the grill to heat through.

