



## The Magic Deer of Christmas Eve

Once, in a quiet village deep in the snowy forest, everyone eagerly anticipated Christmas Eve. The houses twinkled with golden lights, glowing softly in the frosty night, and the air was filled with the smell of warm mince pies.

That evening, two little children, Lily and Ben, were on their way to visit granny. She lived in the next village, and they were so thrilled to see her. But as they walked through the woods, snowflakes began to fall faster and faster, until the path disappeared!

“We’re lost,” said Lily, holding her brother’s hand. “What shall we do?”

Suddenly, a soft golden light glowed through the snow covered trees. It was warm and bright, like the sun peeking out from a cloud.

“What’s that?” whispered Ben, pointing.

From the trees stepped a magical deer. Its coat sparkled like frost in the moonlight, and its antlers shimmered like gold and they glowed brightly, lighting up the snowy forest like a lantern.

“The Magic Deer!” said Lily. “Granny told us about it! It helps people who are lost!”

The deer didn’t make a sound. It gently nodded its head and began to walk, its radiant antlers showing a path through the snow.

“Follow the deer,” said Ben. And so they did, stepping carefully, following its hoofprints.

**“Step by step, one by one,  
We’ll follow the deer tracks till we’re home and done!”**

The deer led them on and on, its light making the children feel warm and safe.



After a while, Lily and Ben began to see something familiar – the church steeple, the twinkling lights in the villagers’ windows, and the welcoming sight of granny’s house.

“We’re nearly there!” cheered Lily.

When they reached granny’s door, the deer stopped. It turned to look at them, its kind eyes twinkling like stars.

“Thank you, Magic Deer,” said Ben, waving.

The deer gave a silent nod, then disappeared into the snowy forest, its bright antlers fading into the night.

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When Lily and Ben told granny about the magical deer, she smiled warmly.

“The Magic Deer is a wonderful gift from the forest,” granny said. “It reminds us to care for nature and all the animals who live in it. But the best way we can help deer is by protecting their homes and leaving them undisturbed.”

Before bed, Lily and Ben drew a picture of the magical deer to hang on granny’s wall. They used crayons to show its shimmering antlers lighting the way through the snowy woods.

**“We can say thank you in a special way,  
By keeping the woods safe every day!”**

Every year after that, the villagers remembered the Magic Deer by telling its story and helping to look after the wild places that the deer called home.

And though the Magic Deer was never seen again by Lily and Ben, its story shone brightly in their hearts, reminding them that kindness to nature is the best gift of all.

**The End**



## Interactive Elements

### Join in with the rhymes

Ask the child/children to say the rhymes with you. They can stamp their feet softly when saying, “*Step by step, one by one...*” or join in to say, “*thank you to the Magic Deer...*”

### Act it out

As the story is read, children can pretend to be the deer walking majestically through the forest or the children stomping in the snow.

### Spot the deer

Show pictures of deer and ask the children to point out the antlers.





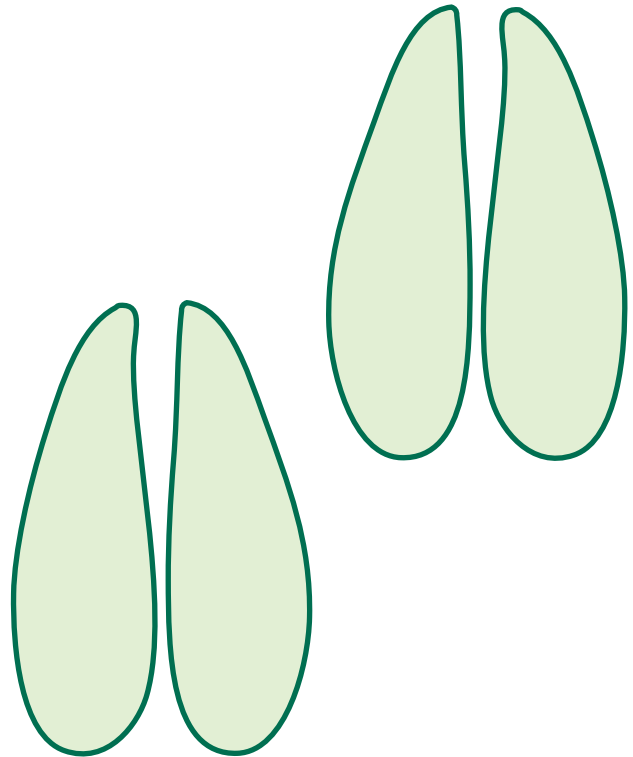
## Deer Track Stomp

### Objective:

Engage younger children in learning how deer move through their environment.

### Materials Needed:

- Paper or cardboard for creating hoof-shaped tracks
- Scissors
- Optional:** Glitter or paint to decorate tracks



### Instructions:

- Prepare a trail of deer tracks by cutting out hoof-shaped footprints and laying them out in a line through the garden or indoors.
- Encourage children to follow the trail, hopping or stomping as they pretend to be deer, mimicking how gracefully and quietly deer move.
- Link this activity to the Magic Deer of Christmas Eve story, where the lost children follow glowing hoof (slot) prints in the snow to find their way home.

### Learning Element:

- Teach children how deer move quietly through forests to avoid predators.
- Discuss how deer use their environment for food, shelter, and protection.
- Highlight the importance of being gentle with nature.





## Paper Deer Ornaments

### Materials Needed:

- Coloured paper (variety of colours)
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue
- Coloured markers or crayons
- Stickers (optional)
- Ribbon (for hanging)

### Instructions:

1. **Prepare the Deer Shape:** Cut out a simple deer shape from coloured paper. If you have a template, you can trace the shape onto the paper before cutting.
2. **Colour the Deer:** Use markers or crayons to colour the deer. Encourage the child to get creative with the colours – perhaps a brown deer, or even a rainbow one!
3. **Decorate:** Add stickers, drawings, or even glitter to make the deer special. If you'd like, you can use the markers to add details like eyes, a nose, and hooves.
4. **Attach the Ribbon:** Once the deer is decorated, glue a small piece of ribbon to the deer for hanging. This allows the ornament to be displayed on a Christmas tree or hung around the home.
5. **Display:** Once the glue is dry, hang the paper deer ornament and admire your beautiful creation!



### Why This Activity is Great:

- Develops Fine Motor Skills:** Children will practice cutting, gluing, and colouring, which helps to develop hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills.
- Creative Expression:** Let children express themselves through colour and design, fostering creativity.
- Introduction to Wildlife:** A wonderful way to introduce young children to the concept of animals and the natural world, particularly in the context of deer and their role in the winter season.

This simple craft activity is a fun way for children to engage with the holiday season while learning about deer and creating a keepsake ornament to enjoy year after year!

### Deer Facts

- "Deer are herbivores, meaning they eat plants."
- "Deer are very quiet animals, and they can move through the forest without making a sound."
- "Male deer grow antlers, but they fall off every year so they grow new ones!"

*As children decorate the paper deer, encourage them to talk about these simple facts and think about the deer in their natural environment. This will help them connect with nature and learn about wildlife in a fun, interactive way.*

# DEER CRAFT PROJECTS



## Deer Antler Headbands

### Materials Needed:




- Cardboard
- Crayons or paint
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue
- Stickers (optional)

### Instructions:

1. **Prepare the Antlers:** Begin by cutting out two antler shapes from cardboard. These can be simple, branching shapes that resemble deer antlers.
2. **Decorate the Antlers:** Let the children colour or paint the antlers using crayons or paints. They can also add stickers or glitter to make their antlers extra special.
3. **Create the Headband:** Cut a strip of cardboard long enough to fit around the child's head. This will serve as the base for the headband.
4. **Attach the Antlers:** Once the antlers are decorated and dry, glue them to the top of the headband strip. Make sure they are securely attached, so the antlers won't fall off.
5. **Fit the Headband:** Once the glue has dried, measure the headband to fit the child's head and use more glue to secure it.
6. **Wear and Enjoy:** Once the headband is ready, children can wear their deer antlers and proudly show them.



### Why This Activity is Great:

-  **Develops Fine Motor Skills:** Cutting, decorating, and assembling the headband helps children improve their hand-eye coordination and dexterity.
-  **Stimulates Creativity:** Children can express themselves through colouring and decorating their headbands, making each one unique.
-  **Introduction to Animal Features:** This craft gives children a chance to learn about deer, particularly about the fascinating feature of antlers, in a simple and engaging way.

This delightful and simple craft lets children get creative while learning about deer antlers and their role in the animal world. It's a great way to bring a little bit of wildlife magic into the holiday season!

### Deer Antler Facts:

- "Deer have antlers that they cast and regrow every year."
- "Different types of deer grow different shapes of antlers."
- "Deer use their antlers to protect themselves, and during the mating season to show off to, and sometimes even fight with, other deer."
- "Did you know? Deer are quick! They can run really fast, especially when they need to escape danger."

*As children wear their headbands, explain how antlers are unique to male deer and how they help them in different ways, like showing strength or protecting themselves. Children can pretend to be deer while learning about these fascinating features in a fun, interactive way!*