

Animal Tracks

Directions: Cut up these cards and head outside to look for animal tracks on the ground. Compare these tracks to the ones you find. What is similar? What is different? Can you find a match?

Fox



Front: 2 1/4 in.

Hind: 2 in.

Tip: Foxes move in straight lines with their back paws landing in the prints of front paws, forming a series of single tracks.

Squirrel



Front: 1 1/2 in.

Hind: 2 1/4 in.

Tip: Squirrels like to hop, and their tracks usually zig-zag, instead of following a straight path. Their feet tend to land side-by-side, leaving a pattern of four distinct prints.

Deer



Front and Hind: 2 1/3-3 in.

Tip: Like dogs and cats, deer leave behind staggered tracks because they lift their front and back legs on opposite sides at the same time.

Raccoon



Front: 2 1/2 in.

Hind: 4 in.

Tip: Raccoon tracks look like small human hands! Raccoons waddle as they walk, leaving tracks that show one front and the other rear foot, side by side.

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Directions: Cut up these cards and head outside to look for animal tracks on the ground. Compare the shapes of these tracks to the ones you find. What is similar? What is different? Can you find a match?

Rabbit



Front: 1 in.



Hind: 3 1/2 in.

Tip: Rabbits are hoppers and move by placing their larger hind feet together, then placing their smaller front feet together. If you see pairs of prints like those above, they were likely a rabbit's!

Dog



Front: 2 1/4-4 in.



Hind: 2 1/4-4 in.

Tip: While other canines like wolves and coyotes conserve their energy by walking in a straight line, dogs make zig-zags and circles as they walk.

Cat



Front and Hind: 1 1/8 in.

Tip: Like dogs, the house cat also tends to meander when walking. Cats retract their claws when walking and will not leave prints of their nails.

Birds



Tip: Perching birds like sparrows have narrow feet with long toes for grasping branches. Walking birds like turkeys and pigeons have wider footprints. Water birds like geese, ducks and herons leave prints of the webbing on their feet.