

To avoid possibly lethal parasitic and bacterial infections, materials gathered from the outdoors should be sterilized.

Baking : You can easily bake small to medium sized branches or pine cones in your oven. Set the oven to 250°F. Place the items on a baking tray and put them in the oven for 30 minutes. Never leave wood in the oven unattended, as it is a fire hazard.

Bleaching: Make a solution of about 1 part household bleach to 30 parts water in a tub large enough for the solution to cover the items. This is about ½ a cup of bleach per gallon of water.

Soak them in the bleach solution for 24 hours.

Empty the tub and refill with plain water to remove the bleach, which is toxic. Soak them in the water for several hours, drain the tub and fill up with more water. Repeat this procedure several times over the next couple of days.

Let them dry in a warm room, turning it occasionally. Alternatively, place it on a clean table outside in the sun. The drying process might also take several days.