

Pelican Pete's Backyard Adventures™

Nature Discoveries and Outdoor Fun

Snow Symmetry

DID YOU KNOW?

Most snow crystals have six sides. The crystals form around dust particles carried high into the clouds by the wind. When the temperature is very cold, water vapor clinging to the particles changes to ice crystals. The crystals grow to build symmetrical six-sided (hexagonal) structures.

The four basic crystal shapes are lacy flat disks, prism-like columns, intricate six-pointed stars, and needle-like tubes. All but the tubes are six-sided.

As the snow crystals fall to earth, they join together with other crystals to create snowflakes that land on trees, bushes, the ground, and *you*—brrr!

GET OUTDOORS!

Explore your yard or neighborhood for nature's sixes. Can you find small critters with six legs? Flowers with six petals? Spiders with six eyes? Leaves with six lobes? Make a list in your journal.

Play Six Sticks! Draw two circles on the ground a distance apart. One is a cloud and the other is Earth. Gather six sticks to use as snow crystals and place them in the cloud. How quickly can you race the sticks to Earth—one at a time?

*Clouds aloft in a cold winter sky
Weave coats of crystals from on high,
Embroidered with stars and glittering lace
To blanket our world in a snowy embrace.*

