

Version 1

There once lived a poor woodcutter, his wife and two children, Hansel and Gretel. The woodcutter and his wife could not take care of their children anymore. So, they decided to leave them in the middle of the forest.

When the children heard about this they got very scared. They came up with a plan of dropping pebbles along the way their father took them. All they had to do was to follow the line of pebbles back home. Their parents were surprised to see them back and decided to take them again. Hansel and Gretel decided to drop bread crumbs this time as their pebbles were gone. But sadly for the children, the birds ate up all the crumbs.

They walked and walked but could not find the way back home. Suddenly, they saw a strange house made up of cookies, candies and chocolates. When they both were eating the yummy door, a witch bounced on them.

She locked up Hansel in a cage and asked Gretel to help her heat the oven. She would cook them and eat them up. But just as the witch bent to check the oven's temperature, Gretel pushed her from behind and locked the oven door. Gretel rescued Hansel and they filled their pockets with the witch's jewels.

Finally, they managed to find their way back home and gave the jewels to their parents. Thanks to the clever children, the family was never poor and hungry again.

Original text: <https://www.bedtimeshortstories.com/hansel-and-gretel-story>

Version 2

There once lived a poor man, his wife and two children. The man and his wife could not take care of their children anymore. So, they decided to leave them in the middle of the forest.

The following morning the parents lead the children into the forest and left them there. The children were very scared. They walked and walked but could not find the way back home. Suddenly, they saw a strange house. When they were outside the door, a witch bounced on them.

She locked up the boy and asked the girl to help her heat the oven. She would cook them and eat them up. But just as the witch bent to check the oven's temperature, the girl pushed her from behind and locked the oven door. The girl rescued the boy and they escaped.

Finally, they managed to find their way back home.

Simplified version of original text from: <https://www.bedtimeshortstories.com/hansel-and-gretel-story>

Version 3

There once lived a dark-haired man, with his red-haired wife and two young children, Hansel and Gretel. The man was a woodcutter and his wife was a baker. They were very poor and so could not afford to take care of their children anymore.

One day, the man and his wife decided to leave their two children in the forest, hoping that they would be found by another couple who could offer them a better home. Hansel and Gretel overheard their plan and were scared at the idea of being left in the forest. They came up with a plan of dropping pebbles along the way their parents took them. All they had to do was to follow the line of pebbles back home. Their parents were surprised to see them back and decided to take them back to the forest again. Hansel and Gretel decided to drop bread crumbs this time because they had run out of pebbles. But sadly for the children, the birds ate up all the crumbs.

They walked and walked but could not find the way back home. Suddenly, they saw a strange house made up of chocolate chip cookies, a variety of candies and lots of chocolates. When they both were eating the chocolate chip cookie door, a witch with long black hair bounced on them.

She locked up Hansel in a cage and asked Gretel to help her heat the large oven. The witch told the children that she would cook them and eat them up. But just as the witch bent to check the oven's temperature, Gretel pushed her from behind and locked the oven door. The witch screamed. Gretel rescued Hansel from the cage and headed to the door. As they were about to leave the house, Gretel saw a collection of expensive rubies, emeralds and diamonds. The children filled their pockets with the jewels and then ran out of the house.

Finally, Hansel and Gretel managed to find their way back home and gave the jewels to their parents. The parents could sell the jewels so that the family would never be poor or hungry again.

Added detail to original text from: <https://www.bedtimeshortstories.com/hansel-and-gretel-story>

Version 4

The old lady knew of the poor family on the outskirts of the woods. The dark-haired father worked as a woodcutter and the red-haired mother was a baker. Their two children – both no older than ten years old – were quiet and seemed happy to entertain themselves making up games in their garden.

One day, the little boy and girl appeared in the forest and stumbled across the old lady's home. Watching from inside, the old lady saw the children gingerly approach the house and then help themselves to the delicate chocolate pieces that laced the cookie panels of her front door. Furious with the children's behaviour, the old lady dragged the children inside. She locked the little boy in a cage whilst getting the little girl to assist her with heating her large, black oven. She was determined to teach these children a lesson!

As the old lady checked the temperature of the oven, she was pushed from behind. She stumbled forwards, into the oven, and heard the door click shut. As the old lady was screaming inside the oven, she could hear the girl free the boy from the cage and then the front door slammed closed as the children made their escape.

Additional text from the witch's perspective (written by Laura Barclay)