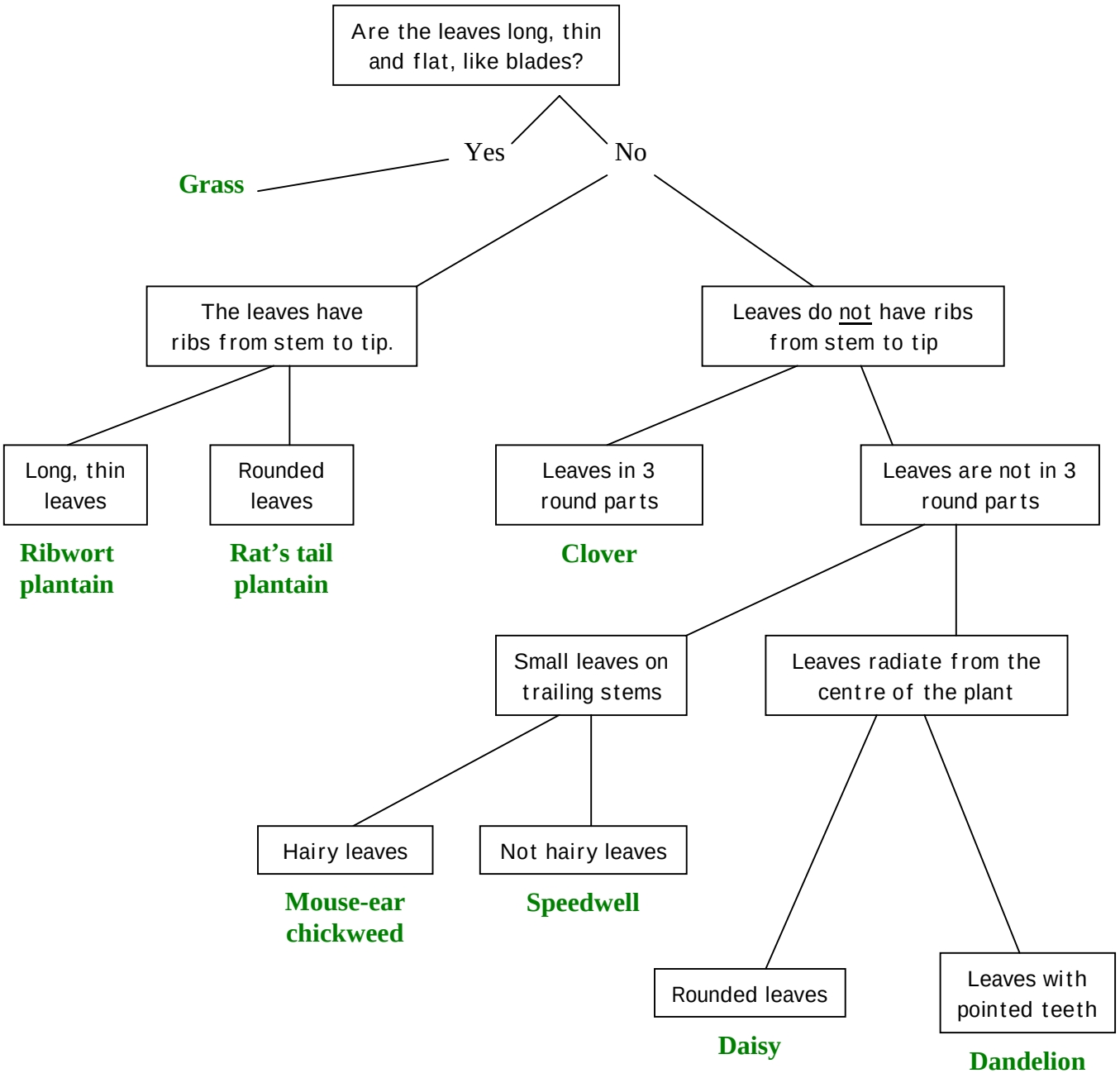
KEY to plants of the school field (using leaves)



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Binary key to plants of the school field (using leaves)

A neater way to arrange an identification key is to write everything in questions. Each question can only be answered YES or NO. It is like the YES NO game.

Here is the same key to plants of the school field, but done in YES NO style. It is called a binary key. Binary means in pairs. To identify a plant, start at 1 and answer the question, then do what it says.

You have to look at the whole plant to use this key. Separate leaves don't work!

1	Leaves long, thin and flat, like blades?	YES	**Grass**
		NO	Go to 2
2	Leaves ribbed from stem to tip?	YES	Go to 3
		NO	Go to 4
3	Leaves long and thin?		**Ribwort plantain**
	Leaves rounded?		**Rat's tail plantain**
4	Leaves in 3 round parts?	YES	**Clover**
		NO	Go to 5
5	Small leaves on trailing stems?	YES	Go to 6
		NO	Go to 7
6	Hairy leaves?		**Mouse-ear chickweed**
	Not hairy leaves?		**Speedwell**
7	Leaves radiate from centre of plant?	YES	Go to 8
8	Rounded leaves?		**Daisy**
	Toothed leaves?		**Dandelion**

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Binary key to plants of the school field, using flowers.

You can identify the same plants using their flowers instead of leaves, but only when the flowers are flowering!

Like with the leaves key, start at 1, answer YES or NO then do what it says. Again, you have to look very carefully at the features you can see.

1	Flowers very small and spiky – no petals?	YES	**Grass**
		NO	Go to 2
2	Flowers green, no petals, brown stamens all round them?	YES	Go to 3
		NO	Go to 4
3	Flowers short and rounded?		**Ribwort plantain**
	Flowers long like a rat's tail?		**Rat's tail plantain**
4	Lots of petals arranged in a rosette?	YES	Go to 5
		NO	Go to 6
5	Petals all yellow?		**Dandelion**
	Centre yellow, petals white?		**Daisy**
6	Petals in a pom-pom shape?	YES	**Clover**
		NO	Go to 7
7	Petals blue?		**Speedwell**
	Petals white?		**Mouse-ear chickweed**

These 8 plants are the most common types on school fields. If you can't identify a school field plant with these keys, it could be because

- **There are other plants growing there which are not on the key**
- **You have not used the key correctly or you have not looked carefully enough**

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