Fun fact!
Romans would greet each other with the phrase 'io Saturnalia' (pronounced eeyo sa-tur-nal-ee-uh and roughly translating as 'hurrah for Saturnalia') so don't forget to shout it while you're making your wreath!

Make a Roman Saturnalia wreath!

Saturnalia was an important Roman festival, given in honour of Saturn, god of farming and money. It started on 17 December and it was a time of gift-giving, feasting and partying! Schools, businesses and courts closed and a temporary king was chosen who gave orders to make sure everyone was having a good time!

Romans decorated their houses and outside buildings with wreaths and tree branches. They were often made from holly (Saturn's sacred plant), fir (in honour of Faunus, Saturn's grandson) and ivy (in honour of Ops, Saturn's wife). The green branches symbolised luck, friendship and life during the chilly winter.

Have a go at making your very own Roman wreath to celebrate Saturnalia!

You will need:
• Bendy branches – we used willow
• Evergreen branches and leaves
• Scissors
• Green string
• Ribbon to hang the wreath

Top tip
To make your wreath last longer, keep it in a cool area, away from direct sunlight. You can also mist it every two days with cold water in a bottle.
Go on a nature walk and collect evergreen branches like fir and holly. You'll need a few different types – you might even have some in your garden! Look for branches which have already fallen on the floor.

Make the hoop by bending the branches into a circle. Tie them tightly together using string.

Organise your branches and leaves by type.

Make small bunches using a variety of leaves and branches. Tie them together using string – you'll need quite a few!

Lay each bunch over your hoop and tie with string as you work your way round the hoop. Don’t forget to add a ribbon loop at the top of your wreath so you can hang it.

Your wreath is complete! Hang it up and you’re ready to celebrate – io Saturnalia!

Top tip!
To make a simpler wreath, cut out a doughnut shape from cardboard. This will be your hoop. Tie elastic bands around the hoop and tuck in the branches.