



How to Make a Rubber-Band Powered Boat

Set 14 (350 words)

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Special words

one, scissors, does, more, when, your, once, put, could, friends, have, water, ruler, bow/ou/ meaning the front of a boat

Words where the vowel says its name:

wind, below

Making a toy boat that can propel itself across water is fun.

Follow the steps below to make your own boat.

What You Will Need

- a rubber band
- scissors
- a ballpoint pen
- a ruler
- a length of corrugated cardboard that can be covered later with duct tape to make it more water-resistant
- duct tape
- a bath or backyard pool to float the boat in

First, cut a rectangle of cardboard about thirty by fifteen centimetres.

Use a ruler to draw a rectangle at one end of your cardboard, three centimetres from each side and about ten centimetres long. At the other end, draw a bow, the pointy bit at the front of a boat, as shown in the picture.

Cut out your rectangle and put it to one side. You will need it later to use as a paddle. Then cut along your boat-shaped lines.

Now, take the rectangle that you set aside and trim it by about seven millimetres on all sides. This does not have to be exact, but the paddle will need room to move freely when it is put back into the space you cut it from. Also, keep in mind that the duct tape will make the space narrower.

Cover the cardboard shapes with duct tape so your boat does not get soggy and sink.

Slip the rubber band onto your boat across the empty space you cut out. Slide the paddle (the rectangle you cut out and trimmed) into the rubber band. Wind it up by twisting it around and let it go. If the paddle does not turn freely, trim it a bit more. After testing, you can staple the rubber band to the paddle to hold it in place.

Wind up the paddle again. Hold it firmly and twist it around and around to increase the tension of the rubber band.

Once you have twisted the rubber band at least 20 times, put the boat in a bath or backyard pool and let it go.

If you enjoyed making your boat, you could make boats with your friends and have boat races.

Questions

After reading the text, or the relevant page, ask students one or more of the following questions. If students are working in pairs, alternate Partner 1, then Partner 2.

1. What is a rubber-band powered boat?
2. How does the rubber band make the boat move forward?
3. Duct tape is also called duck tape. What is duct tape? Why is duct tape used for making a cardboard boat?
4. What do we call the front of a boat? What do we call the back of a boat. When facing the front, what do we call the left hand side of a boat? When facing the front, what do we call the right hand side of a boat?
5. Make a rubber-band powered boat and try it out. Describe what happened.