

WINTER SHELTERS FOR STRAY CATS

AGES

Teens

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Teens make winter shelters for stray cats! Alternatively, for indoor cats, they build elaborate cardboard playhouses out of recycled boxes. Suggested runtime: 90–120 minutes

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Depending on the winter shelter tutorial you choose, you might need:

- Rubbermaid bins or Styrofoam coolers
- Styrofoam sheets, Mylar blankets, or straw for insulation
- Duct tape
- Utility knives

For cardboard playhouses, you will need:

- Cardboard boxes
- Utility knives
- Duct tape
- Pictures for inspiration

Shelter tips:

- To maintain cats' body heat, smaller shelters are better than larger ones.
- The ideal opening is a circle about the width of a cat's whiskers (5–6" diameter). Predators may sneak in through larger holes.
- Add heavy sheet plastic to make door flaps and/or awnings to retain heat.
- Also to help retain heat, raise shelters off the ground (e.g., on 2x4s)
- Weigh down shelters with weights/rocks to keep them from blowing away.
- Elevate the back end and drill a small hole in the floor of the front end to let water drain out.

TIP:

To keep costs down, solicit donations of old plastic bins, Styrofoam coolers, and/or cardboard boxes.

UNIQUE SPACE AND PERSONNEL NEEDS

Because straw and Styrofoam can get messy, this is a great program to run outside. Add staff members or volunteers to supervise construction, depending on the number of participants.

RESOURCES

Web

Winter shelter tutorials: <https://bit.ly/3dx7tAS> and <https://bit.ly/2LoPssk>

TIP:

For cat fiction, see Chapter 04: We Rate Pets; for nonfiction, see Chapter 05: Pet Expo.