

HOW TO FLOAT YOUR BOAT!

Cardboard boats are fairly easy to build and the material cost are very low if you use a few tricks of the trade. The primary focus is to have fun and hopefully end up building something out of cardboard that will float long enough to compete in a couple heats and still float at the finish line, good luck!

Material's needed

Lots of cardboard - You will need more than you think so try to find as much used or recycled cardboard as you can. Pallet slips, appliance boxes, and assorted small boxes can be found behind most major retail shops. If all else fails, you can buy boxes from Home Depot or storage centers.

Contact cement – You may as well buy a gallon of the magic glue. It is waterproof and will stick two pieces of cardboard together better than all the duck tap in the world. Always use in well ventilated area!

Box cutter – You will need a nice sturdy razor knife and some new blades, cardboard is pretty tuff stuff and dulls blades quickly. Let the adults do the cutting!

Disposable paint brushes – You can use the same brush day after day in the contact cement, the brush will get hard over night but softens up again once back in the cement. You will need plenty of brushes for the paint job so stock up.

Rubber gloves – Contact cement is the stickiest stuff in the world; you don't want it on your hands.

Paint – Water based latex paint works best, this is the most expensive item on your list. You will need at least a couple gallons of fun colors. Hint; look in the miss-matched paint section of Home Depot or your local paint supplier. They almost always have paint that was mixed wrong and for sale cheap.

Paper towels – The blue shop towels work the best but any paper towel will do, buy lots of them because you will be covering your boat with a couple layers of paper towels soaked in paint. This process gives you the waterproof finish you need to keep afloat.

Lots of imagination – A cardboard boat is more a work of art than a construction project. After a little practice you can bend it and shape it into almost anything. Kayaks, barges, sharks, cars or whales are all possible with a little imagination and lots of glue.

Now turn the page to get some ideas on boats and some tips on boat building!



This is an example of a couple easy to assemble **Kayak** type boats. You start by laminating four or five layers of cardboard together creating a very thick sheet of cardboard much like a sheet of plywood. You then cut out your stringers and floor joist and glue them together to make your boat frame. Then you stretch a single sheet of cardboard over the frame to create the skin of your boat. Seal the whole thing up by applying a layer of paint to the cardboard, and while it's still wet, lay a layer of paper towels on then paint over them. The paint will soak into the paper towel and create a waterproof finish. You can't apply too much paint or paper towels so slap it on!



This is an example of the **Barge** type boat. These are very easy to build and offer a nice stable platform for showing off your artistic ability or adding lots of crew for paddle power. Take a bunch of assembled boxes of the same size, shoe boxes, liquor boxes tubes or squares, whatever you can find. Glue the boxes closed to create little air chambers then glue them side by side until you have a big flat raft. Cover the whole thing with a layer of cardboard to give yourself a smooth finish then waterproof as explained above.



This is a version of the **Big Box** boat, very easy to make. Get the biggest box you can find then cut it in half. Remember to keep the sides low enough to paddle. You will need to reinforce the bottom so you can sit or kneel on it without poking a hole through the bottom. You may also want to make a couple stringers, as described above, to stiffen up the sides. Seal the whole thing up with paper towels and paint then bon voyage!