

How to Build a Play House or Fort for Your Children in 5 minutes



by **bookmom**



Build a Play House or Fort

Introduction

From time to time we all make purchases that come in enormous boxes. After the item has been extricated, we fill the box with the packing materials, and tow it to the curb, or drag it with some difficulty to the dumpster. Why not do the green thing and recycle it? With a little creativity, this box is a gold mine of possibility and hours of play for your children. It only takes the box and about 5 minutes of your time.

Instructions

Difficulty: Easy

Things You'll Need

- An enormous box. If you don't intend to buy something this huge in the near future but the idea is intriguing, friends, family, and local businesses can all be a source.
- A heavy duty utility knife.
- Packing or Duct tape.

Steps

1 Step One

Sit your box with the open flaps up, the closed portion resting on the ground.

2 Step Two

Cut each of the small flaps into triangles, the point in the middle of the flap. Try to make each side as even and straight as you can.

3 Step Three

Rest the remaining two flaps against the diagonal cut you just made and tape. Now you have a roof.

4 Step Four

You can have two types of doors. My kids wanted a door that opened, so I cut a door shape on the top, bottom and one of the sides. When you pull the piece out, the fold where it opens becomes the hinge. Or you can just cut the door completely out for streamlined crawl-through.

5 Step Five

Use your imagination for the rest. The number and style of windows is up to you. The opposite side wall from the door can turn into any number of things. Ask your kids. No matter what age they are, they will have definite ideas.

6 Step Six

Optional: Your kids will love decorating their new house if you want to go there. Our box was covered with blue ink, so we painted it. We did it in the privacy of our backyard with my kids stripped down to their diapers/underwear. (skin washes MUCH more easily than clothing.) Using Tempera paint (or you could use other washable paint) they each grabbed a wall and painted it as desired. Mommy got into the act too.

7 Step Seven

Be ready for hours of fun. Turn the Styrofoam packing inserts into "furniture" if you want. We made a boat out of a smaller box and well-applied tape. Or just leave it bare bones; it's up to you!

Overall Tips & Warnings

Make plans for storage before you begin. This is a large structure, and may be awkward to keep somewhere out of the weather. Unfortunately, water is deadly to cardboard. (My plastic tarp was purchased, alas, too late.)

Member Comments

 by [Pixie1976](#) on 6/12/2008

My kids love to do this!



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 by [MidniteWriter](#) on 6/8/2008

Kids can usually build it themselves and we can put the finishing touches on it! I have many happy memories of "forts" made from my parents' large purchases. :)



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 by [Pixie1976](#) on 5/29/2008

Very wise, yes recycle.




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 by [AuntPhyl](#) on 5/25/2008

W-a-a-y-y too cute! Thanks!



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 by [Traqqr](#) on 5/20/2008

Good suggestion. I'll have to save my big boxes from now on.



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