

Recyclable Materials Puppets



This year marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. One way to help keep the Earth clean is by reusing items you might otherwise throw away or recycle. Reusing items helps reduce the amount of energy used and greenhouse gases created by producing new objects and breaking them down after use.

For Earth Day, we are going to make animal-puppets using materials that would otherwise be put in the recycling bin. Remember, animals are impacted by how humans treat the Earth, so let's work to keep their air and water clean too!

Below are step-by-step instructions for making an elephant like the one we made. Your puppet can be anything you want – experiment and see how many animals you can make!

How to Make an Elephant Puppet

Step 1: Search your home and gather your materials and supplies – these could be brown lunch bags, paper grocery bags, cardboard boxes, old magazines, buttons, toilet paper or paper towel rolls, or any other recyclable materials in your house.

For our elephant we used a brown paper lunch bag – if you use a paper grocery store bag, make the ears and trunk even larger to match!



Step 2: You will also need:

- a. Scissors
- b. Glue or tape
- c. Decorating materials: pen, pencil, markers, paint, or crayons

Let's make some ears!

Step 3: Using cardboard, paper, or fabric, cut out and make two ears.

- The easiest way to make elephant ears is to draw an upper-case B.
- **PRO-TIP – to make your elephant ears symmetrical**, draw and cut out your first ear, then flip it over and trace it, then cut it out – now your ears match!

Step 4: You can also make a smaller upper-case B to create the inner ear.

4a: Glue or tape this to the larger upper-case B.

I think we need a mouth.

Step 5: Cut out a mouth from cardboard, paper, or fabric.

- The easiest way to make a mouth is to draw an upper-case D.

What's an elephant without a trunk?

Step 6: Create the trunk using a paper towel or toilet paper roll.

- If you use a paper towel roll cut it down to size.

Step 7: Color your roll using markers, crayons, or paint.

- No markers, crayons, or paint? No sweat! Look through a magazine or newspaper for pages with a color you are looking for, wrap it around your roll, then glue or tape it on.

Step 8: Squeeze and flatten the top of the roll and glue or tape it shut.

8a: Add a few lines on the middle of the roll to create the look of wrinkles



All together now!

Step 9: If you want, go ahead and color your paper bag – and don't forget to add some eyes! You can also glue or tape magazine clippings on your bag to create a collage.

Step 10: Use glue or tape to attach the ears to each side of the bag flap.

Step 11: Glue or tape the mouth underneath the bag flap.

Step 12: Glue or tape the trunk in the middle of the bag flap.

Step 13: And there you have it: your very own homemade elephant puppet made from completely recyclable materials.

Go ahead and create your own recyclable-puppet zoo and put on an Earth Day themed puppet show for your family!