



AT-HOME PROJECT GUIDE



VOLUNTEER TO HELP THE ANIMALS, RIGHT FROM HOME!

Thank you for your interest in helping the animals at AWS! For students looking to fulfill community service hours or for caring individuals who just want to lend a helping hand, we've put together a list of projects to help guide you as you volunteer from the comfort of your home!

Each project will directly support the health and welfare of the pets at AWS, bringing them more joy, fun and enrichment while they wait to be adopted. The best part about these projects – they are fun!

When your projects are complete, please call our Youth Programs' Humane Educator at (207) 985-3244 ext. 109, so that we can plan a time for you to safely stop by with your projects.

Thank you for choosing to help AWS! You make a difference to thousands of pets in need each and every year.

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Please note that each project varies in complexity, materials needed and skill level. For youth volunteers, adult supervision and/or guidance may be required

FOOD & TREATS

Projects include making treats for dogs, putting together cat nip pillows for cats and making hay rolls for small animals.

Homemade No-Bake Dog Treats

(1 batch = 2 hours)

This recipe is from the dog lifestyle website prettyfluffy.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 Cup Plain Organic Yogurt
- 1 Cup Natural Peanut Butter
- 3 Cups Rolled Oats

TO MAKE

1. Whisk the yogurt and peanut butter until it forms a paste.
2. Add the oats 1/4 to 1/2 cup at a time ensuring they are fully coated and no dry spots form. You will be left with a heavy mixture.
3. Scoop out bite sized pieces with a spoon and roll into little balls.
4. Place on a flat tray lined with baking paper.
5. Pop them in the fridge for one hour to chill, then serve.

HANDY HINTS!

- * Makes 25-30 treats.
- * Treats can last up to 7-10 days stored in the fridge.
- * Use a gentle pressure when rolling the balls. The mixture can be sticky and heavy handedness can cause it to crumble.



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Homemade Dog Treats

(1 batch = 2 hours)

This recipe and photograph are from the food blog [pinch of yum](#)

Yield: 30-ish large dog treats

INGREDIENTS

DOG BISCUITS:

- 1 cup pumpkin
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup oil* (suggest canola oil)
- 2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda



GLAZE:

- 2 tablespoons bacon grease, coconut oil, chicken fat, or any other fat that will solidify at room temperature, melted
- 1/4 cup smooth peanut butter

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Combine pumpkin, peanut butter, eggs, and oil in a bowl. Add in baking soda and whole wheat flour. Stir until a stiff dough forms. Knead dough or mix just until flour is incorporated.
3. Roll out dough with a rolling pin and use a cookie cutter to cut out dog bone shapes, or just bake into little circles like cookies. Bake for 15 minutes.
4. Whisk the bacon grease and peanut butter until very smooth. Drizzle over the treats and cool till glaze hardens (it does best in the fridge or freezer)



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Upcycled Catnip Toys

(10 toys = 1 hour)

VERSION 1: THE OLD SOCK

Photo from <https://www.marthastewart.com/2127285/diy-cat-toys-and-games>

- Find an unneeded mismatched sock (a baby sock or child's sock works best)
- Make sure the sock is free of holes and isn't soiled or dirty.
- Fill with about a tablespoon of cat nip
- Fill the remainder with cut up newspaper, fleece pieces or stuffing
- Tie off the end, either by sewing or knotting



VERSION 2: THE TP ROLL

Photo from <https://www.catster.com/lifestyle/5-diy-cat-toys-made-from-empty-tp-rolls>

- Gather your TP rolls
- Tightly fold in one end and add catnip to the other end
- Fold the other end as you did the first end
- Decorate as desired.



VERSION 3: THE FELT TRICK

Photo from <https://targetmademedoit.com/diy-felt-catnip-filled-cat-toys>

- Cut a small piece of felt into two identical geometric shapes
- Line up the pieces and stitch* along the outside, leaving a small opening.
- Add a tablespoon or two of catnip and some stuffing.
- Stitch* the opening shut.
- Embellish as desired.



*Stitching can be done on a sewing machine or by hand



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Slow Feeder

(10 slow feeders = 1 hour)

Instructions and photo from aspca.com

What You'll Need:

- Toilet paper or paper towel roll
- Sharp knife or scissors
- Treats or kibble

How To:

1. Using a knife or scissors, cut holes on the side of the tube, making sure they are large enough for the kibble or treats to pass through.
2. Place the kibble or treats inside the tube, tape or fold the ends



Hay Rolls for Smalls

(10 rolls = 1 hour)

Photos from <http://bunnyproof.com/free-bunny-toys-toilet-roll-tubes.html>

Materials:

- Toilet paper or paper towel roll
- Scissors
- Hay (not straws!) or treats
- String (optional)

Instructions:

1. Cut the paper roll evenly into ½-1 inch circular rings
2. Interlay and overlap the rings in a criss-cross fashion until they form a ball
3. Drop in a treat or stuff it with hay for the small animals to enjoy.



Variations:

Simply fill an uncut toilet paper roll with hay, fold down both sides and voila

Before adding the hay to either version above, add a string to hang the toy. The bunnies will enjoy the extra challenge of getting to their hay or treats!



FUNDRAISING

The biggest way you can help is to raise funds or collect supplies to support our animal care operations. Consider launching a fundraiser or ask for gifts for the AWS animals in lieu of birthday presents.

Wish List Drive

Help the animals in our care by donating much needed pet food and supplies. Ask family members and friends to bring a gift for the animals to your birthday party or hold a Wish List Drive to collect a variety of items like:

- Canned cat food
- Canned and dry kitten food
- Dog treats
- Durable dog toys such as Nylabones
- Bully sticks or rawhide treats
- Cat nip toys
- Jingle balls and other cat toys



See AWS' complete wish list at <http://animalwelfaresociety.org/give/wish-list/>



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Fundraising Drive

Monetary donations are a wonderful way to help animals in need because it provides AWS with funds to purchase items that are not typically donated, such as specialty diet food or medication. Fundraising drives are great volunteer activities for students. Through fundraisers, students learn how resources are allocated – to veterinary care, special training or program support. Students will see first-hand how much goes into running a busy community shelter and Adoption Center.

To get you started, here are some ideas:

- Donate money saved or earned from chores
- Run a lemonade stand or have a bake sale
- Collect bottles and redeem them for AWS
- Sell handmade items
- Ask family and friends to save their change

Be creative when it comes to running donation and fundraising drives! There is so much you can do and every little bit makes a difference to the pets of AWS!

Social Media Fundraiser

If you have a social media account, starting a Facebook or Instagram fundraiser is a simple and very effective way to help the animals. AWS is linked directly to Facebook's fundraising tools so any funds you raise on Facebook are automatically deposited into our bank account at the end of each month.

Your friends and family members can make their gifts on Facebook or Instagram securely using a credit card or Paypal account. Many online fundraising tools charge a processing fee of at least 3%. Facebook covers the cost of any fees so 100% of the money raised comes directly to AWS.

Consider launching a FB fundraiser for your birthday, your pet's adoptiversary date or just because!



FUNCTION

There are many items animals need to be safe, warm and comfortable. Here are a few suggestions to help outdoor (feral) cats!

Rubbermaid Cat Shelter

(1 house = 4 hours)

Adapted design by Alley Cat Advocates

This design uses two **Rubbermaid** storage bins with removable lids. It is important to use **Rubbermaid** bin because they hold up to all weather. Other brands may crack in the cold. Earth tone colors will blend best with environment and make them more natural in appearance to the cats. Cats who spend time outdoors, especially feral cats, will use these to find shelter from predators and the elements.

Supplies:

- 8' x 2' sheet of 1" thick rigid Styrofoam
- A yardstick
- Box cutter
- Straw (not hay)
- 1 Large Rubbermaid Bin (approx. 30 gal)
- 1 Smaller Rubbermaid Bin (approx. 18 – 25 gal)

Note: Try placing one bin inside the other allowing room for Styrofoam before you purchase.

To Assemble:

- Cut a 6"x6" doorway in one of the long sides of the bin towards the corner. Cut the opening so that the bottom of the doorway is several inches above the ground to prevent flooding into the bin.
- Using the yardstick and the cutter, cut a piece of Styrofoam large enough to line the floor of the bin.
- Line each of the interior walls of the bin leaving a 3" gap between the top of the Styrofoam and the upper part of the bin.



- Cut out a doorway in the Styrofoam interior wall where the doorway has already been cut out in the bin.
- Measure the length and width of the interior space and place a second, smaller, smaller bin into the interior. This bin should fit as snugly as possible against the Styrofoam wall pieces.
- Cut a doorway into this bin where the doorways have been cut into the Styrofoam and outer bin.
- Stuff the bottom of the interior bin with straw to provide both insulation and a comfortable spot to lie down.
- Cut out a Styrofoam roof to rest on top of the Styrofoam wall pieces.
- Close the bin with its lid.



Styrofoam Insulation



Second Container filled with Straw



Cover Second Container



More Insulation



Final Cover



Completed Shelter

Feral Cat Shelter

(1 house = 8 hours)

Instructions by Garth Russell, Biddeford Animal Control Officer

This type of feral cat shelter is a step above the Rubbermaid one. Construction involves basic carpentry skills and access to a variety of tools. They can be painted a plain color to blend into the background or be decorated to stand out.



Materials List:

- 1 – 4’x8’ plywood ½” thick
- 1 – 4’x8’ rigid insulation 1.5” thick
- 1 – 12’ pressure treated 2x4 (or 2 6’ or 8’ PT 2x4’s)
- 2 exterior grade strap or T hinges (plus mounting screws)
- 1 barrel bolt latch (plus mounting screws)
- Box of 1¼” exterior grade screws
- Exterior paint or stain
- (Optional) 4 exterior grade handles (plus mounting screws).
- Straw for bedding insulation

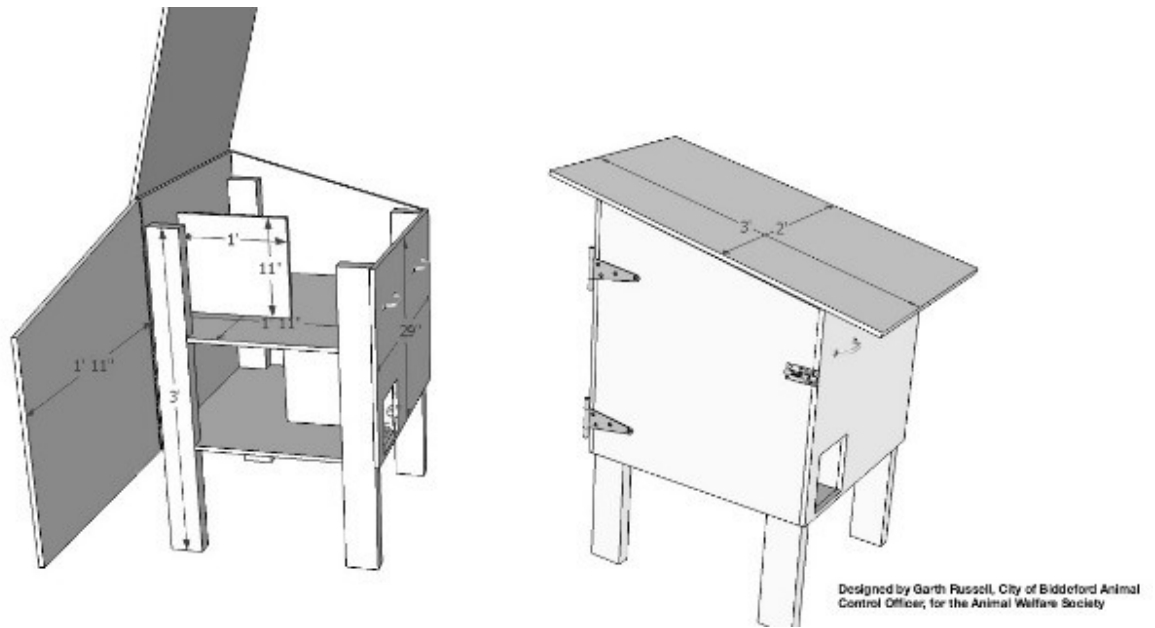


Assembly Instructions:

1. Measure and cut all pieces from 1/2" plywood and 2/4. It might be helpful to label the parts to avoid confusion later.
2. Use 1¼" exterior screws to attach back panel to the 2/4 legs making sure that the top of the legs are level with the top of the back panel. Also make sure that the legs are oriented so they will fit into the notches cut into bottom and middle floor panels. The side of the back panel should be flush with the side of the legs.
3. Attach the side panels to the legs so they cover the legs and edge of the back panel. It should be flush with the backside. Be sure the entrance holes are positioned to allow access to the top and bottom levels. If both holes are towards the front, it will offer more protection from the wind.
4. Attach the two remaining legs to the front inside of the side panels. Set them back ½" to leave room to set the front panel in. However, do not attach the front panel at this time.
5. Stand shelter up on its legs and measure up, from the center, one foot from the bottom of the panels. Mark both the inside and the outside.
6. Take the bottom floor panel and attach it to the bottom of the shelter making sure that it is flush with and inside of the side and back panels. Attach it by screwing through the side panels and into the floor. Do this all around the edge.
7. Place the windbreak panel flush with the side of the lower entrance. It should be placed so it is 11.5" tall. It should also be at the same height as the mark you made on the side.
8. Attach the windbreak to the bottom floor and side panel.
9. Take the middle floor panel and place it inside the shelter on top of the windbreak. It should be level with the bottom of the top entrance.
10. Attach the middle floor panel to the sides in the same way as the bottom floor panel. Use the marks made on the outside as a guide for the screws. You can use the other windbreak as a prop to hold up the floor as you attach it.
11. Attach the second windbreak flush with the side of the top entrance.
12. Place the roof sheet so the overhanging sides are over the entrances.



13. Screw the roof down to the main shelter.
14. Place the shelter on its back, which makes attaching the door/hardware easier.
15. Place the door and attach the hinges and the barrel bolt latch to the door and side.
16. Cut the rigid insulation to fit on the inside of the shelter walls and roof. It should sit between the walls and 2x4 supports. Use a saw or utility knife to cut it. You can use glue or screws to attach insulation.
17. Paint the shelter to protect it.



Additional blueprints and instructions available at:

<https://animalwelfaresociety.org/services/feral-cats/feral-cat-shelter-plans/>



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Microwavable Heating Pad

(1 pad = 2 hours)

This is a quick and easy pattern to make a homemade heating pad. They are great for keeping animals warm.

Supplies:

- Scissors
- 100% cotton* fabric (prewashed)
- 100% cotton* thread long grain white rice (uncooked)
- funnel (or rigid material to make a funnel)

**Please do not use polyester or poly blend thread or fabric. It can melt in the microwave*

To make:

1. With right sides together, cut two pieces of fabric in the shape you want – round, square, rectangular. 7” or 8” is fine.
2. Stitch together leaving ½” seam allowance and a 2” opening to insert rice.
3. Use a funnel to insert the rice filling about 2/3 full.
4. Sew closed.



No-Sew Fleece Blankets

(1 blanket = 1 hour)

Materials:

- Two pieces of fleece fabric
- Scissors
- Yard Stick or Ruler (optional)

Instructions:

1. Line up two pieces of fabric, one on top of the other, right sides facing out, on a flat surface.
2. Trim to the correct size:
 - a. For cat beds: 16 inches x 22 inches OR 22 inches x 26 inches
 - b. For dog beds: 40 inches x 55 inches
3. Smooth out the fabric so there is no wrinkling or bunching
4. Cut a 5-inch square notch from each of the four corners
5. To create the fringe, you will want to make five-inch cuts at regular intervals along all four sides. Each fringe should be a little wider than the width of your finger. Cut through both layers of fabric at the same time, being sure the fabric doesn't shift. *Some people like to use a yard stick or rule to help them keep their cuts even*
6. Leaving the blanket flat, tie each top and bottom fringe piece together using secure knots. Make a knot (not a bow) like you'd make on a shoelace or a balloon knot (imagine tying up a blown up balloon).
7. Continue making secure knots around the entire perimeter of the blanket.



Cat Mats

(1 mat = 2 hours)

Skill Level: Confident Beginner

Materials:

- Two pieces of fabric: cotton, cotton/poly or flannel
- One piece of batting or fleece
- Thread
- Scissors
- Yard Stick or Ruler



AWS places homemade mats in each cat kennel to increase comfort. We use two sizes:

Size 1: 13 inches x 18 inches

Size 1 goes on top of the Kuranda bed as demonstrated by the buff kitten

Size 2: 16 inches x 22 inches

The grey kitten demonstrates how this goes beneath the Kuranda bed to hold it in place

Instructions:

1. Cut two pieces of fabric to the size of the bed you're making (add a quarter or half inch for seam allowance)
2. Cut one piece of fleece or batting to the same size as the fabric
3. Place the fabric pieces right sides together and then place the batting on top (against the wrong side of the fabric)
4. Sew nearly all the way around the mat, leaving a small opening for turning
5. Turn the mat right side out and press if needed
6. Quilt or tie as desired (remember these will be regularly laundered so please tie or quilt them securely enough to withstand daily washings)
7. Sew around the edges or hand stitch to close the hole you used to turn the mat



FUN + ENRICHMENT

As important as it is for a pet to get physical exercise, they need mental exercise too. These projects give pets plenty of fun ways to play while at AWS and keep their minds (and bodies) busy and engaged.

Rolled Feather Toys

(20 Toys = 2 hours)

Instructions and photograph are from the blog "Thinking outside the Cage."

Anything with feathers is very tempting to a cat as it brings out its natural hunting instincts.

Supplies:

- Corrugated paper
- Feathers
- Tape & Non-toxic school glue

Directions:

- Cut a 4" x 4" square of corrugated paper.
- Tightly roll up the paper and secure with tape.
- Glue a feather in each end or multiple feathers in one end of the roll.



Hide the toy so that a feather is peaking out waiting for the cat to discover it!



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Snuffle Mat

(2 mats = 1 hour)

Instructions and photograph are from the blog www.petsplusus.com

A snuffle mat is an easy to make homemade toy that provides your dog or cat with the opportunity to sniff and search their way through fleece strips in search of kibble or treats. This is a great way to provide mental stimulation and can also be a slow feeder.

Materials Needed:

- Rubber Sink or Door Mat with Holes (cut to desired size)
- Washable fleece fabric or cloths
- Scissors

Steps:

1. Cut your mat to desired size.
2. Cut your fabric into 1 inch wide, 8 - 10-inch length strips.
3. Take one strip and push one end through a mat hole and then take the other end of the fabric strip and feed it through the hold next to the first one. Flip the rubber mat over and tie the fabric strip into a knot.



4. Repeat this step until the entire mat is full and there are no empty spots.
5. Turn the mat over and give it a good shake to remove any fleece particles. Sprinkle with treats or kibble and let your pet explore, sniff and search!



Knotted Fleece Toys

(20 Toys = 2 hours)

Quick and easy dog or cat toys.

Skill Level: Easy

Materials:

- Fleece Material

Instructions:

- Cut fleece into 6 strips approximately 1" wide by 10" long.
- Stretch fleece by the ends until fabric rolls.
- Tie the strips together into a knot.
- Trim the ends



Braided Dog Toys

(10 Toys = 2 hours)

Quick and easy dog toys. If you know how to braid, you can make these simple toys dogs love.

Skill Level: Easy

Size: Various

Materials:

- Old t-shirts or fleece

Instructions

Cut old t-shirts or fleece into strips approximately 2" wide. Length of strips can vary. Experiment with various lengths from 10" to ?

For a thick toy use multiple strands in each braid. Tie the end in a knot and start braiding. Tie knots every so often. Tie a knot at the end to secure the braid.



Butterflies for Cats

(20 Toys = 2 hours)

Instructions and photograph are from the blog "Thinking outside the Cage."

Supplies:

- Tissue paper
- Pipe cleaners

Directions:

- Cut pipe cleaners into thirds.
- Cut layers of tissue paper into rectangles (about 2" x 3").
- Gather the tissue paper in the center of the rectangle and bend the pipe cleaner around the tissue. Twist the ends into antennae to secure.

The tissue butterflies are easily tossed and make a crinkling sound to stimulate the play.



Crocheted Fish

(1 Fish = 2 hour)

A 2.5 inch cat toy pattern from A Dog In A Sweater with permission by Jenna Wingate

Skill Level: Easy

Gauge: Not Important

American Crochet Terms

Materials:

- #4 weight (medium/worsted) yarn – scraps
- F/5 3.75mm crochet hook
- Stuffing

Optional:

- Catnip
- Crinkles (business envelope window)

Stitches Used:

MR – Magic Ring or Circle OR Ch2 and work into 2nd chain from the hook

Sc – single crochet

BLO – back loop only

Slst – slip stitch

Hdc – half double crochet

Dc – double crochet

FO – finish off (cut yarn)



Pattern:

Worked in continuous rounds. Do not join, do not turn.

1. In a MR, make 6sc. Pull ring tail to close tightly. (6)

Crochet BLO for the following rounds (2-9):

2. (2sc in the next, sc in the next) 3 times. (9)
3. 2sc in the next, sc in the next 2) 3 times. (12)
4. (2sc in the next, sc in the next 3) 3 times. (15)
5. (2sc in the next, sc in the next 4) 3 times. (18)
6. Sc in each stitch around
7. Sc in each stitch around



8. Sc in each stitch around
9. Sc2tog around. (9)

Crochet through both loops now:

10. Sc in each stitch around.

Stuff full.

11. Fold the opening flat. Working through both layers to join, place 4 sc 5across the opening. Do not FO. (4)

First Tail Fin: Ch7. Slst in the 2nd chain from the hook. Sc in the next, hdc in the next. Dc in the next 2. Hdc in the last. Sk the 1st stitch of row 11 and slst into the 2nd.

Second Tail Fin: Slst into 3rd stitch of row 11. Ch7. Slst in the 2nd chain from the hook. Sc in the next, hdc in the next. Dc in the next 2. Hdc in the last. Slst into the last stitch of row 11. Do not FO.

Dorsal Fin: Ch1. Working into the free loops in a straight line up the back, slst into a loop on the next row.

(Slst, ch1, hdc, dc) into a loop on the next row.

(3dc) into a loop on the next row.

(Hdc, dc) into a loop on the next row.

(Ch1, slst) into a loop on the next row. FO.

Use your hook to pull the tail through the fish and out the end. Trim any excess.

Pectoral Fins

The Pectoral fins should line up with about the very front of the Dorsal fin. You can just eyeball where to put them. Once again, you will be working into the free loops - 2 loops on each side. AND leave 2 loops space between the top of the Pectoral Fins and the Dorsal Fin.

Join with a (Ch1, hdc) in the 1st loop.

(Hdc, ch1, slst) in the next loop.

FO, pull the joins TIGHT and use your hook to pull the tails through to the ends of the body and trim them off. Repeat for the other side.



Pet Enrichment Box

(1 Box = 1 hour)

Instructions from <https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/cat-care/feline-diy-enrichment>

What You'll Need:

- Toilet paper rolls (3-4)
- Shoe box with lid or soft drink box
- Pencil or pen
- Sharp knife
- Cat kibble or treats

How To:

- Using a pen or pencil, trace the end of the toilet paper rolls on top of the lid; repeat in different locations on the lid, one outline for each roll.
- Using your knife, cut the holes out on the lid. Make sure to cut along the traced lines – if the hole is too big the roll will not be sturdy.
- Slide rolls into each of the holes.
- The holes are now ready for kibble, treats or toys!

