

MOMENT



Take flight

LET YOUR CHILD'S IMAGINATION SOAR—HELP HIM BUILD AND FLY A KITE. BY MEG ALBERS

Making and flying a kite with your child is a great way to spend time together and teaches useful skills, even some basics of aerodynamics. Best of all, it's fun! No special materials are

necessary—you and your little one can construct your kite using our cute animal pattern (see page 32) and some common household items (choose from the lists below).

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Spars (framework)

- + drinking straws (the kind that don't bend)
- + bamboo skewers (clip off the pointy end)

Tail

- + crepe paper or ribbon
- + plastic bag or scrap paper, cut into strips
- + surveyors' tape

Sail (wind-catching material)

- + copy or printer paper
- + wrapping paper
- + plastic shopping or garbage bags
- + Tyvek (polyethylene fiber material from which some mailing envelopes are made)
- + magazine pages (newspapers and comics do not work well)
- + junk mail

Flying line and bridle

- (Use lighter weight line for small kites and low winds, and heavier line for big kites and higher winds)
- + cotton string
 - + dental floss
 - + embroidery/crochet thread

Tape

- + clear or masking tape
- + adhesive stickers or labels, cut to size

ILLUSTRATION BY ADAM MCCAULEY



Make a Kite with your toddler from items around the house!

Making a kite with your toddler is a fun, educational, and exciting bonding activity. The natural progression of flying the kite, after making the kite together, is a wonderful way to spend time together outdoors while being active with your toddler.

The skills that you will teach your child while making the kite together will aid and benefit them for the rest of their lives.

Kite making helps your child learn how to fold, tie knots, and think symmetrically. Kite making also practices hand eye coordination and exposes your child to concepts like strength to weight ratio and balance.

The kite making instructions included with this article have the added benefit of teaching recycling and the importance of re-using and re-purposing materials.

When choosing your kite making materials it helps to be aware of the type of conditions you will be flying in. Damp conditions call for plastic kites; where as dry days would work with paper sails. Higher winds will need stronger materials for a heavier kite, while low winds will require lighter materials.

Plastic bags from high end department stores use a heavier plastic than what is used for kitchen garbage bags. This is not to say that one type of plastic works better than another, it is to say that different materials work best in different conditions.

Kite making is perfect for birthday parties, family reunions, block club parties, and any other gathering.

Making a kite out of household materials with your toddler is an exciting and enriching experience that will create a memory that they will cherish for a lifetime.

Various household items you can use for kite making are:

Spars:

- Drinking straws (the kind that does not bend)
- Bamboo skewers (clip off the pointy end)
- Matchstick bamboo from blinds
- Matchstick bamboo from placemats

Sail:

- Copy/printer paper
- Plastic bags (from stores, garbage bags, etc)
- Wrapping paper
- Tyvek (Federal Express envelopes are Tyvek)
- Magazine pages
- Junk Mail
- Paper Plates

*Today's newspapers and comics do not work as kite sails; they are too porous due to their high recycled content. The wind goes through the paper instead of lifting the paper.

Tail Material:

- Crepe paper
- Surveyors tape
- Flagging material
- Plastic bag cut into strips
- Scrap paper cut into strips
- Ribbon
- Tinsel
- Pom-Pom pieces

Flying Line & Bridle: (depends on size of kite and strength of wind)

- Cotton String
- Sewing thread
- Embroidery thread
- Crochet Thread
- Dental floss
- Yarn

Tape:

- Labels with adhesive on one side can be cut to desired size
- Stickers
- Band-aids (not cost effective, but good in a pinch)

Kite Making Directions for a Sled Kite:

1. Determine the size of sled kite you and your toddler would like to make.

The sled template included with this article can be scaled up or down in size to suit your needs.

Use the template to trace or copy onto your sail material (see material list for sail choices)

Cut out kite along thick black line.

Fold in half to confirm it is completely symmetrical.

Decorate kite sail surface.

2. Tape spars on kite sail to area marked 'B' (See material list for spar choices)

3. Tape tails to area marked 'C' at bottom of kite (See material list for tail options)

A looped tail works well with a sled kite, it tends to pull in the back and add tension to the leading edge. Sleds don't produce much lift and can't cope with much drag. Length of tail is determined by wind speed and kite stability, so the actual tail length is trial and error. High winds will require longer tails and low winds will call for a shorter tail.

4. The bridle is used to connect the flying line to the kite. (See material list for bridle possibilities) The bridles length is at least 3 times the width of the kite. Attach bridle to area on kite marked 'D' with tape.

Use lighter weight line for smaller kites and low winds and heavier line for bigger kites and higher winds.

Put a piece of tape on the corner of the triangle wing for reinforcement. Poke a hole in the taped area, put bridle end through whole, tie knot. Do the same on the opposite side.

Center the bridle by holding ends of triangle together, find the center of the bridle and make a loop.

Tie flying line to the bridle loop.

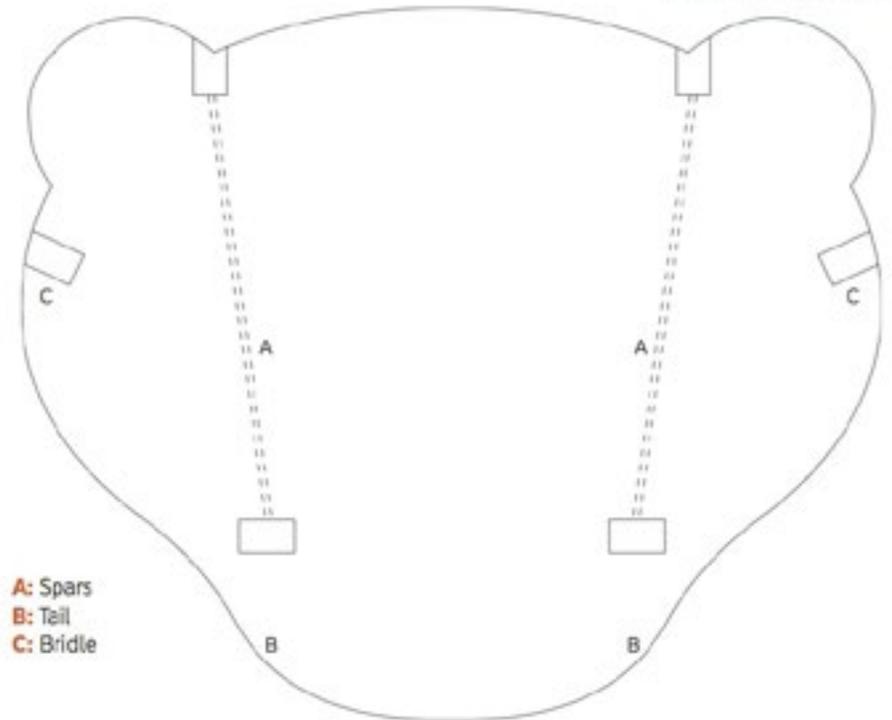
Go fly the kite.



KITE CRAFTING

TEN SIMPLE STEPS TO BUILDING YOUR ANIMAL KITE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30



- A: Spars
- B: Tail
- C: Bridle

1 Enlarge the above pattern 200% to fit on an 8½" x 11" sheet of paper, or go to newparent.com/kiteflying for a printable 8½" x 11" version. You may scale the pattern up larger if your printer can accommodate larger paper sizes.

2 Trace or copy the enlarged pattern onto your sail material and cut along the thick black line to create your sail.

3 Fold the sail in half to confirm that it is symmetrical. Trim as necessary.

4 Decorate the sail surface with the art medium of your choice. (Get a traceable animal face design at newparent.com/kiteflying, or create your own design.)

5 Tape two spars to the front side of the sail along the pattern's "A" lines.

6 Tape the tail(s) to the two "B" points. A looped tail (connected to the kite at

both ends) works well with a sled kite, like this one. High winds require longer tails; low winds call for a shorter tail.

7 Reinforce both towing points ("C") with a piece of tape. Poke a hole in each taped area. With the sail's decorated side facing up, put each end of a bridle—a length of line at least three times the width of the kite—through each hole, tying a knot that won't slip through.

8 Suspend the kite by the bridle so that the two sides of the sail align exactly. Pinch the bridle together at its center and tie a knot with a loop at the end. Make sure that when the kite is suspended from the loop, the sides still align.

9 Tie the flying line securely to the bridle loop.

10 Choose a breezy spot and launch your kite!