

Birdhouse - 2 Liter Milk Bottle

This birdhouse uses some recycled materials. This is a good spring project.

Materials needed:

1. 2 liter (1/2 gallon) milk bottle with lid.
2. 1 x 4 x 3 1/2" western cedar or redwood board (for the bottom, so it won't rot).
3. 4" of 1/4" dowel.
4. 8 - 1" x 17 gauge nails (or small sheet metal screws).
5. 12" of galvanized wire.
6. Spray paint, hammer, silicone or craft glue to glue on water-tight, white glue to glue dowel.

Before the meeting:

1. Cut off lower 1/4 of 2 L milk bottle (2" from the bottom). Keep top 2/3.
2. Cut 1 1/2" diam. hole 2-3" above the bottom (see photo) [or let older boys do this in the meeting?].
3. Cut cedar 1 x 4 into 3 1/2" blocks (square to fit into bottom of milk bottle).

Assembly at the meeting:

- [1. If needed, cut 1 1/2" diam. hole 2-3" above the finished bottom.]
1. Insert square cedar block into bottom of milk bottle.
2. Nail each side with two 1" x #17 nails per side (8 total used).
3. Have each boy write their name on the bottom of the wood block in pencil.
4. Drill 1/4" hole, 2" deep, just below the entrance hole. (An adult may need to do this for small boys). A small, portable drill press does a great job!
5. Add a few drops of white glue or silicone into the hole and insert 4" x 1/4" dowel into the 1/4" hole. The dowel should stick out about 2" to act as a bird perch.
6. Drill 1/8" holes through neck of the bottle for use with the galvanized wire hanger.
7. Insert 12" galvanized wire through holes to make hanger (see photo).
8. Use silicone or craft glue to glue the lid on the milk bottle.
9. Boys can go outside and spray paint the milk bottle birdhouse. It should dry in a few minutes, if not, take the birdhouses home next week.



Note 1: Cutting the hole in the side with scissors is a bit tricky. You may want to do this before the meeting. Cutting off the bottom 1/3 of a milk bottle with scissors is pretty easy, but difficult to make a clean, straight cut. It is easier if you take a Sharpie marker and draw a line around the bottom, 2" up from the bottom. You may also make the first cut (one side) so it is easier for boys to get the scissors started.

Note 2: Some 2 L milk bottles (cf. Braums®) have screw-on caps and do not need gluing.