

Title: Milk Carton Bird Feeder

Grades: All grades

Time: 40 minutes

Activity Description: Students will recycle a milk carton to make a bird feeder. One way we can recycle materials is by reusing them to produce new products. These new products can have a variety of different uses.



Materials:

- Milk or juice carton cleaned
- Craft knife or scissors
- Wax pencil, crayon or permanent marker
- Ruler
- Two small lengths of double-sided tape
- Bird seed
- Hole punch
- Twine for a hanger
- Two bamboo skewers or two straight skinny twigs for perches

Eco-fact: According to the National Recycling Coalition, in 2006, 510,000 tons of milk cartons were generated in the United States and less than 0.05% (5,000 tons) was recycled.

Instructions:

Before Conducting the Activity:

- Discuss how recycled goods can be used to make new things. Brainstorm examples with the class.
- Explain how a bird feeder works.

Milk Carton Bird Feeder:

1. Use the wax pencil, crayon or permanent marker and ruler to draw a pentagon shaped opening on the front of the milk carton. The opening should resemble the shape of a house with a peaked roof. The bottom of the pentagon should be about two inches at the bottom of the carton to hold a plenty of seeds.
2. Cut out the pentagon shaped opening with a craft knife. Adults should help children with this part.
3. Let's make a roof for the birds. Using the piece you cut out of the milk carton identify the top of the peak as a center point. Fold the pentagon shaped piece of milk carton in half along its length. Cut a half-inch from the point of the peak down the center fold. Fold up a half-inch flap on either side of this cut.
4. Put a piece of double-sided tape on each flap.
5. Let's attach the roof to the bird feeder. Insert this roof piece into the top of the pentagon shaped opening. Press the flaps with your fingers against the inside of the milk carton until the double-sided tape holds tightly.
6. Poke a bamboo skewer or twig through of the milk carton, just below the left side of the opening. Do the same on the right side of the opening. Make sure the skewers or sticks poke out the back wall of the carton to keep the perches secure.
7. Let's make a hanger for our bird feeder. Use a hole puncher or a skewer to puncture two holes in the top line of the carton.



8. Put twine through the two holes.
9. Fill the bottom of the feeder with a small bird seed mixture.
10. Hang your milk carton bird feeder from a tree branch that you can see from a window and reach easily when you need to add more bird seed.

Adaptations:

- Students can create a journal to track the birds that use their bird feeders. Students can write daily journal entries about birds they see using their bird feeders.
- Students can decorate their bird feeders using stickers, stamps, and colored pencils.

Extensions:

- Students can research which types of birds eat what types of seed. After the research, students can try using different types of seed in their bird feeders to see what types of birds they can attract.
- Students can take a field trip to a recycling center to learn more about recycling.