

WIRE TOYS

hints and tips for making your own

If you would like to make your own wire toys with your class, here are a few pointers to get you started.

What type of wire should I use?

Any wire can be used to do this, including fuse wire, electrical wire (not attached to an appliance!) copper wire or florists wire. If you want to be really good then go to a recycling centre and get your wire there - basically, if you can bend it then you can use it!

How should I cut it?

Use wire cutters that comfortably fit into a child's hands, and obviously supervise or cutting, or do it yourself.

Should the children wear protection?

Yes. Safety glasses are a good idea, but they're not 100% effective. Use 30cm long pieces of wire and make sure the children keep the ends away from their eyes and have a spare place next to them if possible!

How should they bend it?

Using their hands or by bending it round the edge of a pencil or something similar to give a curved shape.

Where is a good place to start?

Seeing how many different things they can do with just three wires. Doodling around and making little cartoon figures. Trying to make some cats and dogs. They could start by making the models in 2D and then move to 3D. It's a good idea to start by making them do a rough plan of what they are going to create.

What could they make a model of?

Many children in African countries make toy cars to push along, but you could make anything that is connected with Africa or Send a Cow. It could be a Jeep, motorbike, cow, goat, chicken, lion, giraffe or a rhino!

Hints and tips contributed by Elizabeth Berrien at www.wirelady.com

African wire toys

