

Eskimo Style Basket Sled

Gary Crandall, Principal
White Mountain, Alaska

Materials:

4 Tongue depressors (cut to shape as shown in drawing)
9" piece of 1/8" balsa wood for top rails (cut in half to shape as shown)
20" of 1/16" balsa wood for slats (cut five 4" long)
10" 1/8"X1/4" balsa wood for cross pieces (cut five 13/4" long as shown)
2 Popsicle sticks (cut as shown)
1 six inch piece of pipe cleaner for brush bow (bent in U shape)
Hot glue gun
Poultry shears or tin snips for cutting tongue depressors and popsicle sticks
Single edged razor blade for cutting balsa

Directions:

1. Cut pieces as indicated in drawings.
 2. Mark two of the tongue depressors according to the pattern shown. This will insure proper alignment of the stanchions.
 3. Secure the stanchions to two of the tongue depressors with hot glue, making sure that S-1 aligns with S-2 according to the drawing.
 4. Glue the other two tongue depressors to the opposite side of the stanchions, making sure the pairs of tongue depressors (runners) align with each other, forming a pair with the stanchions glued between them.
 5. Tie the two pairs of runners together using the 5 cross pieces and handle bar. I usually place the back one first, then the front, then the three in the middle, then the handle bar last. This will give you the desired width of your sled.
 6. Add the slats by gluing them to the cross pieces, making sure they do not extend beyond the front of the sled.
 7. Glue the top rails from the front of the runners (between them), along the tops of the stanchions, and secure the back end to the handle bar support. You may need to trim the length of the top rail to a custom fit. Use a single edged razor blade for trimming.
 8. Bend the pipe cleaner into a U shape and secure to the side of the sled as shown.
- Option: You may attach plastic runners to the bottom of the tongue depressors if you have access to some plastic sheeting which can be cut to fit and glued on.

Our kids like to make several sled dogs out of clay and attach them to the sled with embroidery thread harnesses. This project can be done by upper level elementary students without much assistance, but primary and ECE students require a lot of help. I usually work with one or two students at a time. I cut all the pieces in advance and make a "kit" in a zip lock bag. This saves a lot of time during the construction process. If you are lucky enough to have parent volunteers, this is an ideal project for them to do. They can make the kits and help the children with the construction. Make extra kits so they can make one for themselves, and don't forget one for yourself. Happy mushing!.

