

Make, Don't Buy - Kitchen Sponge

Scouts give more thought to the idea of being a responsible consumer and making an item rather than buying it. For this activity, the item is a kitchen sponge or cleaning pad.

Section: Scouts, Ventures, Rovers

Time: 1 hour

Where: Home, Den,

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



PLAN

Discuss the concept with the scouts. Every day we buy and use things that we need. To move to being a more responsible consumer, the scouts need to put more thought into these purchases. One way to do this is to think about items that their family buys and come up with alternatives that they could make themselves. Doing this could save on the resources, energy, water and everything else that went in to making it.

Use the example of a kitchen sponge. If you have one to show the scouts, this might save some time on the explanation, especially for those not used to helping out in the kitchen! Most are made from synthetic materials, and sold in multipacks as they are designed to be used and thrown away. Depending on the age and enthusiasm of your scouts, you might leave them off to research, design and create the sponge themselves, or you might like to give them the basics and maybe show them one that you "made earlier" yourself!

Materials

Scrap materials, sewing machine or needle and thread, and scissors.

DO

There are lots of different ways to make these, so go online and find a design. At its simplest, grab a few pieces of scrap material and stitch them together to make a pad the size of a dish sponge. This could be done by hand or on a sewing machine. Coarser material will do a better job for the outside, but you can use softer material to stuff it. Stitch the pieces together on three sides, then fold the pocket inside out and stuff it. Finish up by stitching the last side to close it up.

After using the sponge, stick it in with the laundry and it is ready to go again, and again, and again!

REVIEW

If the scouts made these together in the den, come together at the end to look at their handiwork. If they made them at home, then chat about them the next time the scouts come together, by which time the pads might have been in use in the kitchen for a while.

How did the scouts find the challenge? What did they learn from making the kitchen pads, and what might they do differently the next time? Be sure to bring the conversation around to consideration of what people buy, and the resources and energy needed to make, package and transport before it reaches the consumer.



In a nutshell...

- Scouts figure out how to make a simple kitchen sponge, to avoid having to buy them.
- Using scrap materials, they use their sewing skills to make a washable and reusable kitchen cleaning pad.
- They think about how using scrap materials could save on energy and resources in manufacture, packaging and transport.



Follow-on

The same approach could be useful to find other things which could be made instead of bought. Have the scouts brainstorm to come up with their own solutions, then get on and try them out.

Check out our resource sheets for other Make, Don't buy projects.



SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production

SDG 12 seeks to achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, and to substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse. Scouts can help to achieve these goals, and replacing a purchased item in their household with something they make themselves will get them thinking about other possible solutions.



Find out more!

Visit - www.betterworld.ie

Contact us - sustainability@scouts.ie

Produced by the Scouting Ireland Sustainable Scouting Team