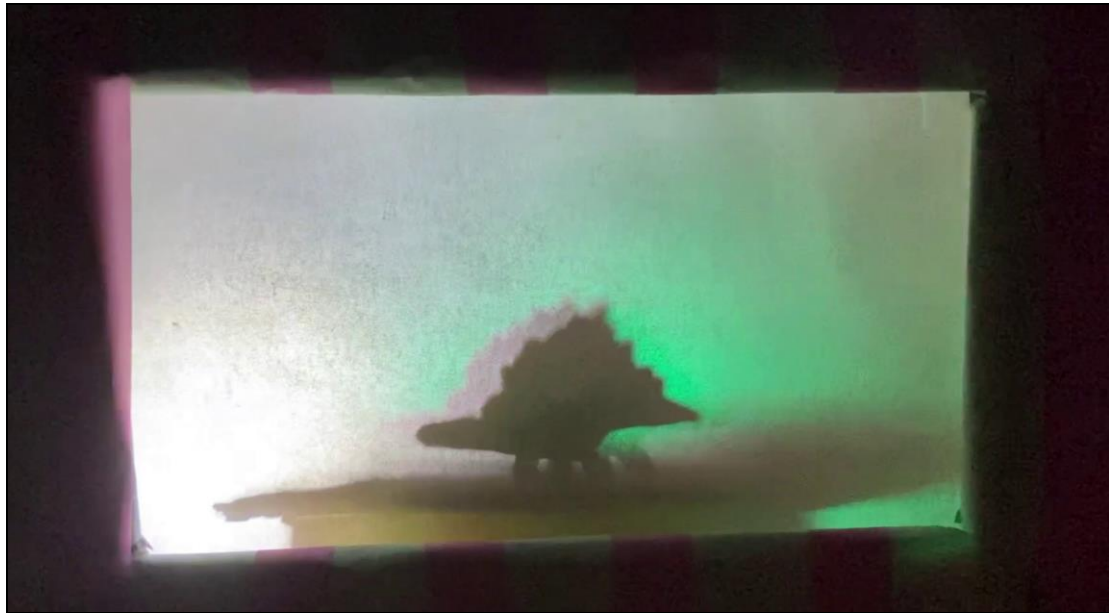


How to make your own Colourful Shadow-box Theatre



Using just a few recycled materials you can create your own miniature theatre with coloured lights so that you can tell stories with your toys.

To make the Colourful Shadow-box Theatre you will need:



- A cardboard box
- Marker pens (Sharpies work really well)
- Scissors
- Clear tape
- A ruler
- Greaseproof or baking paper
- A torch or two (phones work well for this)
- Scrap cardboard (this could be used from the cardboard box)
- Small toys to use as puppets
- Craft materials to decorate your box.

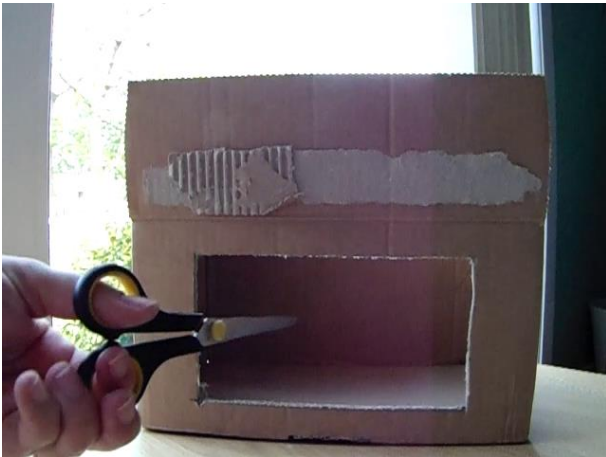
Any craft materials will do. You could wrap the box in paper or colour it with paint, pens, crayons, buttons, stickers, feathers or whatever you like. Use your imagination and whatever you have around you.

First choose a box to make into your theatre. Cereal, shoe and delivery boxes work well for this.

Choose a flat side of the box without flaps or joins in it. Measure out a rectangle that leaves at least 2cm all the way around, like a photo frame.

Cut out the rectangle making a window in your box. Ask an adult for help with this bit. This is the front of your theatre.

On the opposite side, draw another rectangle, this time it should run along the bottom of the box and leave at least 2cm on both sides and along the top.



Cut this out, too. This is now the back of your theatre.

Measure a piece of greaseproof paper which is larger than the frame at the front of your theatre, but slightly smaller than the inside of your box. Attach this paper as smoothly as you can to the front frame from the inside using clear tape.

This is the screen of your theatre.

If your box has flaps on the top, stick these down now with tape.



Now decorate your box however you like! Use whatever craft materials you have around you. Perhaps you could think about the stories you would like to tell using your theatre and this could influence your choices. Do you want your theatre to look like it's in space covered in stars, rockets and planets? Is it a time machine? Does it look like a traditional theatre? Is it spotty, stripy or your favourite colour?



You have now made your shadow-box! Well done!

To use your shadow-box simply place any toys inside that you would like to play with and shine a torch behind the toys, pointing it at the front screen of your shadow box. Anyone watching from the front is your audience. The audience will be able to see the shadow outlines of your toys.



To move the toys you could cut a strip of paper or thin card and place one toy on each. By moving this paper gently side-to-side or front-to-back you can move your toy without making a shadow yourself. This might take some practice but to the audience at the front it will look like the toys are moving on their own!

To make tube filters

You will need:

- At least 1 toilet roll
- Scissors
- Marker pens (e.g. Sharpies)
- Clear sticky tape

Begin by cutting your toilet roll into two or three sections so that you now have 2 or 3 shorter tubes.

Cover one side of the short tube with sticky tape. It's ok if this tape overlaps as long as you cover one end completely.

Take a marker pen and colour-in the sticky-tape end, taking care not to leave any gaps.

Colour each short tube in a different colour. You may even want to use more than one colour on each.

To use your tube filters put a toy inside your shadow box and hold the tube behind the toy. Shine a light through the tube and it will project a round spotlight of colour on to your toy and the front of your shadow box. Anyone looking at the front will see this clearly, especially if you find a dark spot to be.

To make a big filter frame

You will need:

- Scrap card or a box lid such as a shoe box lid
- Scissors
- Marker pens such as sharpies
- Clear sticky tape

To make a larger filter frame you could use some scrap card, or the cardboard lid of a box if you want it to stay upright by itself. This would be very useful. If you don't have a box lid or the corner of a box you could use one piece of card and use blu tac to help it to stand up on a surface.



First thing to do is to measure a rectangle on your card as large as you like, so long as you have left 2cm around each edge. This will make sure your filter is strong.

Draw the rectangle and ask an adult to help you cut it out.

Using clear tape, cover one side of the filter frame, overlapping the tape if you need to. You will now have one smooth 'window' side and one sticky window side. Turn the frame over and cover the sticky side with tape too so that both sides are smooth and there are no sticky bits left.

Now colour in your frame with sharpies or other marker pens. Blocks of colour work well and if you colour in the same colours on both sides it will make an even stronger image.

Think about where your characters might like to go. The jungle? The sea? The sun? Use colours that make you think of that place in big, bold shapes. Try not to leave any gaps in your colouring.

Using this big filter is the same as using a tube filter, but hopefully this can also stand up on its own. By moving a torch from one colour to another, the audience will see a multi-coloured background for your toys to play in. If you move the torch back and forward too, it can look like your toys are dancing.

You can make as many filters as you like and visit new places in your stories. We would love to see what you come up with!

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