



At-Home Science Saturday: Sea Turtles

An at-home activity for grades K-2: Make a Sea Turtle Model

Produced by:  Florida
Oceanographic
Society



Science Saturday at Home: Create your own sea turtle

May is Sea turtle month at the Coastal Center, so for this at-home activity we are going to create our sea turtle with supplies you have at home! Before you create your sea turtle, we'll start by learning about some of the body parts that make a sea turtle special.

Needs:

1. Paper bowl
2. Small paper plate
3. Two balloons
4. Five paper clips
5. Three popsicle sticks
6. One egg carton cup
7. Glue
8. Markers
9. Scissors
10. Tail and flipper templates



Sea Turtle Lesson

Sea turtles are reptiles. Reptiles have five things that make them different from other types of animals. All reptiles have a **backbone**. They also have **scales** covering the outside of their bodies. Most reptiles lay **eggs**. They breathe air with **lungs**—just like you and me! Reptiles also use the outside temperature to warm or cool their insides; scientists call these kinds of animals **cold-blooded**.

Today you will be making your very own sea turtle model with materials you can find around your house! As scientists, we can use models to learn more about plants and animals without having to take them out of the wild. A model provides an accurate representation of a real thing. We are creating our sea turtle model to have many of the same characteristics found in a real sea turtle. In our sea turtle model, the backbone or spine will be made of the 5 connected paperclips, popsicle sticks will represent ribs, the lungs that sea turtles use to breathe will be represented by two balloons, and the scales covering the sea turtle will be drawn on using markers or colored pencils. Let's get to creating your model sea turtle!

How to create your own sea turtle model

1. First, we are going to decorate our sea turtle shell! Using markers or colored pencils, color the top (outside) of the paper bowl. There are 7 different species of sea turtle and they all look a little different. Get creative when decorating yours- what will your sea turtle look like?
2. Next, take the 5 paper clips and hook them together to make a chain. Once they are chained together, glue (or tape) the paper clips down the center of the bowl creating the spine of the sea turtle. The paper clips should be glued to the inside of the bowl where you would put your cereal.
3. While the glue is drying, break the popsicle sticks in half. These will create the ribs of the sea turtle in your model! Since the ribs and the spine are both connected to the shell, you will need to glue each rib to the inside of the bowl. The popsicle sticks should extend out from both sides of the sea turtles spine, similar to this image. There will be three ribs on each side of your turtle's spine.



4. Now let the bowl dry. While the bowl is drying, you will create the head of your sea turtle! You will need a cup from an egg carton. Flip the cup upside down, and turn it so that one corner is facing you and it looks like a diamond. The top corner facing away from you represents the sea turtle's beak. Sea turtles don't have sharp teeth like us. Instead, their sharp beak helps them eat. Now you can draw the eyes on either side of the beak. When drawing the eyes and face of your sea turtle, you might want to add sunglasses because sea turtles spend a lot of time in the sun. Remember we said that sea turtles are cold-blooded, so to get warm, sea turtles need to hang out in a warm, sunny spot. Sea turtles like to warm up by floating at the surface of the ocean, basking in the sun.



5. Once the bowl is dry, you will need the two balloons. Remember these two balloons represent the lungs of a sea turtle, which are used for breathing, just like in humans. If you want, you can blow up the balloons a little bit and tie them off. You will glue the balloons to the ribs of the sea turtle. This is where the lungs are located in a real sea turtle. Did you know that sea turtles can hold their breath for over 1 hour?

6. Now you can put your sea turtle all together. First, glue the egg cup to the front of the bowl to represent the sea turtle's head. Then glue the plate to the bowl. The plate represents the plastron, which is what you call the underside of a sea turtle. Your sea turtle is almost complete, all you need to add are the flippers and tail!
7. Cut out four flippers and a tail from the next page. Have fun coloring them, then glue them around the outside of the bowl where a real sea turtle's flippers and tail would go.
8. That's it! Your model sea turtle is complete!



