

The Scouter's Books No. 23

**INSTANT IDEAS**  
for  
**HANDCRAFT**  
**WITH CUBS**

By VALERIE BARTON

*Illustrated by the author*

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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or express sentiments which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form. Any spelling errors have also been retained for historical accuracy.

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## **UTILE DULCI.**

Bearing in mind the different sorts and conditions of Cub Packs wherever they may be, I have tried not to suggest accurate prices of tools and other articles. For the most part I have tried to suggest materials that can be obtained free from home and shop waste bins. There is always extra satisfaction in making something from absolute rubbish and as much of the "rubbish" of today is made from such good materials it is a shame to ignore it's possibilities.

I have included a short section on various tools and how to use them. Not all ladies have handled them, even in this modern day, and several have asked" me for some short notes to help other Akelas who may feel the same about using tools. I hope the gentlemen will understand that these notes are not really for them. Handicrafts with Cubs are meant for creative fun so never attempt to go too "arty" and cultural. In fact quite a number of the models I have written about are more of a technical nature and I find this appeals immensely to boys.

Most models can be adapted to suit different titles, for instance I have described, as fully as space will allow, the construction of a model swimming pool. Using similar principles you can change this to a village pond or a rockery pool, the scenery adjusted to suit. The treasure island scene can equally well be transformed into the hideout of the Black Hand Gang, potholers or even a bunny warren complete with furniture and model rabbits should you have a budding Walt Disney in your Pack.

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## Instant Ideas for Handcraft With Cubs

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Please take my instant ideas and use and transform them as you will to keep your Pack happy and busy in their handcrafts, and do make some of the models yourself, they're fun!

"Akela, please may I go in for my Handcraft Badge?" The question filters through to our tired ears just as we are bandaging Michael's knee for the third time that evening. A parent hovers in the background waiting to chatter about his devoted offspring, or is it that chap in the corner house with another bill for a broken window? "Yes Billy, that is a reef knot at last. For goodness' sake will one of you Sixers get Henry off the piano before he puts his feet into the works. Yes John, I am trying to tell you all about the Handcraft Badge." "Oh, I thought you was doin' fust aider wiv Michael."

It is with these moments, and certainly these Cubs, in mind that I am setting out some fresh ideas in as simple a form as I can. Instant ideas if you like. Something that you can quickly show to a boy who wants an idea at once. All the models and tips I have given you have been made and tried at some time or other by our Cubs or myself. I hope you will find the drawings clear and easy to understand.

I have tried to layout the ideas to cover some of the main requirements in the Second Star and Handcraft Badge. Obviously as the years pass by, some of the individual tests in the badge may alter to suit new or different hobbies, but the basic idea of making one or two things by hand from scrap and so on should not vary at all.

I have found it very useful to keep a small notebook and jot down every novel idea and quaint oddment that I come across so that I can draw on this when I wish to make something to start the Cubs off. Many interesting ideas can be gleaned from the toy and handicraft sections in museums, especially the very old handmade articles in wood.

In all cases the finished work must be judged to the highest standard of which the boy doing it is personally capable. Our boys are so varied that to lay down a standard other than "his best" would be highly complicated. Thus this little book is not designed to teach handcrafts but to offer you a selection of ready-made ideas that you may copy as blatantly as you like in your Pack meetings.

I have found that many boys will try to offer you the raffia mat that they made in the infant school three years ago: I hope you do not accept these, for in my opinion, this is not real effort made specially for the test or badge of the moment. Thus the very purpose of our test work is foiled. I do not feel we should allow any work made in school unless it is of exceptional standard and the boy knew from the onset that it was his intention to make it for the tests. (Boarding school and hospital Packs are obvious exceptions because of their circumstances and carefully integrated routines).

I feel too that we should introduce an element of Scouty adventure into our models. Something that does not take too long to make and yet is stimulating to his imagination, and which gives him fun, pleasure and intense satisfaction. He should feel that he would like to go on making models for ever, that his fingers could make anything he wanted them to if he tried hard enough. Can a boy ever feel excited over a small, round raffia mat?

For handcrafts it is always best to work in small groups if at all possible (shall we say consisting of the half dozen boys who want to go in for the tests), whether Star or badge work. (From here on generally referred to as "the tests"). It is appreciated that in most cases the work will be continued at home. But you will inspire excitement and a good response if you start it off at the meeting. If you wish the Cubs to bring materials you must give them a list the week

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before but it is unwise to rely on it arriving. A bout of measles and you have lost the whole stock.

It is absolutely vital to have all the junk, glue and your tools ready laid out on the tables in a quiet comer. You will not want the Pack football to land on the models or, even worse, in the glue pot! If the Cubs are going to work on similar projects then Akela must have made some samples at home herself to display and illustrate. Boys of Cub age do not want to listen. They want to look and touch and take the lid off things. Only then will you arouse their creative instincts. Remember that a lot of boys have a great deal of art in them, but until someone, you, entices it out of their fingers it may stay dormant.

### NATIONAL FLAGS

Now to start work. Every wise Old Wolf will keep a box somewhere at home into which she can pop every item of the oddest nature that might come in handy. I wonder if I should tell you this, but I had one box once. Now I have fifty metal Oxo tins fitted into their own "bookcase." Each labelled for metal oddments, plastic oddments, leather scraps, etc. and etc. But I do seem to be rather involved in handcrafts and so it may not happen to you.

Shall we start with some of the Second Star requirements? The sketches of National flags are very popular. Possibly because they are easy to produce and need only be copied from a book. However, they are part of a handcraft test and so I feel we should introduce a bit of handwork in the making of this item. So often the sketches come rolled on a thin little scrap of notepaper; weakly drawn in the palest colours. Is this a fair offering for the test?

Try this idea. Take some nice stiff poster card about 3/32" thick. Most stationers or art shops will have something similar to the kind I use. Even stiff cartridge is better than notepaper. My background card is a bright royal blue. I have cut it to 10" x 12". If you buy the 19" x 24" (approx.) sized sheet you can cut it into four pieces. The whole sheet will cost about 1/6d. so the price is not too unreasonable.

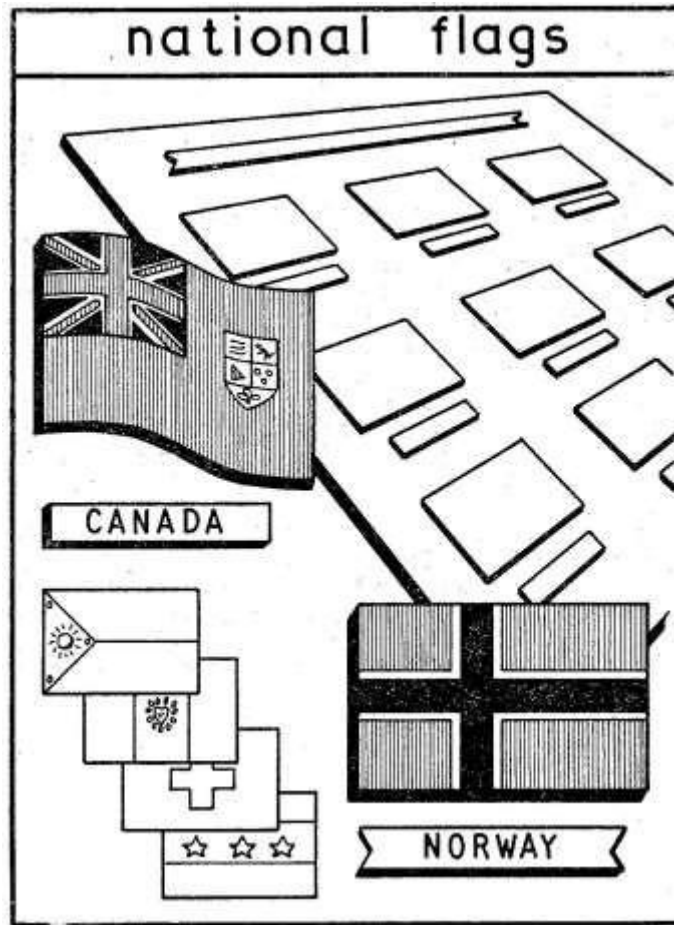
Another sheet of the same thickness is bought in plain white. The set of eight flags is cut out (by the Cub of course) from his portion of white card. He should make them all the same size. They can be cut into straight oblongs or wavy flags, but the same shaped flag should exist throughout the set. To suit my sheet I cut the flags to 2" x 3". This allows plenty of space to layout the flags nicely on the background and leaves room for a title plaque under each.

The little flags are then neatly drawn and well coloured in bright colours and stuck on to the background with Copydex glue. (Never use flour paste please !). A small tube or jar of one of the latex glues will really be just as economical in the long run and far more effective.

The result will be a fine and proudly presented sheet of flags that stand out clearly on a rich background. The names of the flags should be very neatly printed in black ink on small strips of white card and stuck squarely under the appropriate flags.

Sketches of animals and flowers can be treated the same way to great effect choosing background card that is suitable. Perhaps pale pink or green for the flowers, dark green, buff or black for the animals. If money is a problem in your Pack an alternative background card can be made from grocer's cartons covered with scraps of wallpaper in some plainish colour without a design that will argue with your own cut-outs. I would avoid crepe paper as it

wiggles when glued to anything. For a perfect job, however, I can only recommend the poster card I have suggested.



### **PIRATE CAVE**

Treasure Islands. I suppose that at sometime or other every boy dreams about pirates and the treasures reputed to be hidden on desert islands. It is exciting enough to find some small coin in your garden, so how about using a bit of romance in the making of a pirate cave.

For this cave of mine I started first with a sheet of chipboard about 12" square. Then I spread some glue over most of it and dusted it thickly with some silver sand. You can get small packets of this from most pet shops for a few pence. It is clean and smooth nearly the proper colour for beaches. Of course, if you live near the sea you will have all you need at your feet.

Then, using matchboxes and thin card I made several little treasure chests and rum caskets covered where necessary with plain paper. The paper was then drawn upon to represent metal bands and studs, etc. and then coloured brown with water colour. When dry they were stuck on to the sandy base in their final position near the centre of the board. Some pirates of the correct scale to match the chests were made from plasticine and dressed in scraps of cloth as

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near period costume as possible. The heads are made from acorns secured to the body by means of matchstick necks. The features are drawn on in Indian ink.

When making these kind of models it is a very good opportunity to have a subtle lesson on period costume and lanterns. There will be a book in the library to help you on these subjects and there is at least one Cub in the Pack who is used to looking up things in books to help you with the details during the handcraft session. This kind of research is most interesting and gives an extra boost to the models.



After you have arranged the inside of the cave to your liking and have stuck it all down then is the time to put the roof over it. Some 1/2" wire mesh is first moulded over a bucket bottom and then placed in position over the pirates. See where you think the cave mouth will look most effective and then cut the mesh away at this place with a pair of pliers or tin snips. At this stage a tiny bulb holder is fixed in the roof of the cave and two attached wires are led down to the back of the model. For extra clever effect you could put another little bulb inside your model lantern too to give a gleam from the proper light source. Attach the mesh cage to the chipboard using wire staples tapped in with a small hammer.

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Now cover your cave with some thin cotton cloth and using a putty knife and a tablespoon spread a nice thick mixture of plaster filler all over the cloth until the cage is completely covered with it except for the cave mouth. The cloth is bent round the bare wire at the entrance so that no hands will get pricked when the bulb is screwed in place later.

On one corner of the board spread some more plaster so that it looks like the sea. If you wish you can set a model rowing boat on it half beached. When all the plaster work is completely dry you may then paint it with any kind of paint, powder paint being quite suitable.

Your last job is to place a battery at the back of the model, attach wires and a small switch. Ask your examiner to turn off the main light and turn yours on for a first-class pass.

### OLD WELL

HOW to make your own working well. This is a model which causes great fun if its secret is well kept before it is displayed.

Again I have used mostly scrap. It is different to most models in that part of it is below the surface. Lots of models are made on a sheet of hardboard or in a seed box with never a thought given to going underground.

I started with a cardboard box from my grocer's. This should not be less than 12" square. Then I visited the lino shop and obtained a cardboard roll used to keep rolls of lino uncracked in transit. Be prepared to walk home. The buses will surely pass you by when they see you coming.

Firstly, look at the top of the box and think where you would like to sink your well. Bear in mind what type of scenery you are going to stick round it once it has been made - paths, bushes, etc. Then with a Stanley cutting knife cut a hole exactly the same diameter as the outside of the roll. The roll is cut with a saw to the depth of the box plus about two inches which will come above the surface of the box and form the actual well head. Press the roll right down through the hole until it touches the table underneath. It is a good idea at this point to sellotape it to the box on the inside to prevent further movement.

Up on the surface once more we can start to make our well look like one. Take two strips of wood about 1" x 1/2" and 6" long. Drill four suitable holes in each piece as shown. Hold the strips upright one at a time and drill some corresponding holes in the cardboard roll and fix the wood strips to the roll by means of two nuts and bolts on each side. Next take a piece of rod such as a small length of thin broom handle and cut this a little less than the diameter of the top of the well. This is going to revolve to wind up the rope so it must not rub on the uprights.

After making a thinner drill hole centrally on each end of the wooden roller and another through the roller's side at 'A,' this can be secured to the uprights at one end by a screw (not done up too tightly) and the other by the wire you use for the combined fixing and handle. A word about this handle. You will see the shape it has to be by looking at the sketch, but it must also be stout enough to rotate the roller without the wire twisting. A long thin nail could be used if you bend it to the required shape with pliers or using a vice and a hammer. You can sometimes buy handles this shape from a model shop for a few pence. The end which is to go into the roller will be sharpened and then gently tapped home until the whole roller is secure. Another strip of wood the *same* dimension as the well head is placed in between the uprights

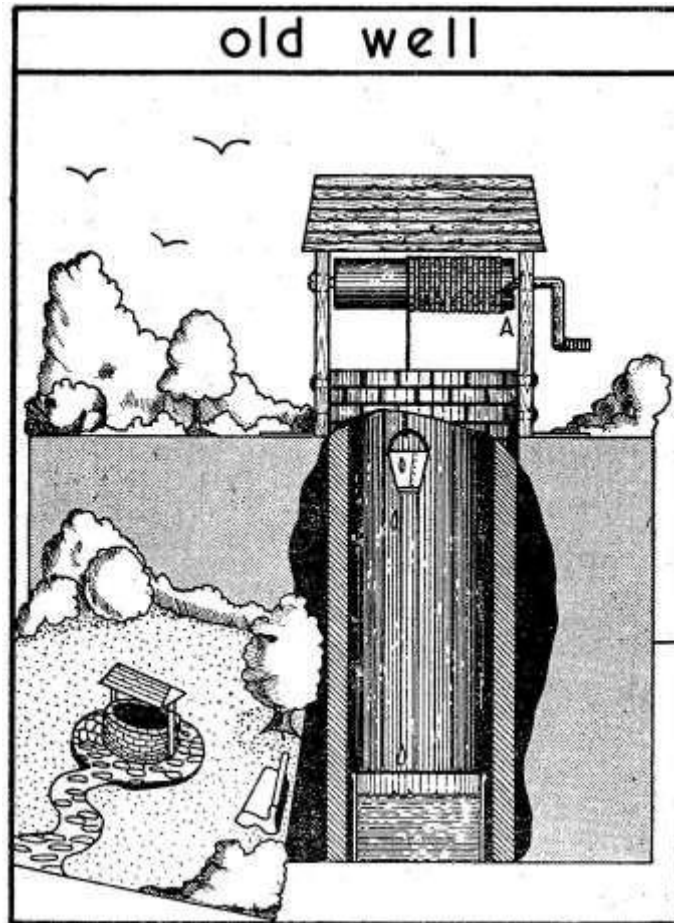
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at the very top where a pair of those holes will have already been drilled. Screw it firmly into place. A cardboard roof is made to the shape shown and glued in position.

Now for the rope and bucket. My bucket came from a model shop and is in correct proportions to the size of the well. You may find a suitably shaped bottle cap to make your own bucket with. The rope is thin brown garden string. The rope should be longer than the total depth of the well by about six inches, just to make sure that the bucket can be lowered to the very bottom. Pass one end of the string through the hole 'A' and knot it so that it will not come out. The bucket is best fixed by passing the string through the handle and whipping it to look as though it were eye-spliced. Add a touch of Copydex to the whipping and no knots will be needed.



The mechanics of your well should now be complete. Test. and make sure the bucket will wind up and down easily. Now you are free to decorate the top of the well as you wish. Will it be brick or stone? Will your roof be slate, tiles or wood? To make a grassy effect you stick a piece of old thin white towelling on the top of the box. When it has dried you make up a creamy mix of plaster filler and paste a layer over the outside of the well head to give a stony effect when later painted. The mixture can be smoothed over the towelling too to make paths

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around the well. Before it is quite dry mark your brick or stone and paving slabs in it with a sharp pencil point.

Foam sponge on twigs can make trees and shrubs to complete the general "field" scene. Cut-out magazine photos of fine British scenery pasted to stiff card can be added to one, two, or three sides to make the view more interesting and alive. Finally the whole model is left to dry out and is later painted with powder or poster paints laid on nice and thick to look realistic.

At last you are almost finished, and for your final masterly touch you add water! Before you demonstrate your model slip a bean can full of water under the bottom of your well as you place it on the table. The bucket is lowered and raised and to the joy of all up comes a drink of cool, gleaming, well water. If this is your demonstration model you will not be able to put it away until each Cub has had at least three "goes." So you see why it must be strong and if at all possible have the poster paint strongly varnished by the well. It may be an idea to use enamel paint for your own model. Just to ensure that it lasts.

### SWIMMING POOL

The swimming pool is another of my favourite models. As with the water well I have taken part of the model underground.

First take a shoe box. Cut off the lid's sides and bend the lid in three places to make the sloping bottom of the pool as shown in the sketch. Stick this in position with Copydex where it touches the shoe box. Paint the whole inside of the box with watercolour paint in swimming pool blue. Try and get the paint even so that it does not look streaky. If you have a steady hand you could paint four "lanes" in a darker blue on the bottom of the pool. This is not absolutely necessary although it adds to the finished effect.

Next, using the discarded edges of the lid make some angle brackets and glue these round the top of the pool on the outside a fraction below the top rim of the box. Leave to dry for ten minutes to make sure the brackets are firm.

Meanwhile, take a grocer's cardboard carton big enough to be able to accept the shoe box and still have a fair bit of floor space round the pool. Pencil round the shoe box, cut out the oblong with a Stanley knife and fit the shoe box up into the hole from below, glueing the topside of the angle brackets and making sure everything is completely stuck. The top of the pool should now be level with the top surface of the surround.

We now add the watery effect and this can be obtained by cutting out a sheet of clear cellophane or polyglaze about two inches larger all round than the pool. This is stretched tight across the pool and becomes the surface of the water. You will probably find it easiest to stick it in place with short bits of Sellotape stuck at 90 degrees to the edge rather than all round it. About a dozen bits would be enough. It will all be hidden by the flooring which we now lay.

For the floor you take another piece of cardboard the same size as the total surface of the grocer's box. To this card stick a sheet of graph or arithmetic paper the same size. When dry, cut out an oblong to correspond with the size and position of the pool. This in turn is stuck to the "floor" like a great sheet of lino.

Now you may begin to work out a design that you would like to see on a real swimming bath floor. Your tiles are already drawn on the graph paper and you can make patterns galore to suit yourself. The colour is dabbed in with a small brush using watercolour paint. If you want some

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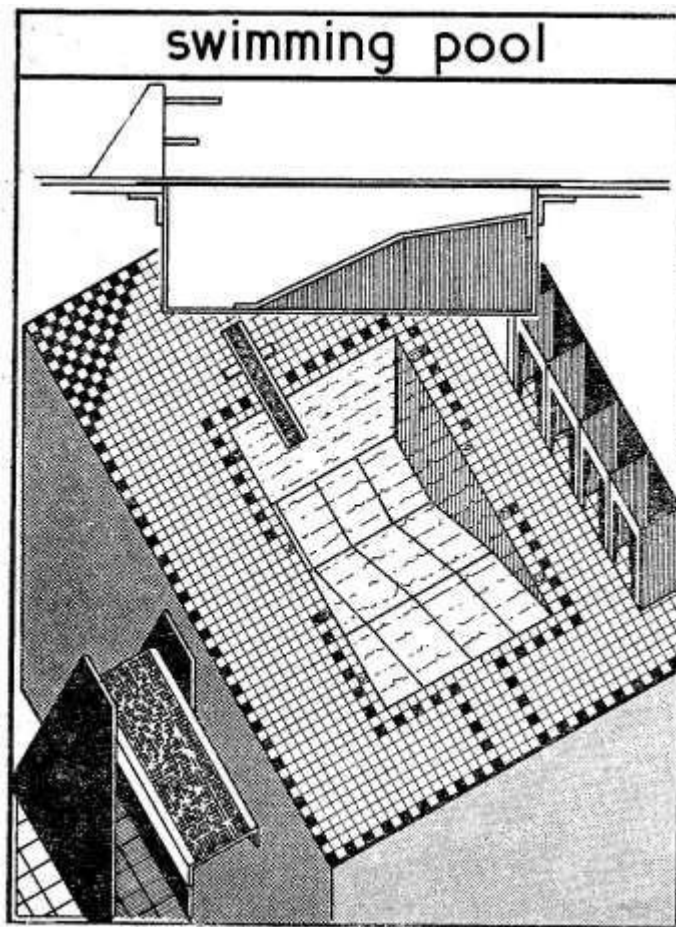
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ideas for patterns you have only to study the pamphlets produced by various firms specialising in tiles. Have no more than two colours with white or you may lose the china tile effect.

A low spring board can be made from a slip of wood resting on a block. A tiny mat can be glued on to this to stop the divers slipping. The braid used for Scout shoulder knots is effective material, especially in brown. If you take a fancy to a high board, try to make a modern affair out of cardboard or balsa with smooth lines that suggests it has been made in concrete. This will be easier than trying to make a frame out of wire.

Finally, your dressing accommodation is made from thin card. Several little cubicles can be made in a row with tiny cloth curtains across the doorways. If you have the space, there is nothing to stop the keen Cub adding a cafe corner, a spectator's gallery, or whatever else he fancies. But me, I'm off for a swim!



### SCOUT CAMP

If we were to ask any Cub what he would like to do best when he goes up into the Scouts he is pretty sure to answer "go campin'."

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To stimulate this idea I encourage the making of a Scout camp site for a model. Neat finger work is necessary to tie the right kind of little knots to hold up the poles of the rope bridge and to do the correct stringing up of the main walk-way so there is no fear of falling through. For the older Cub this is a subtle way of introducing him to a few of the tenderfoot knots and a little bit of lashing. This can be especially useful if the boy has got his Leaping Wolf and has still a few weeks to go before he can join the Troop. A Scout Cub Instructor can be most helpful in giving a little advance information on the Tenderfoot work.

This is one of the easier models as no major "engineering" has to be done as in the case of the swimming pool or the well. The basic requirement is a piece of soft Essex board about 14" square. This is covered with a piece of old white towelling and stuck with Copydex. The towelling is then smothered with green powder paint to represent a lush meadow. Add buttercups if you fancy some, just a dab of bright yellow here and there.

Now, continue with your background. The silhouette of trees and bushes cut from plywood, hardboard, or thick card are fixed upright at the back of the scene. This is then painted in proper colours or in dark green and brown to give the suggestion of background rather than a detailed account of it. If you like you can use a cut-out coloured photo of rolling scenery taken from a good magazine. Several of the countrymen's magazines have ideal photos of this type.



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Choose a suitable corner of this field to construct a real little camp kitchen. With a Stanley knife, carefully cut into the towelling and Essex board as though you were removing a turf. Paint the hole with earthy brown powder paint, and using small dry twigs from under a hedge build a small fire. It need not be like mine of course, but may be of any design you choose.

The billy can is made from cardboard and thin wire, or you can use a cap from a Dettol bottle which is just the right size and shape and also black. Drill two tiny holes in the edge of this to take the thin wire handle.

Miniature tent pegs can be made from whittled wood, 1" nails or small green twigs such as that holding up the billy. A dresser or table is made in the standard Scout way, and tiny twigs, round ice lolly sticks or thin dowelling can be used. The kitchen area can be sealed off with a string fence if you wish. I have not shown it in the sketch just to keep the picture clear.

The tents are simple folds of white or green cartridge paper and the tent poles are round lolly sticks or old knitting needles cut to size and stuck in the soft board. Prick two small holes in the peak of each tent roof and slip the tent over the poles. For extra firmness arrange that there are a couple of folds where the brailing is that can be stuck to the ground. A small Patrol flag can be designed and stuck to the front tent pole.

Finally, make your masterpiece of pioneering. This is best done in carefully measured lengths of 1/4" wood dowelling. It is wise to mark out exactly where the feet of the sheer legs will go and then drill a hole into the the Essex board at these places. The drawing is clear enough to show you the principle of the bridge but if in doubt, you can always refer to one of the Scout pioneering books. You can use 1" nails in the soft board to act as pegs for these are strong enough to take the strain of the bridge when you stretch the rope across from one side to the other and tie it tightly. A cardboard cut-out Scout, or one made from pipe cleaners can then proceed to do his balancing act.

Not in the picture, but no reason why it should not be is, of course, the "small room" of the camp site. At least it will reassure the Cub that these private little cubicles are available at camp. Boys often worry 'about these small details you know, so a suggestion from you may be most comforting!

When you are making these kinds of models you must be consistent in the scale of things if the model is to look at all realistic. If you settle for the fact that each foot will be represented by 1/2", then whatever you make must be accurately measured to this size. If your tents are 8 ft. long in real life, then they must be 4" long on your model. The height of the tent must be the right size for your Scout to walk into. The dresser must be at his correct waist height and so on. The camp fire must be the appropriate size too as the Scout is cooking on it and not building Guy Fawkes bonfires.

It is not as hard as one would at first think to find out the scale of things, for you only have to measure what is round you with eye or rule to find out how things compare in size in relation to each other. The best comparison to teach your Cubs to work to is obviously their own height. Show him such examples when you are out and about. How little he is compared with a church steeple, how high he comes up the side of a bus. Tell him the dimension of a common brick so that he can work the height of a building for himself.

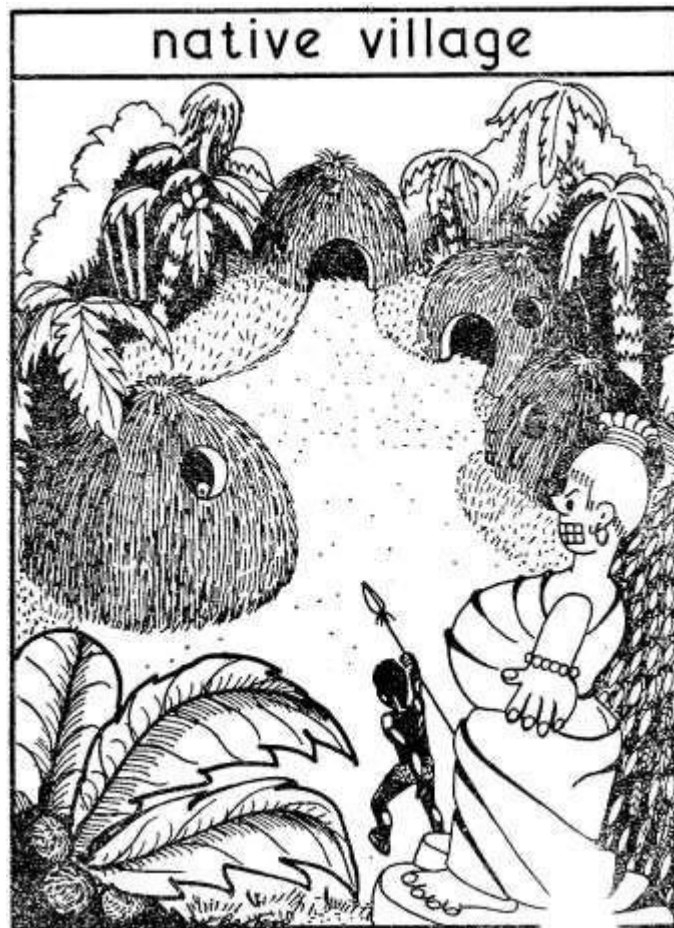
These are all the things you can chat about while you are making your models together in the den. You will be teaching the Cubs observation which may well be useful to them one day. You will awaken their awareness to the things around them which are so part of their lives that they tend not to notice a thing.

**NATIVE VILLAGE**

Another favourite model of mine is the native village. This is something which can be quite exciting if novel ideas are used. To start with I will suggest that you obtain one or two plastic animals such as lions and tigers which can be bought at any toy shop and are often sold in zoo sets. They are the standard sizes ones. One or two model natives should be bought at the same time. They are often wielding spears like the one in my picture. This adds to the fun.

Next, try and obtain some coconuts. They can be won at Fairs but I suggest you buy one or two as it will be cheaper in the long run. You may not have a Fair handy anyway.

Saw these in half and do what you will with the inside. With a small saw, drill and a round file cut out a door and a window in each hut. Make your base in the same manner as that described in the Scout Camp.



Arrange your mud huts in the traditional circle and then muddy up the ground where all the natives have run in and out of their huts on a wet day. Then, using foam plastic, or twigs and cotton wool fashion yourself some trees and shrubs not forgetting the brown plasticine

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coconuts on the palm trees. Making the trunks strong enough sometimes presents a problem but any stick or twig can be strengthened by binding it with a streamer of crepe paper well glued. Trunks can be secured to the ground by sticking on to a blob of thick plaster or by drilling a hole in the Essex board base to stick the trunk in. The trees should be put close together so that they make the typical thick and spooky undergrowth found in the jungle. A water-colour brush loaded with dark green powder paint can be poked into the depths of the undergrowth to add to this effect.

Your little native men and the model tigers can be put in exciting places ready to pop out on each other and the realism starts to grow. Perhaps you will wonder why I have not suggested that the animals and men be made too, but on this occasion it is the coconut mud huts that are the high spot of the model and I use the bought figures as a foil to the very natural look of the huts. Animals are hard to make to look real at the best of times and this is one of the models that could look rather uninteresting if the figures were badly made. However, you are not going to get off entirely from figure-making as there is that fearful and formidable totem pole to be carved from soft balsa block with a small but really sharp penknife. It should be higher than the huts and should command a respectful position in the camp. You can go quite riotous on this model and make it as fearsome as you like. I have not suggested detail on mine, but you could colour yours with enamel or bright poster paints if you wished. There would be nothing to stop you sticking coloured map pins on the figure instead of eyes. But at all events make it a real voodoo type totem.

I have not drawn any snakes as I made too much noise when I sketched this village and they slithered off. However, they can be made very easily from short lengths of blind cord. Dab the ends in Copydex and roll with your fingers to make the proper snake shape. Dab this body with poster paint until the snake, and your fingers, have arrived at the right pattern and hue. Nice little snakes can also be made from 2" lengths of gay plastic covered wire. Drape them neatly all over the village until the thought begins to horrify even the Cubs. Remember the coconut huts are your real focal point so build all the scenery and excitement around these. May I wish you a pleasant night's sleep after doing this model at Pack meeting.

### CASTLES

Old castles have always fascinated me. Whenever I enter the courtyards of these places standing so proudly amongst the cedars and the yews I can almost see the first Elizabethans in their tall pointed hats, slashed doublets, and hose or the Normans running to the firing slits carrying their crossbows. Or maybe Richard the Lion Heart leaning back on a teak throne under a crimson canopy watching his prize archers battling it out on the green sward. The herald up there on the ramparts adds the sparkle of his golden trumpet to the sunbeams picking out the lead glazed windows set deep in the stone walls. It happens to me every time and each time I am sure I enjoy the sensation more. Sometimes I feel as though, if I stood still for long enough, I might fade back in time and find myself alive in the olden world still so vividly about me.

If you are lucky enough to live near a castle perhaps you would like to take some of the Pack there to make sketches and afterwards make a model of part of the place. The tower I made was done from real pebbles and cement and is on my rockery garden surrounded by miniature trees. For an indoor model you will need a firm chipboard base about 14" square. In my sketch I show the old keep which in most castles is set on a mound which has many steep, well worn stone steps leading up to it. To make most of the mound quickly you will need a block of

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wood over which you smother plaster of paris, cement or pyruma until it looks like stone. Large stonework markings are scratched in this before it has set quite hard. Depending on the size of your base, a tin can of correct scale is set upside down on the base before the plaster has set. Make sure it is firmly embedded and leave it until it is really firm and unlikely to pull out.

At the same time as you stick the tin in the plaster, place a cut out balsa door of appropriate size and appearance close up to the tin where you want the door to be. This can be held close to the tin by means of an elastic band. (Later snipped off).

Next, using real sand and cement mortar, go round and round the tin laying a bed of mortar and then a layer of pebbles and so on until you reach the top. The mortar should not be soft, but firm enough to hold the pebbles up the tin without collapsing. Another ideal material to use for mortar is pyruma cement which is widely used for this kind of modelling. The castle top is best modelled inside a separate cardboard ring. This is later cemented to the top of the tin when the walls are really dry.



When this section of work is dried out, drape some real plant life round the keep to represent ivy. On my garden castle I have some miniature rockery plant which thrives on mortar and

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## Instant Ideas for Handcraft With Cubs

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looks most realistic. For the actual day that the Cub's model is examined he could use rock plant or thyme to drape over the walls.

A model tree is made from foam plastic or fronds of fir stuck together, but there would be nothing against you using a plastic tree so well made by "Britains" as a foil to your castle. This can be set or stood on a grassy mound made from any left-over concrete. The mound and all the surround must now be painted in appropriate colours to give the correct scenic effect.

A high wall in silhouette can be cut out of card and tacked to the back and two sides of this model. The wall, of course, will be much lower than the keep to give the keep its true impression of height in perspective. A hole-in-the-wall door suggests a quick way out to freedom for anyone who feels like escaping from the confines of the castle.

The Cubs will delight in making cannons which can be made from balsa wood well shaped and painted, the cannon balls being large ball bearings about 1/2" in dia. Most marble players will supply these for you if only "to borer." Make sure that the mouths of the cannons are the right size to take the balls ! Any Cub will be glad to look up the right sort of armoury for you and most castles sell booklets containing notes on their pet cannons.

This is a model which could go with a bang in your Pack. So watch those ball bearings!

### NATURE MODELS

Apart from the main models in the tests the Cub is required to make something from tinier objects such as fir cones, pegs and so on. Here are some other things that can be used and made. These are things that could well be introduced to the whole Pack one evening as they are amusing to make, the materials can be obtained in huge quantity. No glueing should be needed.

Ida the Spider is one of my favourite little horrors. She is a conker with legs made from three inch lengths of bendy wire. Her eyes are most effective if made from beady map pins. She can be strung from a cotton to dangle most enticingly from the six corners. Cubs good at netting may even like to weave her a web from linen thread.

To my mind, acorns have definite Chinese faces. Press a sharpened match in one for a neck. Draw the eyes and features in Indian ink (should be Chinese ink I suppose) and set the head in a half potato. Cover this body in a tiny scrap of coloured silk held to the potato with pins pressed right in and there you have one genuine Mandarin. (You can buy mandarin ink too!) Make sure the Cubs understand that the potatoes are not to be eaten afterwards.

The spook is made from wrapped peanuts (original wrapping). They are joined together the same way with sharpened matchsticks. Beady pins represent antennæ. In our Pack we call them "germs" and jolly fun is had in trying to see who can make the best set of measles germs, or whichever set of germs is doing the rounds.

All the Cubs enjoy making the guillotine. A plasticine basket full of nice little acorn heads is a great attraction. The trail of red poster paint does much to enlighten the evening. The uprights are poked through the match box and the cutting knife can be fixed by two short pieces of Sellotape.

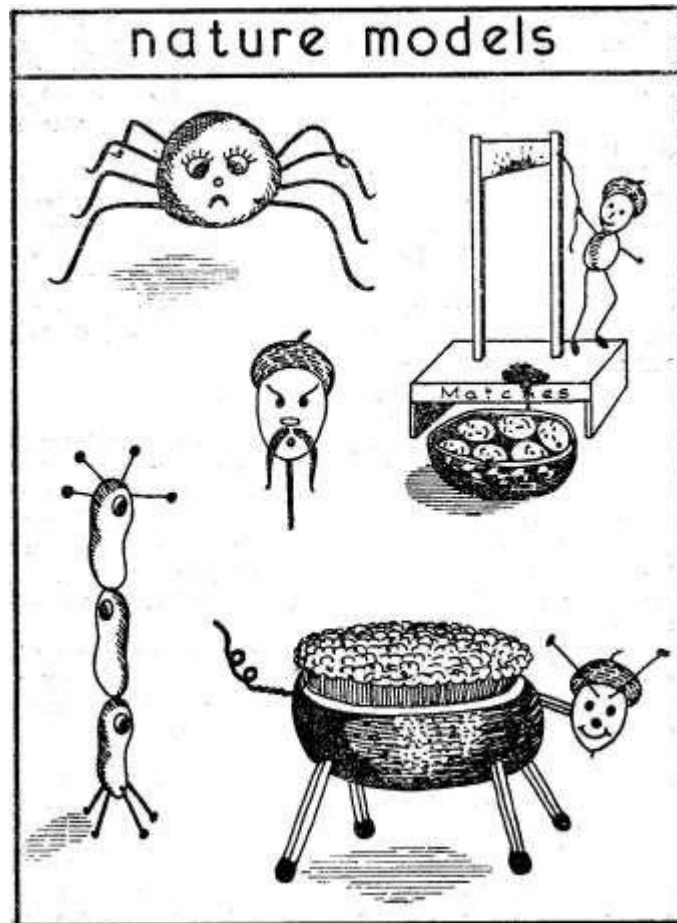
Finally, another of my favourites. The "kitchen window-sill monster." This pleasant pet is made from half a large potato its middle scooped out with a teaspoon, Matchstick legs are added and a head made from a conker or acorn. A small disc of lint is spread inside the body

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and a teaspoonful of cress seed sprinkled over it. Keep this watered daily and in about ten days you will have the fluffiest monster you ever did see.



### FOR SOME LADIES

On tools. It has been suggested that a few lady Scouters are not quite sure which tools to use for certain things and how to handle them. I will try and offer one or two suggestions to help you build up a small stock of tools of your own to save the inevitable yell of anguish from a distracted husband who finds his best chisel being used for a screwdriver or that his tool kit has gone down to the Pack meeting!

For general Pack use you will need several pairs of round-nosed scissors for paper and card. A few old stainless steel table knives are useful for spreading plaster of paris, dessert spoons for mixing plaster and powder paints.

In cases where you need a cutting knife I can only recommend the Stanley knife which has a sturdy handle and hardly any blade showing. Several spare blades come with the knife and are stored safely in the handle. The price is under 8/- . This is a knife which can do practically everything from cutting out lino, leather, paring wood sharpening pencils, carving balsa and cutting out thick cardboard. It outweighs every other knife that I know of for sheer safety in

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small hands as well as our own. I hasten to add that it will still cut careless fingers and so you must use proper discretion as to who can use it in the Pack. But weigh it up against the fact that Cub's penknives are usually dangerously blunt and have a jolly habit of folding up on unwary fingers. Razor blades are fragile and definitely too dangerous for Cub use even when in a holder. They wobble like mad and snap off too when you least expect it. Old fashioned lino and leather knives have to be honed continuously to keep a safe sharpness. The ones kept in most work boxes at home are usually rusty and any Cub will tell you what rust in a cut will do to you.

Ladies sometimes find difficulty in cutting wire. (Used for legs of figures and animals, etc.) Scissors are not the tool for this job, nor the rose pruners. I recommend buying yourself a pair of pliers which have a wire cutting Dart built in the main head. (Some pliers have a silly little slot on the hinge which does not always work.) Pliers are not expensive and come in various sizes. If ladies buy a smaller pair that feels comfortable in the hand they should be able to work well with them. Go to a good tool shop if possible, You will have a far better choice and skilled advice. Pliers have many uses. Stiff wire can be bent easily and cut. Tricky bits of models can be held in place while the glue sets and so on. Wood dowel can be cut in the wire cutter although personally I always use my pruners for a quick, clean cut in thin dowel.

For thicker dowel and other wood and metal cutting I have a most useful miniature saw made by Eclipse. Blades come in different grades and are cheap and easily replaced. It is safe for any Cub to use and only 9" long overall.

Other useful tools for your kit are briefly as follows. A small hammer as used for tapping brads in shoes. A small screwdriver. I have a ratchet screwdriver which is handy for doing up screws in awkward places. The new sanding blocks or files made from carbide particles save a lot of money on having to replace sandpaper, not to mention wear and tear on finger nails.

Tweezers are useful for holding fiddly parts and hairgrips hold tacks whilst they are tapped in. A bradawl has many uses from dibbing holes to starting screws off, making holes in card, leather and conkers, etc. If Pack funds cannot run to a Maun hand punch the bradawl is a very suitable substitute.

These should be your basic tools. I think of all of them the Stanley knife is the most useful as it can be used in practically every aspect of our handcrafts. Although not "tools," I would like to mention glue and paint. The best glue in my own experience is Copydex. It is a latex glue which sticks instantly. (So let not a Cub apply it to the inside of his cap!) It is wonderful for most jobs in paper, card, leather and decorative work. For balsa we use the stuff called "balsa cement." Poster paint is the best for certain models which need to be well finished, but one tin each of red, blue, yellow, black and white powder paint should see you through many handcraft sessions. Both of these paints have the advantage over ordinary watercolour in that they are opaque and not at all "wishy-washy." Another useful tip. Save all your washing-up liquid containers, the plastic ones, and cut off the bottom two inches to make unbreakable water pots. I have always thought that fish paste jars were the silliest idea ever invented for paint pots. The top half makes a useful funnel if you happen to need one to fill your primus at camp.

Keep a special box in your den for your tools and handcraft equipment. It is really important that they are looked after. "They" say that bad workmen always blame their tools, but you will find that a fine craftsman praises his.