

The power of wind

Use natural materials to build a biodegradable raft powered by the wind



Wind turbines are the biggest contributor to green energy in the UK, generating 14.8% of all the electricity we use. In the future, the use of renewable sources of energy like wind power is set to grow. Use this raft-building activity to highlight the power of the wind to your young people, and showcase the different things you can do with natural materials.

Suitable for Beavers and Cubs

You will need (per raft)

- 10 straight sticks
- long wooden skewer
- string made with natural fibres
- piece of recycled card
- small piece of modelling clay
- scissors
- paddling pool (optional)



Facts to blow you away...

There are currently 32 offshore wind farms in the UK, with 1,716 turbines.

Instructions

1 Read the water safety guidance for activities taking place near water: members.scouts.org.uk/por9.48.

2 Ask your section to go foraging for straight sticks near your meeting place or to collect some before your meeting and bring them in.

3 Each young person should place about 10 sticks of a similar length (approximately 10cm to 15cm) side by side, to make a base for their raft.

4 Add stability to the raft by putting two extra sticks across the base, going in the opposite direction.

5 Next, they need to tie all the sticks together. Ask everyone to use a snake lashing to do this. Go to scoutpioneering.com/tag/double-floor-lashing/ to find out how.) This can be tied off with a reef knot.

6 Using scissors, the young people should cut out a triangle-shaped sail from recycled card. Ask them to carefully push the skewer through the top and bottom of their sail.

7 Next, they need to roll a small ball of clay to form a base for the mast. They should stick this onto the raft base and poke the mast into it, then mould the clay to make it secure.

8 Finally, ask the young people to attach a piece of string to their rafts so they don't float away. Take the finished rafts to a local pond, lake or use a paddling pool to see them sail with the power of the wind.



In 2022 a new wind farm is due to be completed off the coast of Yorkshire. It will become the largest in the world, with capacity to generate enough electricity for 1.3 million homes.

The largest onshore wind farm is currently in Whiteley, Scotland – it has 215 wind turbines.

Time needed 60 minutes

Badge



Gruffalo Explorers sponsors the Beaver My Outdoor Challenge Award

Partner



Outcomes

The young people will learn about the importance of wind power as a sustainable energy source and have the chance to practise their knot skills.

More information

For more badge resources, activity sheets and safety guidance visit: scouts.org.uk/gruffaloexplorers

