

Snowman Kit

Let it snow let it snow let it snow.....one of my favorite songs for the winter and boy do I love winter...especially all the snow! I bet all of you who have had the fortune of living in snow country have also had the opportunity to build a great big snowman. I used to build one every winter as a kid and then we would scurry around looking for anything we could to give our “man” or “woman” the appropriate eyes, mouth nose and buttons to give the snowman the ultimate look. We would use stones, sticks; bottle caps anything we could scrounge. Sometimes we would just give up and our snowman would be, well, just snow.



Guess what? It's time to stop your searching, because, by using some simple steps and stuff you can purchase at any home center for mere pennies, I'm going to show you how to build the ultimate “snowman kit”. Every kit will have, eyes, nose, mouth and buttons, and if you check out the sewing section,

Shari has sewn a wonderful little drawstring bag to hold all of the pieces safely away after the dreaded melt down.

Materials List:

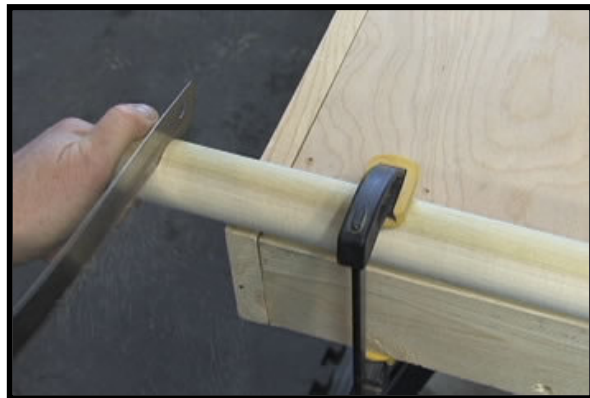
- 1 ½ inch wooden dowel
- 2x2 inch wooden square lumber
- 1 inch wooden square lumber
- ¾ inch wooden square lumber
- Hand saw
- Clamps
- 120 grit sandpaper
- Block plane
- Pencil
- Craft Paint

Tip:

I did use a hand saw for all the cutting, but you can use a miter saw if you like. But use caution, you will be cutting small pieces and a hand saw may be a better choice.

1 The first pieces will be the eyes, because if the snowman can't see, he won't be able to warn you of incoming snowballs. The eyes are constructed out of a 1 ½ inch poplar dowel, which can be found in the lumber section. I purchased a 48 inch long section which is the length it was sold in, but that's cool, I'll be making a bunch of these for all my friends' kids.

2 To start, make a mark about an inch down the dowel which should be a good thickness for the eye, clamp the dowel down to a work surface and cut the section using a small hand saw. Don't worry about how straight the cut is, because the rough edge will go into the snow and nobody will see it.



Tip: To start the cut, use your thumb to guide the first couple of cuts, just draw the blade back a couple of times toward you to get the cut started, then you can start using full strokes. Just a side note, I use a hand saw called a pull saw or it is also referred to as a Japanese saw. What makes these great is that the power of the cut is when you

pull the saw towards you, not on the down stroke. This little saw seems to give me more control than a normal saw. These saws come in all different sizes. I have a few of them and I love them. They're great for woodworking!

3 Once you have made the cut, repeat the step so that you have two eyes. Then sand the edges smooth using a piece of 120 grit sand paper.



For the mouth, I used a two different size square pieces of lumber, 1 inch and $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The mouth starts larger in the center of the smile tapering to the smaller pieces at the end.

4 To make the mouth use the same process as the eyes, measure 1 inch down the square pieces of lumber, clamp and cut using a hand saw and then sand smooth. Cut at least 6 of each size – you may have a large snow man with a big grin or a small snow man with a simple smile. Or even a frown if a warmer trend is occurring.



5 For the buttons, use a larger square piece of lumber, I used a 2 x 2 piece and cut to size the same way as the other pieces, but I did something different to give the button a unique, used look. I taped a piece of sandpaper down to my bench then just roughed up the edges on one side to soften them for a more worn appearance.



6 Now the nose took a little more effort. Use the same wooden dowel as the eyes and a block plane and mark about 6 inches down the dowel.



Using a carrot as a model, “whittle” down the nose using the block plane.



Work from the large end down to a pointed end until you fashion a nose to be proud of.



Then just sand it smooth. This will take some time, but enjoy the process of working with wood.

When all of the pieces are done being cut and sanded, it's time to consider how the pieces will be placed into the snow man, you could just stick them into the snow, but more than likely they will just fall out. So using a small wooden dowel and my hand drill, I drilled holes the size of the dowel into the back of each piece.

Tip: Place a small piece of tape on the drill bit to give you a stopping point, so that you don't drill through the piece. As you drill when you reach the tape, stop the drill.



7 Then cut the dowel to length. About 4 inches should give you enough sticking-stick to hold the pieces in place in the snow. You have the option to glue the stick into place, or just place it in when needed.

Remove if you want and store them in Shari's great little draw string bag. Find this project in the sewing section!





8 The final step is to paint the pieces the appropriate color. Of course I used the traditional coal color, black, for the eyes, mouth, and buttons and orange for the nose. But hey it will be your snow man so use any colors your little heart desires. Speaking of hearts, maybe I should give my snowman a heart, or a brain, I

know....COURAGE!!!!

This would make a marvelous gift at Christmastime for any children you may have on your gift list. Everyone loves something home made and this is something that could be handed down for generations. You might consider wood burning your initials and a date on the back of the buttons or eyes!

Matt

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