

How to Make Pinball Games Out of Cardboard

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Pinball is a classic arcade game. When it comes to making your own pinball machine, there are tons of options. You can keep it simple or make it as elaborate as you want. Whichever project strikes your fancy, you're guaranteed to have fun!

Things You'll Need

- ☐ For a cardboard pinball table:
- ☐ Clear tape
- ☐ 2 cups from an egg carton
- ☐ Duct tape for decoration (optional)
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Straws
- ☐ Brass paper fastener (1/2" or 3/4")
- ☐ Thin cardboard (the cardboard from a cereal box works well)
- ☐ Marble or other small ball
- ☐ Odds and ends to create obstacles in the playing field. Examples include:
- ☐ Small paper cups
- ☐ Bottle caps
- ☐ Pipe cleaners, markers, aluminum foil, popsicle (craft) sticks
- ☐ For a paper plate maze:
- ☐ Paper plate
- ☐ Craft supplies such as construction paper, bottle caps, and pipe cleaners
- ☐ Glue and tape
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Marbles
- ☐ For a skee ball game:
- ☐ Two large cardboard boxes of approximately the same size
- ☐ 2-3 plastic storage bins
- ☐ Sharp craft knife or Canary knife
- ☐ Packing or duct tape
- ☐ Tennis balls (or similar)

Method 1 of 4: Creating a Pinball Machine From a Cardboard Shoe Box



1 Gather your materials. You will need:

- Shoebox. You can also use the top
- Clear tape
- 2 cups from an egg carton
- Duct tape for decoration (optional)
- Scissors
- Straws
- Brass paper fastener (1/2" or 3/4")
- Thin cardboard (the cardboard from a cereal box or tissue box etc.)
- Marble or other small ball
- Odds and ends to create obstacles in the playing field (optional). Examples include:
 - Small paper cups
 - Bottle caps
 - Pipe cleaners, markers, aluminum foil, popsicle (craft) sticks

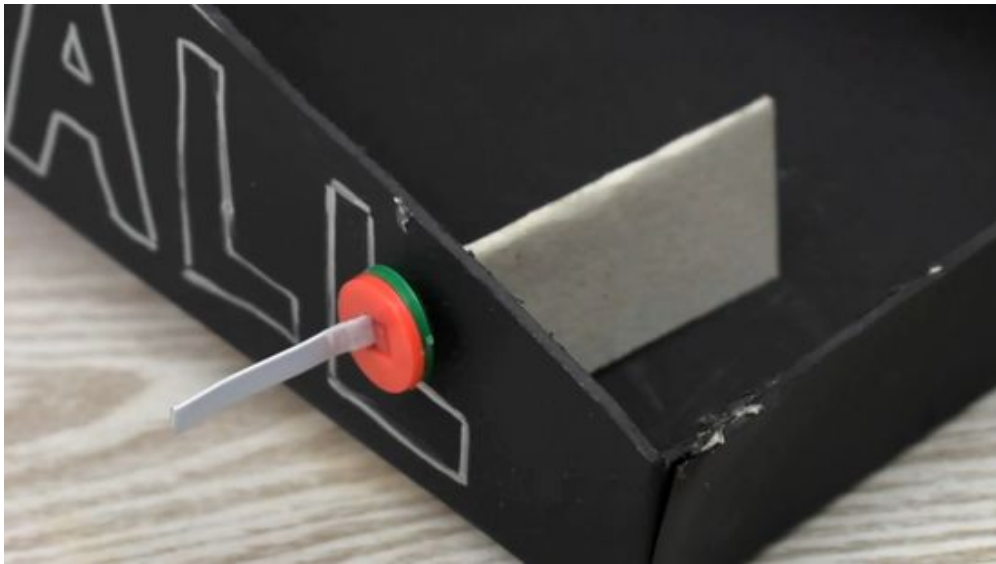


2 Paint and decorate the shoebox if desired. Let it dry overnight.



3 Set the box on an angle.

- Tape or glue the two egg carton cups to one end of the shoe box.



4 Create a ball-launching lever.

- Fold a two-inch strip of cardboard lengthwise.
- Attach the cardboard to the lower left-hand corner of the shoebox using a brass fastener.
- Test the lever by flicking it with your finger to see if it can shoot the marble. Adjust the lever as needed.



5 Design the playing field.

- PBS Kids recommends making a path on the left side of the box by taping down a straw to lead your marble to the top of the box.^[1]
- Add a curved piece of paper to the top left corner of the shoebox to enable your marble to roll smoothly to the right.
- Create an obstacle course with miscellaneous objects on the right side of the box.



6 Try it out! Keep testing the playing field until you are satisfied with how the pinball machine works.

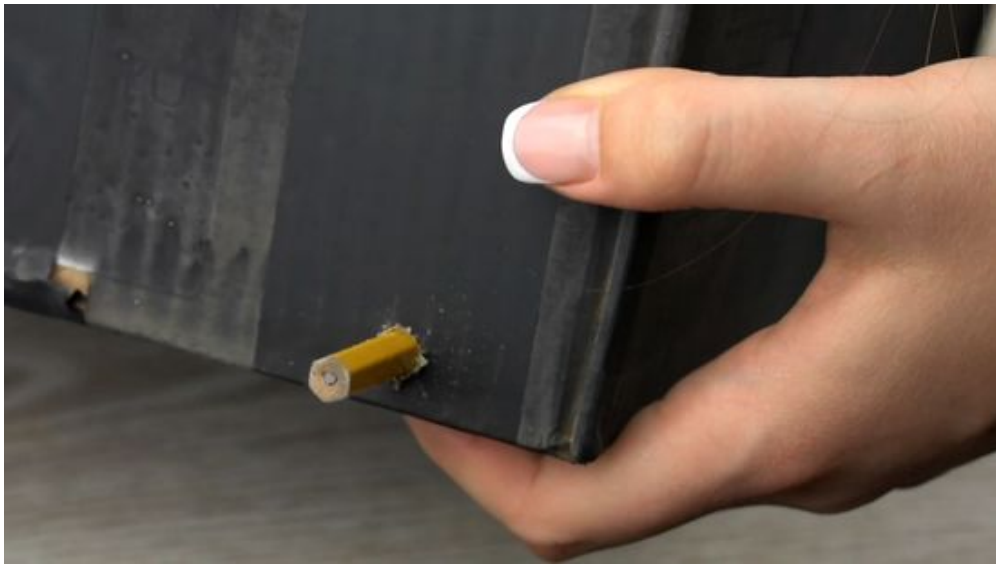
Method
2

Method 2 of 4: Creating a Pinball Machine from a Larger Cardboard Box



1 Create a ball launcher to start with.

- Materials needed:
 - Pencil
 - Thumbtack
 - Washer wide enough to place around the pencil
 - Spring wide enough to thread around the pencil
- Stick the thumbtack in the pencil eraser.
- Slide the washer up next to the thumbtack.
- Thread the spring onto the pencil.



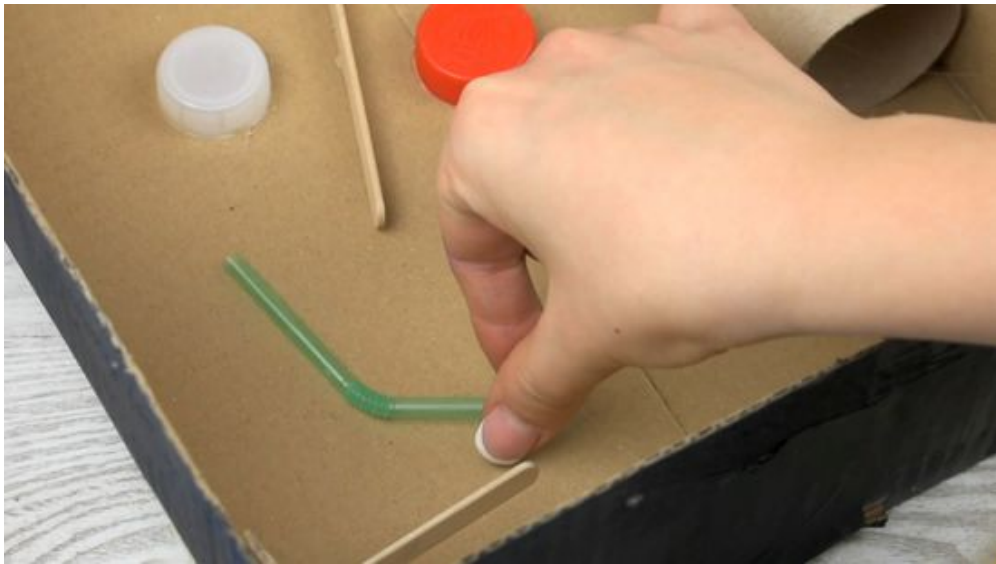
2 Install the ball launcher

- Cut a hole just big enough to fit the pencil.
- Thread the launcher through the hole.
- Use a small piece of cardboard to create a chute next to the launcher for the marble.
- Use your imagination and create more obstacles.



3 Add flippers to your pinball table.

- Determine where you want to locate the flippers.
- Cut slits in the cardboard box big enough to insert craft sticks.
- Insert craft sticks. Reinforce the slits with duct tape.



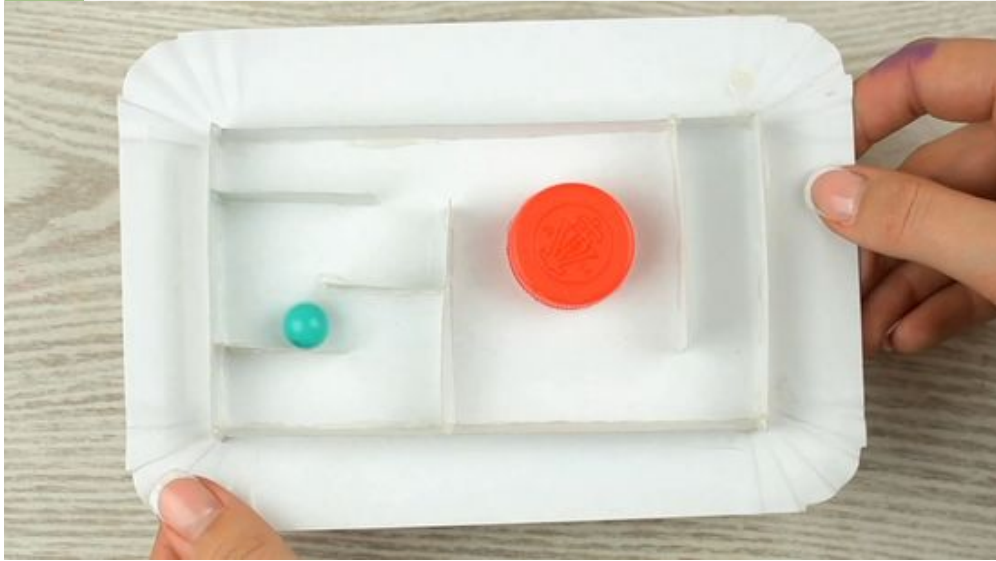
4 Add obstacles to the playing field.

- Attach the cardboard bat to a craft stick or other type of stick.
- Place the marble on top of the thumbtack, pull back the launcher, and let it go!
- The Scientific Mom has many suggestions for creating playing field obstacles, including setting up ramps, bells, and flaps.
 - Create tunnels and ramps out of toilet paper tubes.
 - Create flaps using a skewer and cut paper.



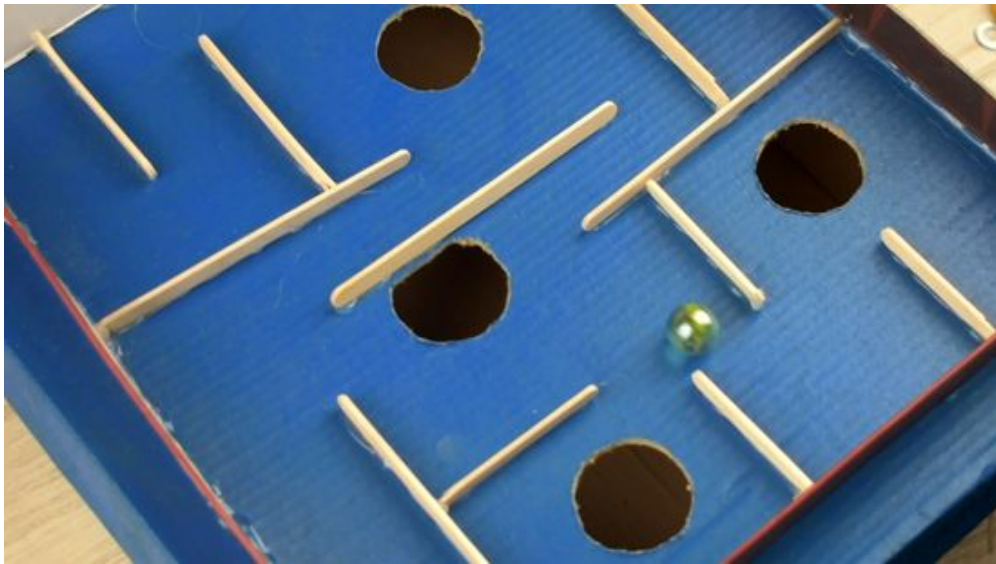
5 Start playing and having fun!

Method 3 of 4: Creating a Cardboard Maze



1 Make a paper plate marble maze. Kids can have fun making a simple maze pinball game using a paper plate and a few found items.

- Gather your materials:
 - Paper plate.
 - Craft supplies such as construction paper, bottle caps, and pipe cleaners.
 - Glue and tape.
 - Scissors.
 - Marbles.
- Create obstacles for the maze.
 - Cut strips of paper and tape or glue to the inside of the plate rim side up.
 - Tape or glue other objects to the plate.
- Navigate through the maze with the marble.



2 Make a cardboard box maze.

- Gather your materials:
 - Cardboard box with lid.
 - Wide craft sticks.
 - Utility knife.
 - Hot glue gun.
 - Craft knife.
 - Small circle. A nickel works well.
- Create a maze on the top of the box lid by gluing the craft sticks with a hot glue gun.
- Trace circles on the lid using a pencil and nickel.
- Cut the circles out with a craft knife.
- Place the lid inside the box and decorate how you want.
- Use a marble to negotiate the maze and avoid the holes.



3 Make sure children have adequate supervision when handling tools.

Method 4 of 4: Making a Cardboard Skee Ball Game



1 Gather your materials. You will need:

- Two large cardboard boxes of approximately the same size.
- 2-3 plastic storage bins
- Sharp craft knife or Canary knife
- Packing or duct tape
- Tennis balls (or similar)



2 Create a skee ball game similar to one described on the Momtastic site. [2]

- Make a ramp by cutting the short side of one of the boxes so it lies down flat. Be sure to leave the rest of the box intact.
 - You should have a box that is solid on three sides with a flap that folds out.
- Cut out the short side of the other box so it is the same size as the first box.
- Fold the flap from the first box into the box at an angle so it forms part of a ramp. Tape in Place.
- Place the cardboard cut from the second box on top of the ramp and tape in place.
- Place the containers behind the cardboard box.



3 Play the game by rolling tennis balls up the ramp and into the plastic containers. The farther away the container is, the more points scored.



4 Fold up the ramp and put the box away when you're finished playing.



Community Q&A

Question

Do I have to use a brass tacks?



Kim G
Top Answerer

You can use any type of fastener that will enable the lever to be moved to launch the ball. Whatever type you use, make sure there are no sharp edges exposed.

Helpful **2** Not Helpful **1**

Question

Can I use a hot glue gun instead of a brass paper fastener?



Kim G
Top Answerer

The point of using the fastener is so you can move the lever. Gluing the lever would defeat the purpose, but you can use any type of holder to attach the lever.

Helpful **3** Not Helpful **3**

Video **Read Video Transcript**

<https://www.wikihow.com/video/c/cd/Make+Pinball+Games+Out+of+Cardboard+Step+0.1080p.mp4>

References

1. ↑ <http://pbskids.org/fetch//parentsteachers/activities/act/act-pinball.html>
2. ↑ <https://www.momtastic.com/diy/754057-play-inside-diy-cardboard-skee-ball-game/>

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