



Ages: 5 & Up

Time Required: 10-20 min

Make a Pooter!

Make your own bug collecting device!

Materials

- Small container with lid (should be soft enough to punch a hole with hole puncher)
- One straw (paper preferably)
- Hole puncher
- Tape & Scissors
- Small piece of cloth (cheese cloth, sheer, thin layered leggings or tights work well)
- Rice grains

Try this!

Step 1: Punch two holes using a hole puncher on opposite ends of the small plastic cup near the edge of the opening (see example, where straws are located).

Step 2: Cut the straw in to two pieces, one should be a quarter of the size and the other should be three quarters.

Step 3: Wrap a piece of cloth around one end of the long piece of straw and hold it in place with a piece of tape.

Step 4: Push the other end of the straw through one of the holes so that the covered end is in the container.

Step 5: Push the short piece through the other hole on the other side.

Step 6: Place the lid on the container and you are ready to go!

Step 7: Hold the end of the shorter straw over your bug (rice) and suck on the longer straw. The bug will be sucked up inside.



What's going on?

A pooter (named for its inventor, William Poos) is also called an insect aspirator. This low-tech device works by aiming one end of the tube at the bug and inhaling sharply, trapping the small creature in the tube. A pooter is especially useful for collecting small insects that would

otherwise get hurt or damaged if you tried to grab them with your hands or a net. Many entomologists (scientists that study insects) make their own pooters, since they have the supplies on hand, but a basic pre-fab pooter from a lab-supply company isn't very expensive either. When you use your pooter keep in mind that you shouldn't try to capture insects that can sting or bite you since you will have them pretty close to your face, and always remember to release your creature after you have observed it.

Extension Activity

Use a website like iNaturalist.org to help you identify the bugs you collect! Take pictures of them and post them on the iNaturalist website. By doing this you are actually helping scientists that study bugs and they can also help you by identifying your bug.

Additional Resources

You can visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLPoNSQ2wmE> to see a step-by-step guide on how to make this activity!