

BEND WOOD INTO BRACELETS

Can you bend a wooden craft stick without breaking it? Try it, and see if you can. Did you know that it's possible to bend a craft stick into a bracelet? It takes patience and a little know-how, but you can do it!

Here's what you'll need:

- Craft sticks
- Water
- Small glass canning jars, jelly jars, or something similar
- Colorful duct tape (or tempera or acrylic paints plus paintbrushes)

Ask an adult to help you boil a pot of water. Once the water begins to boil, add the craft sticks to the pot and continue boiling for 5 minutes. Then turn off the heat, and let the sticks soak for 30 minutes.

While the sticks are still wet and flexible, bend and mold them into a curved bracelet shape while placing inside the jars. Allow them to dry for 24 hours.

When the bracelets are dry, remove from jars and decorate.

Wood is a hard, fibrous material that makes up the main part of the trunk, roots, and branches of trees and shrubs. It is super-strong and is used for fuel, construction materials, paper, musical instruments, and lots of other things.

Wood is composed of **cellulose fibers**, the main ingredient found in plant cell walls, and it is **hydroscopic**, which means that, like a sponge, it absorbs water and swells in damp conditions, then releases the water again when the air dries and the temperature rises.

In order to make wood flexible and able to bend, it must be **plasticized** or softened. This can be done with steam or humidity and heat (just like in our experiment to form these bracelets) or by using other substances such as ammonia.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

<https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/forest-and-forestry/274384>

<http://www.fao.org/state-of-forests/2020/en/>

<https://www.timeforkids.com/k1/fantastic-forests/>