

Curriculum Share

DRDP Measure: COG 1: Spatial Relationships
Age Group: Toddler

Cardboard shape puzzle

Developmental information:

Spatial Relationships

Child increasingly shows understanding of how objects move in space or fit in different spaces



Source: Barley and birch
Link:

<https://barleyandbirch.com/2018/03/make-modern-diy-cardboard-shape-puzzle/>

To make your own cardboard shape puzzle you'll need:

BASIC SUPPLIES:

- 2 Pieces of cardboard (ours were 11" x 12" and one side was white – for contrast)
- Recycled Juice Bottle caps (or something similar to use for knobs)
- X-Acto knife or utility blade
- Scissors
- A Glue Gun or Craft Glue
- Markers or other supplies to add decoration

OPTIONAL SUPPLIES:

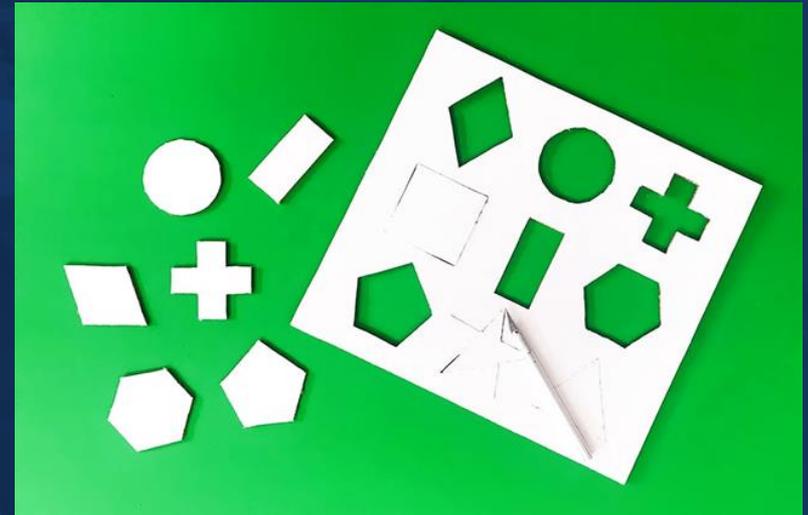
- Our Printable Modern Shape Templates
- A Glue Stick



These shapes are so simple that you don't necessarily need our template – you can use cookie-cutters or other household items to trace your geometric shapes. However, if you're like me and enjoy everything perfectly-sized and want a little extra challenge and interest, then our printable templates will definitely make the process easier (ps...the pack also includes shapes cards in 3 different styles for memory games, flashcards or other learning tools!)

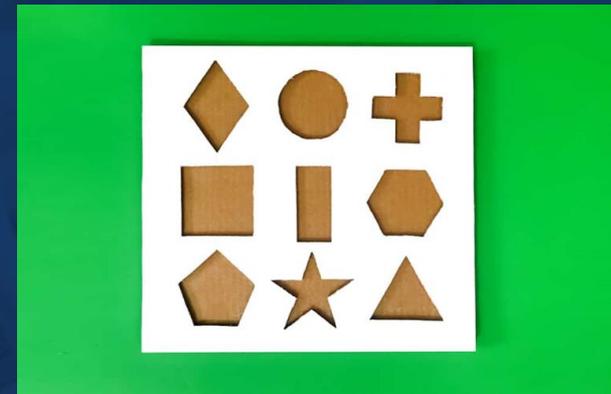
Cardboard Shape Puzzle Instructions:

1. Print our patterned shape templates or draw your own
Print out the desired pages of our PDF shape template printable and cut out all the shapes. We used 2 copies – one for each side of our puzzle pieces, but you don't have to put it together exactly as we did.



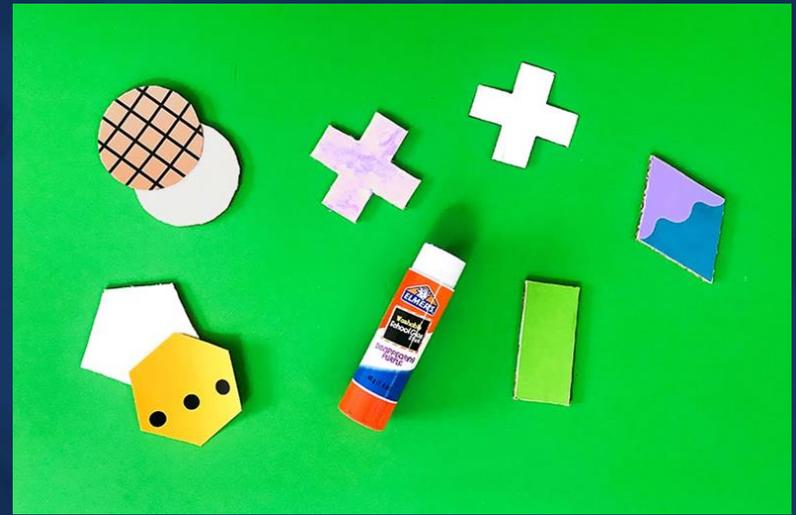
2. SavTrace shapes on to cardboard
Using a pencil or marker, trace around all your shapes. I took with our shapes facing pattern-side up so you could see I used the printable cut shapes for tracing, but I'd recommend placing them pattern-side down. This will keep you from getting ink or marks on the "nice" side. 😊

3. Carefully cut the shapes out of the cardboard
Using an X-Acto knife or utility blade carefully (and slowly!) cut along the traced marks. You'll be using both the shapes AND the board with the cutouts, so you don't want to overshoot your lines or use scissors to cut pieces away. This is the most tedious part of the process, but once you're done it's smooth sailing! I found it was easiest to make all my cuts on the back, then flip the board over and go over all the lines before pushing out the pieces – just to make sure I didn't tear away any bits when pushing out the pieces.



4. Smooth edges of shapes

The fit of the pieces will be extremely snug, so if you'd like to make it a little easier for your toddler, I recommend pushing the sides of the cutout shapes a bit with your finger, stripping a little extra away with an X-Acto knife, or using a small piece of sandpaper to make the cutouts just a tiny bit wider.



5. Glue the cutout board on to a solid piece of cardboard the same size. Using craft glue or a hot glue gun, glue your cutout board onto your second (same-sized) solid piece of cardboard. Voila – you have your board! Set aside to let dry completely.



6. Glue patterned paper front on to each shape puzzle pieces
Glue the patterned shapes onto your cardboard puzzle pieces (fronts only, or front and back as we did). We just used a glue stick and it worked great, but if you'd like a little extra protection from small hands (and mouths!) you can add a layer of mod podge over each one.

7. Add plastic bottle cap knobs to each puzzle piece
To finish off your puzzle pieces, add some knobs! This will make it much easier to grab the pieces out of the board. Grab your bottle caps, and using craft glue or a glue gun, glue a "knob" to the top and middle of each puzzle piece. I tried both and have to say, the glue gun worked better as far as durability (and is dry within seconds – can't beat that!)



I am thrilled with the way our DIY cardboard shape puzzle turned out! I also love that we were able to recycle a few things in the process, didn't have to buy a "uni-tasking" toy, and will be able to recycle almost all of this once the interest has waned.

Love a good upcycled toy DIY? Be sure to check out the DIY modern dollhouse we made from scrap wood, this awesome DIY writeable kids tablet, and our collection of cool cardboard crafts.

