

CAT ENRICHMENT & COMFORT DO-IT-YOURSELF PACKET



**THANK YOU for your interest in helping the animals of the
Animal Welfare League of Arlington!**

This Do-It-Yourself packet outlines several fun and easy projects that will help our animals have a better experience while in our care!

If you have any questions about a project, or would like to know what would benefit our organization the most, please contact the Animal Welfare League of Arlington at (703) 931-9241 or email us at mail@awla.org.



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WHAT IS ENRICHMENT?

Enrichment is something that encourages the natural behaviors in an animal, such as sleeping, eating, playing, and learning. It can be almost anything: toys, socializing with another animal, or even taking a walk are all enrichment that greatly benefit your pet's health and overall well-being. It reduces stress and can provide physical and/or mental stimulation.

There are five categories of enrichment:

1. Environmental, like spending time outside or exploring a new area
2. Sensory, such as a snuffle mat or scratching post
3. Cognitive, which includes puzzle feeders and toys
4. Food, which can mean any sort of fun food or treats
5. Social, for instance, giving them time to interact with other animals or with you

When you donate any of these projects listed below to the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, they will be used to provide enrichment for each of our animals in our shelter, to help them feel loved and relaxed. Your donations will go directly to our animals and will be used to provide physical and mental exercise to keep them active, healthy, and happy.

The projects below will be given to the cats in our care and are ranked easiest to hardest. We appreciate any and all donations and thank you for your care for animals, time, and effort!

START A FUNDRAISER

Do something you love to help support the animals! Creating and participating in a fundraiser is a great way to help the many animals at the shelter.

How to Start a Fundraiser

1. Visit our website to help set up your fundraiser (**CLICK HERE**)
2. Choose an activity or item you would like to sell to raise money
 - a. Running for a Cause
 - b. Dog Wash
 - c. Baking Cookies/Treats
 - d. Selling handmade Bracelets etc.
3. Create Flyers for your goods/service and hang around neighborhood (or email them out to your friends)
4. Raise money by having people sponsor your activity or by purchasing your goods.
5. Donate the money directly to the AWLA or go out and buy suggested item that would most benefit our animals.

Best Items to Purchase for Cats

Visit our **ONLINE WISHLIST**

IN-KIND DONATIONS

Wet/Dry Unopened Cat Food (Friskies pate any flavor is a favorite)

Non-Clumping Paper Litter



FOSTER FAMILY PET SUPPLY GO-BAGS

To support the furry friends at our shelter, you can create bags of their favorite things to make the transition to a foster home easier. Here are a few items we would love for each type of animal. If you buy an item in bulk, you can split the item between multiple bags.

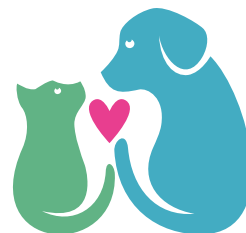
NOTE: Check out your local dollar store for buying toys!

DOGS

- Leashes (We prefer 6 foot with 2 handles if possible. NO retractable)
- Medium/Large Martingale Collars
- Large Fun Slow Feeder - You can pick from a variety
- Treats
- EZCheese Spray Cheese(Found on Amazon)
- Tuffy Brand Dog Toys (Found on Amazon)
- Calming Spray

CATS

- Small Fun Crinkle Cat Toys
- Churro Cat Treats or Tasty Crunchy Treats
- Catnip
- Feliway Spray
- Cat Scratch Board
- Slow Feeder



SMALL COMPANION ANIMALS

- Care Fresh
- Treats
- Washable Cage Liners
- Chew Toys (Another fun option) - Need more for Dental Health
- Slow Feeder or Fun Wooden Feeder

SUNSHINE HUNTING TOY

Level of Difficulty: 🗝️

What you'll need:

- Scissors
- Toilet Paper Tubes

1. On each end of the toilet paper tube, cut small slits that are about $\frac{1}{2}$ in long up the sides.
2. Fold and spread out the frayed edges to make a sunshine look.
3. Let your cat play with it by sliding toy across floor or toss in the air.



TREAT DISPENSER

Level of Difficulty: 🗝️

What you'll need:

- Toilet Paper Roll
- Scissors/X-Acto Knife
- Treats

1. Using a pair of scissors or X-Acto knife, make a couple small holes in the toilet paper tube
2. On one end of the tube, fold down the ends making a concave arched shape.
3. Add treats
4. Fold down the ends of the other end of the toilet paper roll.

If you pre-fill tubes for shelter cats, please schedule a time to drop them off with staff and bring the original treat container so that we can check the expiration date and ingredients

If you want to donate an extra gift to go along with this toy, here are few of our pet's favorite things:

- [Tasty Crunchy Treats](#)



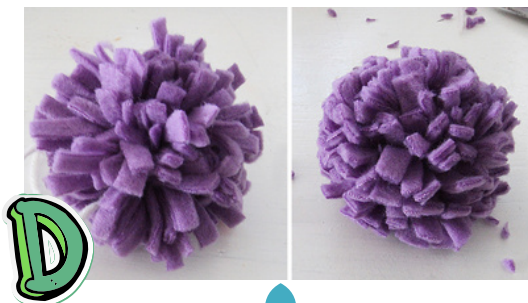
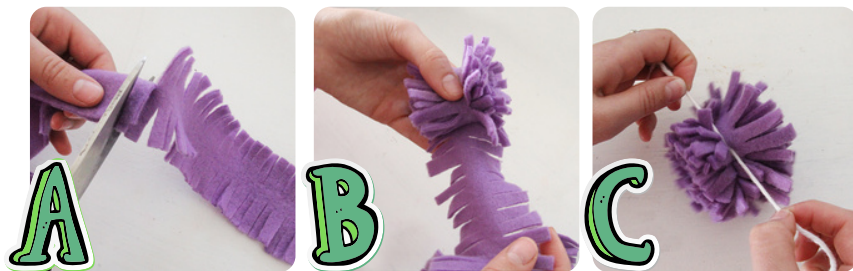
FLEECE POM-POMS

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- Fleece (12" long x 2" wide)
- String, or Yarn
- Scissors

1. Cut a 4" length of string/yarn and set aside
2. Cut your piece of fleece that is roughly 2" wide and at minimum 12" long. The longer, the bigger the pom-pom.
3. Place your strip horizontally on table, and fold in half. Cut thin fringe along the length of the strip, cutting just up to the fold. Repeat on both sides.
(A)
4. Roll the fringed fleece in a tight roll, making sure that the fringe does not get twisted or folded within the roll. **(B)**
5. Using the string that you set aside, wrap around the center of your roll and tie a **tight knot**. **(C)**
6. If desired, cut fringe to be more uniform or to create different depths. Fluff **(D)**



CATNIP TOYS

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- Small sock
- Dried catnip
- Fabric scraps OR cotton balls
- Optional: toilet paper tube

1. Pour dried catnip into the sock, filling up to one-third of the sock. Optional: use a toilet paper tube as a funnel
2. Stuff fabric scraps or cotton balls to fill the sock the rest of the way.
3. Tie a knot in the sock to close off the top. You may also tie it off with yarn or fabric.

Note: If you intend to donate your sock catnip toy to the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, please do not tie the sock off with any fabric or yarn (simply make a knot with the sock itself), as these could be safety hazards for our cats.

VIDEO FOR HELP

**** Start at 0:53****



REACH FEEDER

Level of Difficulty: 🦷

What you'll need:

- Shoebox with lid or soft drink box
- Toilet paper rolls (3-4)
- Pencil/Pen
- X-acto knife
- Cat kibble/Treats



1. Using a pen/pencil, trace the end of the toilet paper rolls on top of the lid. Repeat with different locations on the lid, one outline for each roll
2. Cut holes out of lid using X-acto knife. Make sure to cut on the inside of the traced lines -- if hole is too big, the toilet roll will not be sturdy
3. Slide rolls into each of the holes. (Optional: Fill holes with your cat's favorite kibble or treats!)

What you'll need:

- Flat piece of Cardboard
- Toilet paper rolls (4-6)
- Scissors
- Cat kibble/Treats



1. Using scissors, cut the toilet paper rolls into varying length tubes. Longer are typically more fun!
2. Glue varying length tubes vertically all over flat piece of cardboard
3. Optional: Fill with you cat's favorite kibble or treats!

VIDEO FOR HELP



Directions Credit: ASPCA

SPIDER RING

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- 2" wooden rings ([Michaels Link](#)) or Hair Band
- Fleece or old t-shirt
- Scissors



1. Cut fabric into strips (recommended: 4" long x ½" wide) If you'd like, you can also do varying lengths to add variety.
2. Take 1 strip at a time and double knot around your circle object.
3. Repeat with another fabric strip and pinch it close to the first strip to allow for you to add as many strips as possible. Repeat until you've covered the whole circle object. (A)
4. Optional: Attach completed spider toy to a shoe lace or ribbon link material to make it a fun chasing toy



VIDEO FOR HELP

SNUGGLE BLANKET

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- Fleece (22" x 14") or (32" x 22")
- Fabric Scissor/Rotary Cutter
- Fabric Ruler
- Optional: Safety Pins



1. Lay the your fabric material out on a flat surface. Fold your material in half and cut a 22" x 14" or 32" x 22" rectangle. Cut along folded edge to create 2 separate rectangles.
2. Lay both rectangles on top of each other. Trim off any ends with rotary cutter to make sure the rectangles line up near perfect.
3. Cut out a 2" x 2" square from each corner to prevent bunching of the materials at the end.
4. Then, go around the borders and cut tassels that are between roughly ½" wide and 2" long. Make sure you are cutting both pieces of fleece in the same cut.
5. Take the corresponding tassels from both the top and bottom pieces and double knot them together. You can also choose to take both ends, wrap them around your finger to make a loop, and push the ends through the loop. Pull tight. Repeat, tying each and every tassel from both pieces all the way around the border of the two fleece pieces.

Note: If you intend to donate your blanket to the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, please **do not** add any stuffing, as this can be a hazard for our dogs.

VIDEO FOR HELP



SNUFFLE MAT

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- Sink Mat with Square holes ([Target Link](#))
- Fleece (up to 1.5 yards)
- Fabric scissors
- Ruler
- **Optional: Cardboard, Marker, Hole Punch/X-acto knife**



FRONT



BACK

1. Lay the fleece on a flat surface. Using your fabric scissors, cut strips that are 6-8" x 1"
2. Taking one strip at a time, thread the strip of fleece through two adjacent holes and double knot.
3. Take the next strip and pull one side of the strip through the second hole alongside the strip already there, towards the side with the double knot. Then, take the other end of the strip and push it through the next adjacent hole. Double knot on the same side as the original knot.
4. Continue until you finish one length of the rubber mat. Repeat for the rows on your board.
5. When you are done completing all rows horizontally, you will repeat the steps but connecting the holes vertically. Take a strip and push it through the first hole, then connect it to the first hole in the row below.
6. Repeat process until the mat is complete. Flip the mat over and check to make sure you created bridges between every hole in each of the four directions.

Optional: If you would like to make your own mat, you can use sturdy cardboards. Draw a grid of 1" x 1" squares and use a hole punch at each intersection. The reason we ask for sink mats as the base is to make them reusable.



VIDEO FOR HELP

RECYCLED CARDBOARD SCRATCHER BOX

Level of Difficulty: 🦴🦴

What you'll need:

- Sturdy box for base (i.e. tissue box, clean pizza box shoe box base)
- Boxes & cardboard ready to be recycled
- Glue (hot glue/liquid glue)
- Scissors/box knife
- Ruler
- Pen/Pencil



1. Measure the length and height of your base. (AWLA prefers smaller scratchers)
2. Using the length and height of your base, measure strips from your spare recyclable cardboard and boxes.
3. Cut out cardboard strips and place them in the base until full. Make sure the corrugated (wavy) side of the cardboard is along the length of each strip. Take out all strips and set aside. (A)
4. Start placing strips back in one at a time and glue the sides of the strips together as you put them in the base. Do not glue them to the base.
5. When all strips are glued together dry, take out of base, flip over your scratcher so the top is flat. Apply glue to sides and bottom of base. Place in the cardboard strips with the flat side upwards.

** The smaller the better for donating to the shelter to fit in any cat condo.



VIDEO FOR HELP

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T-SHIRT TENT

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- Two wire hangers
- Square piece of cardboard (15"x 15")
- Masking Tape
- Wire cutters
- Pliers
- Hole punch (small)
- Medium t-shirt
- Safety Pins



1. Clip the wire hangers below the twist on both sides (removing the hook on top) and straighten. Bend both wires into arches that are roughly the same height. **(A)**
2. Reinforce cardboard support by taping around edges for more stability. **(B)**
3. Use the end of the hanger or a small hole-punch to cut holes in the four corners of the cardboard, about ½" from the edges. **(B)**
4. Insert ½" of one end of your first arch into one hole, then the other end into the hole diagonal from it. Bend the ends with pliers to act as anchors on the bottom side of the cardboard. Repeat with the other hanger, crossing over the first arch. Tape the anchor points and in the center of arches. **(C,D,E)**
5. Pull the t-shirt over the box and hanger arches and arrange so the neck hole is lined up with where you want the entrance. **(F)**
6. Gather the excess fabric tight and wrap on the bottom. Wrap sleeves under the bottom and secure with safety pins. **(G)**



VIDEO FOR HELP

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Directions & Photo Credit: Jessy Ratfink

T-SHIRT TENT



CATNIP BLANKET

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- Cotton & Fleece Fabric
- Scissors/Cutting Mat
- Pins
- Sewing machine/thread
- Catnip
- Sew on Velcro - $\frac{3}{4}$ " width (optional)



1. Measure, mark and cut a 12.5" x 17" piece of cotton and fleece fabric. Cut out a 4" strip of sew-on velcro. **(A)**
2. With wrong side of cotton print facing up, fold back a little more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " on one of the short sides. **(B)**
3. Pin the **hook side** of the velcro in the center and about $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the top.
4. On the fleece fabric, wrong side facing up, fold over a little more than $\frac{3}{4}$ ", pin **loop side** of velcro in center and about $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the top.
5. Sew velcro to each piece of fabric, not forgetting to backstitch. **(C)**
6. Take both pieces of fabric, right sides facing each, and pin together. Make sure velcro lines up and both pieces are facing outward. **(D)**
7. Sew around the edges of blanket, starting at one end of the velcro, and stop at other. Use a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam on non-velcro side and $\frac{1}{8}$ " seam on velcro side.
8. Snip corners and trip off excess fabric. Turn over blanket right side out and poke corners. **(E)**
9. Topstitch around the edges with a $\frac{3}{4}$ " seam. Make sure not to sew the opening shut. **(F)**
10. Add catnip, velcro shut and let your pet enjoy! **(G)**

Note: If you decide to not use velcro, sew around fabric with right sides facing together with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam. Leave a 4" opening to turn right side out.



VIDEO FOR HELP

CATNIP BLANKET

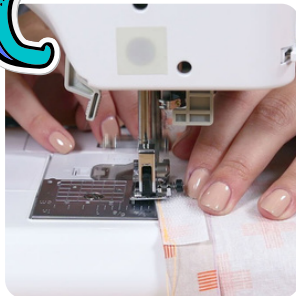
A



B



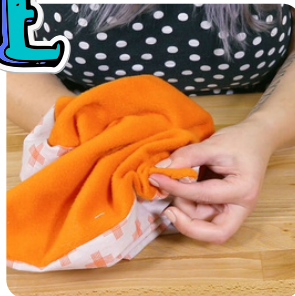
C



D



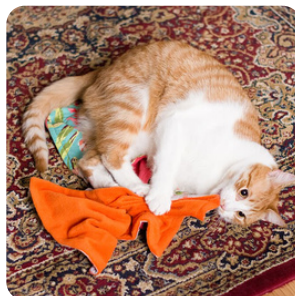
E



F



G



CATNIP FORTUNE COOKIES

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- Felt
- Round object 3.5" diameter or more
- Scissors
- Stuffing
- Catnip
- Sewing Machine or Embroidery Thread/Yarn Needle
- Optional: Pen/Long Skewer

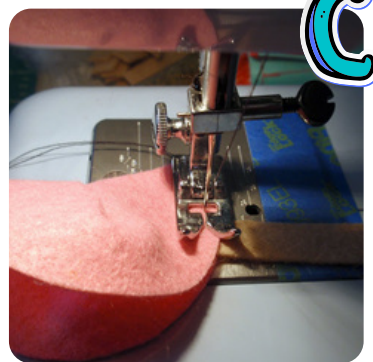


1. Lay felt flat on a surface. Trace around your round object and cut circles out. Additionally, cut out small thin rectangles out of a different color felt to act as the "fortune" sticking out of the cookie.
2. Fold your circle in half and sew about an inch along the center of the folded edge. **(A)**
3. Fold your cookie in half the other way -- Do this by taking the two "corners" from the last step and pull them towards each other, then flip the felt inside out. **(B)**
4. Place rectangle felt into cookie so half is inside cookie, while the other half will stick out. Sew around the edge of cookie, making sure to sew in the paper fortune between the two layers of felt. Stop when half way, but don't take cookie off sewing machine. **(C)**
5. Add a small amount of stuffing and catnip. Optional: use pen or long skewer to help stuff into cookie. **(D)**
6. Continue swing around the rest of cookie. Lock your stitch when you are done if using a sewing machine. **(E)**

FOR MORE FOOD SHAPED FUN



CATNIP FORTUNE COOKIES



SELF-PETTING STATION

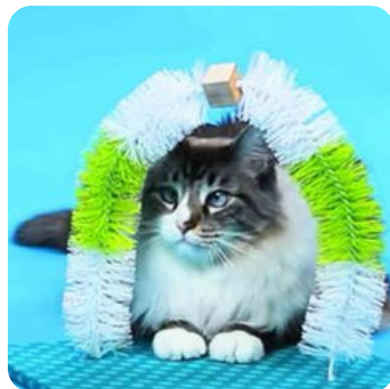
Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- 12" x 12" Wood Base
- 14" x 14" Fabric or 12" x 12" rug piece
- 2 New wire toilet brushes [\(Walmart Link\)](#) -- Also look at Dollar Store
- 1" x 1" wooden cube
- Staple Gun
- Wire Cutters
- Super Glue
- Power drill

1. Detach brushes from handle.
2. Drill hole through the center of the wooden cube
3. Apply super glue to one end of one brush. Insert halfway through wooden block. Repeat with second brush and insert through other half of wooden block.
4. With fabric facing down, center wooden base. Fold one edge over at a time and secure with staple gun, until complete.
5. Flip over. Drill 2 holes diagonal from each other about 7" apart. Apply glue to ends of the brush bridge and insert into the holes.

Please Call Ahead
to See if We Need
this Item



VIDEO FOR HELP

CAT SCRATCH DOOR HANGER

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- 2- 1"x 3"x 24" pieces of wood
- Mitre Box & Saw
- Sandpaper
- ¼" sisal rope
- Hot Glue & Wood Glue
- Scissors/Ruler
- Leather Cord
- Drill with ⅜" bit



1. Measure the boards and make a mark at 22". Cut boards at a 30-degree angle and sand all sides to remove splinters **(A)**
2. Spread a line of wood glue on the shorter edge of one board. **(B)**
3. Clamp the two pieces together with the edges flush. Use a damp cloth to clean off any excess glue before it dries. **(C)**
4. Measure a 12" length on the back of the wood piece and draw a straight line to indicate where the rope will start and stop **(D)**
5. Run a thin line of hot glue along the drawn line and attach one end of rope to the back of the board. **(E)**
6. Continue wrapping the rope tightly around the board, running the line of glue along the front underneath each previous line and pressing the rope into it to adhere. **(F)**
7. Drill two small holes near the top of the board (at least 1" in from all sides) **(G)**
8. Cut a 10" or longer strand of leather cord or hanging material of choosing and tie a knot at one end. Thread the cord through the right hole from front to back, then through the left hole to the front. Tie a knot at the other end of the cord to secure. **(H)**

CAT SCRATCH DOOR HANGER



SKYSCRAPER SCRATCHER

Level of Difficulty: 

What you'll need:

- 12 in. x 12 in. x 1/2 in. plywood board
- 36" wooden dowel (3/4" x 3/4") or shorter
- Corrugated cardboard
- 1-1/2" wood screw
- Screwdriver
- X-Acto knife
- Power drill
- Liquid glue
- Templates (make them in step 1)

1. Make template squares that are 8"x8", 7"x7", 6"x6". Cut out a 3/4"x 3/4" square in the center of each. Optional: Paint plywood board base.
2. Use templates to trace more squares of cardboard and cut out centers. For the complete 36" dowel, you will need 80 large and medium size squares and 60 small squares.
3. Drill a hole in the center of plywood board. Drill a hole in the center of the dowel that is roughly 1" deep.
4. Drill the wood screw completely through the center of the board. Using a screwdriver to hold the screw in place, twist the dowel onto the screw until it is securely on.
5. Start stacking cardboard pieces onto wooden dowel, large group to small group. Use glue in between each cardboard piece to keep them in place. Stack the cardboard pieces onto the wooden dowel all the way to the top.

VIDEO FOR HELP

