

CAMP STOOL

Few can guess what the camp stool (*Figure 94*) is the first time they see it. Most are amused when they find out. A child's legs provide the second and third legs for this single leg stool. The seat can be a slice from a tree, which requires adult preparation (see below) or a chunk of 2 X 6, which is easier to find.

Adult Preparation

A parent, teacher, or volunteer needs to prepare the tree slices. Find trees or branches 4" to 5" in diameter. Paint the ends and let them dry for a few months to help prevent cracking as explained in the section on wood, page 52. Cut the branches into 2" slices with a chain saw or band saw. A band saw will leave a smoother cut. Sometimes you can find tree sections that aren't cracked too badly in a firewood pile. Neighbors who are trimming trees are another good source.



Kids: Making the Camp Stools

Tools

- Handsaw.
- Vice.
- Brace with bit to match the dowel or broom handle.
Or hand-operated drill press.
- White glue or yellow carpenter's glue. Hot glue won't work.
- Hammer.
- Eye protection.

Figure 94.
The camping stool in use.

Materials

- A 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick slice from a tree about 4" to 6" in diameter. 2" lumber of the same dimensions will also work.
- 10" of $\frac{3}{4}$ " dowel or broom handle for the stool leg. Dowels and drill bits vary in their actual measurements, so make sure the dowel is a tight fit into the hole made by the $\frac{3}{4}$ " bit. Drill a test hole ahead of time.
- 5" square of $\frac{3}{8}$ " or $\frac{1}{2}$ " plywood for each stool.
- Six or eight nails (screws could be used) about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long for each project. Make sure they don't go all the way through the seat.
- A plastic cap to fit the end of the dowel leg. I've also used colored electrician's tape.

Construction

1. Sand the top of the seat. If you are using lumber instead of a tree slice, rounding the corners is a nice touch.
2. Cut the corners off the 5" plywood square so they don't stick out, and fasten it to the bottom (the unsanded side) of the seat. Put the nails into the plywood piece before stacking it on top of the seat to finish nailing. This piece will hold the seat together in case it splits and will provide a thicker base for the stool leg. Pre-drilling the six holes in the plywood piece will make the nailing easier (*Figure 95*).
3. Drill a hole with the brace and bit (or hand-operated drill press) 1" deep in the center of the bottom of the stool. The dowel must fit snugly into the hole.
4. Cut the dowel or broom handle about 10" long for the leg. Cover the inside of the hole with glue and tap the dowel into the hole with a hammer. Let the glue dry.
5. Put the rubber cap (or colored tape) on the stool leg and test your stool.
6. The hardest part of this project for children is drilling the $\frac{3}{4}$ " hole. For the younger children, I'll help by setting up a station where I hold the brace horizontally (it's easier to turn), and have the child rotate the handle.

Figure 95.
Construction
drawing of the
camp stool.

