

Family Art from Home

Woven bird houses inspired by A Garden

by Harley Kirschner

A Garden is an evolving art + agroecology project created by UNM Art & Ecology students in collaboration with the Albuquerque Museum. On the north side of the Museum you will find furniture made from hay bales and woven felt, a lush healthy garden and birdhouses which this lesson will help you create for your own garden.

Simple yet beautiful, your feathered friends are sure to be drawn to your enchanting abodes. Allowing you to observe birds more closely and create a multi creature ecosystem right outside your window. To attract birds to your birdhouse, pay attention to the areas where you see birds in your yard, such as trees, sunflowers and vines.

CAUTION: This project requires adult supervision and personal protective gear.

Supplies Needed

- chicken wire
- natural fiber cloth (cotton, linen, silk, denim, leather- even jute or soft grasses can work)
- heavy duty scissors, wire cutters or metal cutters
- safety gloves and safety glasses
- scissors (for cutting fabric)

How to do it

Cut cloth (or strips or rope) into about 12"-30" lengths. Thickness of strips can range from 1"-3".

Wearing your safety glasses and gloves, use your wire cutters to cut a rectangle from chicken wire. Mine is approximately 24"x12" but yours can be smaller or larger.

Roll your chicken wire into a cylinder, meeting the ends and wrapping them to connect. Tuck the sharp ends under or trim them off (you will be wrapping them later so it's ok if they're still a little sharp, just be aware of them).

Bring the bottom edges into the middle so they form a closed end.



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Weave and wrap fabric strips through your wire armature, covering all chicken wire. Pay special attention to wrap any loose ends of your chicken wire that are sharp. Wrap those areas several times until they are completely covered by your fabric. Tie fabric strips when necessary (I did on about a ¼ of my strips, the others were just tucked in).

After covering nearly all of the armature, tuck in a hanger by attaching both ends of a strip of sturdy fabric (such as denim or canvas). Tie if necessary. Alternatively, pinch between wire.

Trim any loose threads.

Hang your birdhouse and wait for a new feathered family to move in.

