



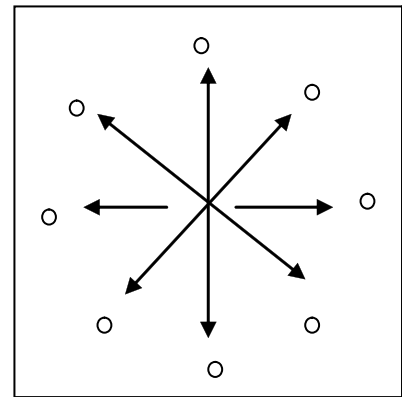
Make a Model Mesolithic Hut

Archaeologists now think Mesolithic huts were sturdy enough to last several seasons and were probably predominantly covered in turf sods. The materials used for this model are designed to reflect this. This does take a bit of planning, so if you don't have the materials or space required to make this scale of model, the same principals can be used to make smaller ones from wire and paper.

For each hut you will need:

- One board of plywood 60x60x2.5cm
- Willow rods—2 sizes, heavier to build the frame and lighter, very pliable ones for weaving
- PVA glue
- Materials such as bark chips, imitation moss, hessian etc. suitable to cover the hut

Allow about 2 hours to make the huts. Pupils will need to work together in groups of 3-5.



Directions:

Using a compass, mark and drill 8 evenly spaced holes in a circle on the board (see above diagram). The width of the holes should relate to the diameter of the willow rods you will be using for the main frame of the structure. The holes should be deep enough for the willow frame to remain secure.

You will need 4 sturdy rods for the hut frame, about the thickness of a pencil and 80-90cm long. Insert one end of each rod into a hole, bend it across the board, and insert the other end into the corresponding hole on the opposite side, creating a dome about 20cm high.

Leaving a gap between two of the frame rods to create a doorway, weave smaller willow rods in and out of the frame working backwards and forwards from one side of the doorway to the other along the bottom of the dome. To add a new rod in, set it slightly behind the end of the last rod and just continue as if you had extended the last piece of willow. Weave about 6 rows until the dome has become secure.

Next, weave more rods randomly across the top of the dome, creating a more open weave to which you can attach your roofing materials.

Take small pieces of Hessian and weave these at random through the willow, using some glue to hold it in place if necessary. This is to act like the inside of a sod of earth with its fibrous close root system and

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will support the other materials you will be using for the roof. Use glue to attach moss, bark, compost, leaves etc. to the hessian, completely covering the roof of the hut.

Finally, spread a thin coat of glue over the floor of the hut and sprinkle some compost over it, to give the impression of an earthen floor.

You may like to use other materials to re-create your hut. Remember that in Mesolithic times the hunters and gatherers had to use what materials were available to them. This model is just an interpretation of what a Mesolithic hut may have looked like.

The workshops photographed and these guidelines were provided by willow weaver, Louise McLean. If you would like to arrange a workshop with her, please phone 07731457263.

