

All kids need a space to escape to – a place to read, play games and think sans grown-ups. Set up this Wild West-inspired teepee in your child's room or in the backyard and let them make their own fun. KELLY DOUST shows you how.

MAKE A CHILD'S TEEPEE



WHAT YOU NEED

- 1.5m x 112cm-wide each of four contrasting fabrics, for the outside of the teepee (you will have some fabric left over for smaller projects)
- 5.2m fairly sturdy ribbon or woven cotton tape (lovely, bright, striped grosgrain is perfect)
- Four 1.8m x 25mm-diameter wooden dowels, available from hardware stores
- Measuring tape
- Ruler
- Dressmaker's chalk
- Scissors
- Bobble-headed pins
- Sewing machine and thread
- Needle and thread
- Iron

STEP BY STEP

STEP 1 Lay one of your fabrics out on the floor or on a large table and use your tape, ruler and chalk to measure and draw a triangle that is 90cm across the base and 140cm high from base to apex. Then cut out the triangle with your scissors.

STEP 2 Draw a line across the top of the triangle where it measures 15cm from side to side, then cut off the top of the triangle along the marked line. The shape you now have is a triangle with the top lopped off – a bit like a volcano.

STEP 3 Use this piece as a pattern to cut out three more "volcano" pieces from each of your coloured fabrics – four pieces in all, including your original pattern piece.

STEP 4 Measure halfway down the side edges of all of the triangles and make a small mark at this point. Cut four 70cm lengths from your piece of ribbon and fold each piece in half crosswise. Trim the cut ends at an angle to prevent fraying. With right sides together, pin two of >>>



This easy-to-construct project will look fantastic even if you're out by a few centimetres in different places. When choosing fabrics, pair polka dots with bold colours, stripes or a fabulous paisley print, such as the acid-bright one shown here, which is by US fabric designer Anna Maria Horner and available in Australia from The Remnant Warehouse (theremnantwarehouse.com.au). For a gorgeous selection of ribbons, try Specklefarm (specklefarm.com.au) or The Ribbon Jar (ribbonjar.com).

Contrasting fabrics in eye-catching patterns will make your teepee even more inviting.

Kids will love having a bright, colourful space to call their own, where they can play with their favourite things and let their imaginations roam.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEAN WILMOT; STYLING BY KELLY DOUST

your triangles together along one side edge, matching your halfway marks. Slip the folded end of one of your ribbons in between the layers at the marked point, so that the folded end extends beyond the sewn edges and the angled ends lie between the sides. Pin in place.

STEP 5 Allowing a 1cm seam, stitch the sides together from top to bottom, sandwiching the folded end of the ribbon in the seam and reversing back and forth over the ribbon a couple of times for extra strength.

STEP 6 Following Steps 4 and 5, add the three remaining triangles, one after another, sandwiching a folded ribbon between each seam. When you've sewn all four triangles together, you should have a funnel-shaped tube.

STEP 7 Take hold of one of the triangles in the tube – made from the fabric you want at the front of the teepee – and fold it in half lengthwise, aligning the seamed edges. Use your scissors to cut along the centre line, from bottom to top – this is to create the opening flaps in the teepee.

STEP 8 Using your iron, press under 1cm on each raw edge on the flaps, then press under another 1cm and stitch this double hem in place close to the inner edge.

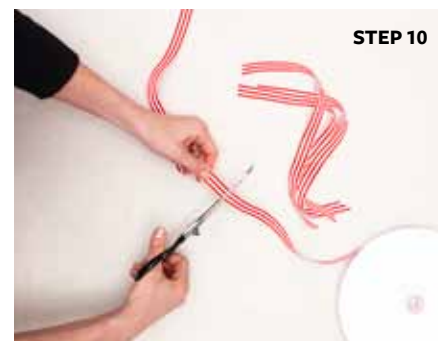
STEP 9 Press under 1cm around the upper raw edge, then press under another 1cm and stitch this double hem in place. Repeat this process with the bottom raw edge, pressing and stitching a double hem. Finally, overlap the very top of the teepee flaps together by about 1cm and sew together, reversing a few times for strength.

STEP 10 Cut four 35cm lengths of ribbon and trim one end on each into an angle. From the top, measure about a third of the way down the opening edge on each outer flap and mark with a pin. Measure a further 30cm or so further down from this pin and mark with another pin. Sew a ribbon tie at each pin mark, turning under the raw edge of the ribbon before you sew.

STEP 11 Set up your dowels by tying the remaining length of ribbon around all four, about 30cm from the top, securing all four pieces together. Pull out the bottom "legs" of the dowel to form the corners of a square, creating your teepee's frame, then lay the teepee over the frame, aligning the seams along the dowels.

STEP 12 Tie the lining ribbons to each dowel on the inside, and adjust the legs until the fabric is neatly stretched over the frame.

Your teepee is now finished – just in time for the kids to play a game of cowboys and Indians. ■



Kelly Doust is the author of *The Crafty Minx* and *The Crafty Kid*, available from all good bookstores. For more hints, tips and supplier details, visit thecraftyminx.com.au.