

Houston Zoo at Home

CHIMPANZEE

Puzzle Feeder Challenge

Ages: 3 – 8

For this activity watch the video of Primates Zookeepers Agnieszka and Victoria and the Zoo's chimpanzee troop. [Click here to watch!](#)

Chimps use lots of different tools to obtain food items. They can learn to crack nuts using a large stone and can strip a branch of leaves to use the bare stick to dip into an ant mound or termite hill; an act called “fishing” since they're fishing for insects! At the Zoo we provide puzzle feeders for enrichment to help encourage these natural behaviors. See if you can make your own puzzle feeder and go fishing at home!

Materials Needed:

- Paper towel or toilet paper tubes
 - Scissors
 - Small items to fill your tube (ex. cotton balls, dry beans, wads of paper)
 - Tape or stapler
1. Cut several holes in the tube evenly spaced every couple of inches. Four to five is a good number for paper towel tubes; less for toilet paper. The holes should be small enough for a single finger to fit through, no larger.
 2. Add some “insects” to your tube (dry beans, rice, paper) and seal the ends with tape or the stapler.
 3. Act like a chimp and use your fingers to try and get your food! Are there any tools around your house that may make the job easier?

Level Up Challenge: If you find something that works well to get the food out try and teach your family how to use that item, just like chimps would teach each other how to use a new tool!

Share your project with us!

Tag your photo using #HoustonZoo or email us your story at communications@houstonzoo.org.