

CREATIVE SIT-UPONS!!

Introduction to Sit-Upons!

Part of Guiding tradition calls for these handy and practical items. What is a sit-upon? For the uninitiated -- it is an insulated and (usually) waterproof pad, often homemade, used to protect the user's backside from the cold and damp while "sitting upon" the ground! It is also great to keep mosquitoes from biting you from underneath your webbed lawn chair

- A simple sit-upon made be constructed by taking several layers of newspaper, folding to the appropriate size and inserting them into a plastic "kitchen catcher"-type bag. Squeeze out any air, fold the bag snugly around the newspaper, and use duct tape or packing tape to hold it all together. Add your name with a permanent marker!
- Fancier sit-upons can be constructed with a little imagination... Old baby change pads make good insulation, and don't crackle like newspaper!. Or cover your pad of choice with cloth -- plain, patterned -- you choose -- add your name with t-shirt paints, and then enclose in a CLEAR garbage bag. Tape all edges with clear packing tape... Voila!
- To add even more interest, ask at your local t-shirt shop for their used iron-ons. These come in an amazing array of pictures and styles. As long as you pick one with no words (words would be mirror-imaged), you can carefully cut the picture out, tape it to your sit-upon fabric or plastic, and cover with the clear plastic as described above. Functional, yet elegant - or at least with personality! And often a conversation-starter!



Take your sit-upon everywhere, and sit in comfort! *Luanne Taylor, Ranger Guider, Mackenzie, BC*

Tablecloths & Egg Crate Foam

When we (the girls, not me :)) were brownies, we used vinyl table clothes (purchased at Wal-Mart, if I remember correctly I think we were able to cut out four sit-upons per tablecloth) and egg crate foam mattress which were donated to the troop. The foam is much lighter than newspaper--something to keep in mind if doing a day hike with them. *Karen Marks, Junior Troop 289, Austin, Texas*

Using Newspaper: A Warning! A Great Alternative!

Watch out for the woven newspaper sit-upons. When they get damp, everyone has the news printed on the back of her shorts. :) The sit-upons in the Brownie handbook leak if they are made as suggested. When water gets into these, the newspaper inside can become very heavy.

- A much simpler, and more leak-proof, sit-upon can be made by placing folded newspaper inside a large Zip-lock storage bag. These can be decorated with permanent markers.
- My daughter's first sewing machine project (at age seven) was a sit-upon. We stacked up two squares of rip-stop nylon (the fabric used in outdoor banners), added a square of the same size cut from quilt batting, and stitched three sides. She then clipped the corners, turned it, and stitched the remaining side shut. This is waterproof, machine washable, can be folded to stuff into a backpack or fanny pack, and lasts for years. She is now thirteen and still uses it.

Woven Supermarket Plastic bags

Here is my 1c worth (inflation ate away the 2c!) about how I have made sit-upons with the Guides here in South Africa. We also use the weaving method, but use plastic supermarket bags. We fold the bags into strips, weave them under and over and then tie the loose ends sticking out, in pairs with a reef knot. This is great for the "Thrift Badge" work as well, and it is not only waterproof, but folds up small and can be re-used for a few camps! *Margaret Kieser, Guide Guider, South Africa*

Free Source For Form!

If you don't have an unwanted foam "egg crate" mattress available for putting inside sit-upons, try leftover carpet padding. A friend of mine found an even better free source of foam: soft foam padding used in packing medicines for shipment to pharmacies. The ones she got (from a mom who worked at a major drug store chain) were already a perfect size for sit-upons - about 13 to 14 inches square, and about 1 inch thick.

The mom who gave her these said all this foam is normally just thrown out, so this is a good way to recycle too! *Sallie Zeil, GSCCC, Virginia Beach, Virginia*

Colorful Heavy Duty Vinyl Options

If you go to the good-sized fabric stores they have bolts of vinyl tablecloth-like fabric, often in wonderful colors and quite heavy-duty. They are all a fairly standard size and I've found that the width is always just right for making two sit-upons.

The length you buy is simply the size of a newspaper (measured side-to-side), plus about a half inch on either side. I use a paper hole puncher to put holes around the three sides of the vinyl, and the girls put in about a half inch max or smaller bunch of newspapers and then we lace it up with gimp. The knots at the end are not always "pretty", but since we go in a whip stitch from one side to the other, then whip back to make an "X", I have NEVER had a problem with moisture getting into our sit-upons - and some of them have already had 3 hard years of use.

As opposed to vinyl tablecloths, the vinyl fabric at fabric stores is often wonderfully colorful and unique - our sit-upons always stand out at Service Unit events! *Barb*

A Great Use for Packing Peanuts!

Our troop made easy, light-weight, and comfortable(!) sit-upons so I couldn't resist sharing this idea with everyone. We made these as Daisies.

- Take a gallon size Zip-lock baggie and lightly fill with Styrofoam peanuts so that it lies flat, not overstuffed and round.
- Clip the corners to let out the air so it won't pop.
- Cover with Contact paper. (Lay the Contact paper on the ground, peel half the backing off, place bag, peel rest of backing off and flip over top, leaving a slight lip all around. Trim if needed. Younger girls may need extra hands to help them keep the Contact paper even, but we told everyone wrinkles don't matter.)
- Punch two holes with a paper punch and add string to make it easy to wear around your neck for carrying.
- Adults may need to use a plastic grocery bag to make their sit-upon a little larger. (At my parent meeting, the parents all got a chuckle out of that part.) *Carol Metz, Brownie Troop 1312 leader, Penn Laurel Girl Scout Council, Frederick County, MD*

An Idea From Girl Scouting in the '60's

When I was a scout (in the 60's) we made our sit-upons with a strap to tie it around your waist while hiking. So, now that I'm a leader I had to use my old Girl Scout knowledge with my troop. We made ours using flannel backed table cloth fabric from the fabric store, filled it with carpet padding (real cheap at home improvement stores), laced the edges using household twine and made the "belt" part with a piece of regular clothes-line, long enough to wrap around the waist and tie a generous bow.

The kids loved it. They walked around the cabins with their sit-upons on even when they weren't hiking! You do have to untie it to sit down, it's too tight around the belly if you try to sit with it tied. *Sue Parenti, Westchester, Illinois*

Use Those Old Pair of Jeans!

- Take an old pair of adult blue jeans and cut-off about three inches below where the legs come together.
- Sew across legs and across the top of the belt loops. This will secure the batting.
- The girls then unzip the zipper and stuff with batting.
- They can then use fabric paint and decorate the bottoms any way they want.
- Tie a long piece of cord through the belt loops and they can tie it around their waist on hikes or use it to carry the sit-upons.



These were really cute. I can't wait to make them with my troop. *Tammy Rice, Northern Horizons Community, Circle T Girl Scout Council, Junior Leader, Registrar, Event Director, School Recruitment Coordinator, Day Camp Director, First Aid and Lifeguard Instructor*

I saw the same blue Jean sit upons that Tammy Rice did only modified. Instead of stuffing with batting the troop uses the inside to store things like extra jackets, bandanas and money. It was so cute!! *Kathi Reed, Kathi@AOL.COM*

Using Shower Curtains

I used an old shower curtain for my Brownie troop. One curtain made 12 sit-upons. We filled with newspaper (they could have been woven and they would have been more comfortable). Pieces were cut so that both sides were one piece--fold in half and then only 3 sides needed to be closed. Sealed the edges with duct tape (others have had girls 'sew' edges with yarn using the overhand stitch). Girls decorated with permanent markers. Seven years later, the ones I have are still going strong.

Another source of vinyl could be a business using vinyl for its products (auto interiors, for example). There used to be a place around here which would gladly donate the remnants. *Linda Gardner, Cadette Troop 2001, Patriots' Trail Girl Scout Council, linda@fpr.com*

Vinyl Wallpaper

Some of the nicest sit-upons I've seen were made from samples of vinyl wallpaper. My daughter's leader a few years ago went to wall paper stores and asked if they had any sample books they were throwing out and got plenty. They are already "cut" to size and the girls had some pretty neat prints to choose from. Hope this helps. *Carolyn Ayers, Tierra Del Oro GS Council, CA, ayers@oro.net*

Carpet Samples and Floor Tiles

Here is an idea for a sit-upon I made in Pathfinders. You need a carpet sample and two floor tiles. Remove the backing from one of the floor tiles and place it on the carpet sample. The decorated side of the tile will be touching the wrong (not decorated) side of the carpet sample. Fold the extra sides of the carpet tight onto the glue of the tile. You may have to cut the corners to get it as flat as possible. Remove the backing of the other tile and stick it to the glued side of the other tile. I hope this makes sense! It is best to use a very flat carpet sample, you could also use another tough fabric sample. *Teresa, 316th Rangers, Win-nipeg, MB*

Quick, easy, no-sew sit upons

This is how we make quick sit-upons. Cheap and easy. You go to the dollar store and buy contact paper. You can get 3-4 sit-upons from one roll.

Take a bunch on newspapers. (as many as the girl wants.) She places them on the contact paper w/backing still on and folds it over to see how much she needs. Then cuts the contact paper. She then removes the backing, carefully places the newspapers. She then place a long piece of twine inside one of the folds of the newspaper. This will become her handle. She then folds the contact paper over the newspaper, making sure the twine is coming out the top. It is ok that the edges do not meet. You will trim these to make them neater. Then tie the twine together to make a loop/handle. See, easy!!!

Bucket Sit-Upons

- Use 5 gallon buckets. These are available from warehouse food stores such as Costco, holding laundry detergent. They are also available from restaurants and janitorial supply houses. Make sure if you use used buckets that they held no chemicals.
- Cut a paper pattern of the lid, inside the outer ring. As you look down on the bucket you will see an indentation...this is your seating area. Use your paper pattern to trace seats out of corrugated cardboard.
- Cut a circle of fiberfill about an inch smaller around than your seating circles.
- Cut a circle of vinyl tablecloth about 3 inches bigger all around than your seating circles. You can buy these tablecloths at Wal-Mart, K-Mart, etc., pretty cheaply. If you get the larger sizes, they are usually the same price. A good size tablecloth will make over a dozen covers.
- Baste all around your vinyl circle with heavy thread (we use full strength embroidery floss) This is easy enough for Brownies. Leave about an inch border outside your sewing line. You can also trace the sewing line on the reverse of the vinyl so you will sew a round circle.
- Lay the fiberfill on the back side of the vinyl, then the cardboard. Using the end of your thread, gather the vinyl and pull tight. Tie off your stitches...you can use a piece of duct tape to tape off your thread.
- Turn over, and you should have a padded top that looks somewhat like a frisbee.
- Using auto epoxy or marine epoxy, apply as directed to both the bucket lid and the gathered side of the pad. These types of glues hold much better than white glue, glue gun, or anything else we have tried.
- Press the top onto the bucket lid and leave to dry....pressed down by books if you can.
- If the top of the bucket has never been sealed, you may have trouble getting it to "click" down on to the bucket. You can use a utility knife to cut "V" shaped notches in each of the circle sections around the lid.
- Decorate your bucket using permanent markers. We used "Sharpie" brand laundry type markers.

Your situpon is waterproof and dirt proof. You can take it hiking, to the beach, in the snow, and almost anywhere. It will hold your supplies, your lunch, the fish you caught, or just about anything else. We have found if we are going to be out in the rain, it's nice to keep a small towel in the bucket. You can pull it out and wipe off your vinyl seat before you sit on it.

Have fun and enjoy your buckets!

Giant Potholder Sit-upons

Ages: Brownies if materials are prepared beforehand Juniors if time allows and plenty of supervision is available. Older girls if they are interested

Supplies:

- 10) T-shirts that are no longer wearable, Adult Mediums work best
- 4) 1 x 2 pine lumber cut in 2 foot lengths
- Yellow wood glue
- Finishing nails 2 1/2 inches long

Directions:

To make the loom. Using the yellow glue and a couple of nails at each corner, assemble an open square from the 4 strips of lumber. Use a carpenter's square to make sure that your assemblage is "true." Let it dry for 24 hours. (Older girls can do this at one meeting and finish at the next.) Choose one side of the square to be the "top". Mark intervals of 3/4 of an inch along all four sides of the square. Hammer a nail into the top at each mark. Voila! A handmade "looper" loom.

To weave the giant potholder:

Cutting from side to side of the T-shirt, make giant loops that are about an inch wide. If they are stretched lightly, they will curl inwards to make a familiar material. Stretch them across the loom from North to South. With the remaining loops weave under and over from East to West

To finish:

Starting at a corner, lift the first loop off the nail. Lift the second loop off and insert it thru the first loop. Lift the third loop off and insert it thru the second. Continue in this manner until you are back where you started. What is it? A giant pot holder perfect for sitting upon. *Nancy Rimassa - Sooner Girl Scout Council*

Woven Newspaper Sit-Upons

Materials Needed:

8 full-sized pages of newspaper. (28" across when unfolded)

1. Open paper up. Fold in half from bottom to top. Fold in half twice more. You will have a strip about 3" x 28"

2. Make seven more strips.

3. Weave strips together tightly in middle (see picture)

4. Fold end #1 up, over the top of #16, and tuck it in underneath #16. You may have to fold the end over at least once before tucking to get it to lie tight and flat.

5. Repeat process with ends #3,5,7,9,13, and 15, tucking ends under the strips that lie across them. Keep the weaving tight!

6. Carefully turn the sit-upon over and repeat folding and tucking with the remaining loose ends.

Completed sit-upon can be easily folded in half or in quarters for portability. You can also slip it into a plastic grocery and seal it with tape for a waterproof sit-upon. To make a bigger sit-upon, use 12 strips. Practice making this sit-upon before teaching your troop. It can be a tough project for little hands

Tips

- Spray a light coat of clear acrylic spray on your Sit-Up-on.
- Use the section front pages that have color for additional pattern interest.

Other:

We made sit-upons and stuffed them with recycled old clothes

Sources:

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http://gsleaders.org/files/Newspaper_Sit.htm

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