

# Build a Dam Activity

A dam is a structure that stops a river from flowing. Can you build one out of popsicle sticks and small rocks?

## Materials

- long, shallow, clear Tupperware container
- sand
- small rocks (like aquarium gravel)
- popsicle sticks
- bucket full of water



## Instructions

1. Fill the Tupperware container with sand.
2. Dig the path of a river in the sand.
3. Choose a spot somewhere along the river to build your dam.
4. Use popsicle sticks and small rocks to construct a dam that will let only a little bit of water come through, but not too much. Keep in mind that the deeper the water, the greater the water pressure. So, the bottom of your dam will need to support more pressure than the top of your dam. If you built your dam in a triangular shape, then the bottom will be wider and will be able to support more pressure.
5. Test your dam by pouring water from a bucket down the river path.

**Keep in mind:** the deeper the water, the greater the water pressure. The bottom of your dam will need to support more pressure than the top of your dam. If you built your dam in a triangular shape, then the bottom will be wider and will be able to support more pressure. How did your dam work? Did you have to adjust your design after testing it?

Adapted from <https://damsafety.org/kids#fun%20activities>

## Background Information

- Association of State Dam Safety: [Dams 101 for Kids | Association of State Dam Safety](https://damsafety.org/kids#fun%20activities)
- National Geographic: <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/dams/>