

The Great Indoor Den Adventure!

Introduction: What is a Den? (5 mins)

Let's talk about dens! What is a den? Where might you find one? (Think animals in the wild, cozy corners in a house). Why do animals or people build dens or shelters? (For safety, warmth, a place to rest, a secret hideout!). Today, you get to be an architect and an engineer to build your very own amazing indoor den!

Step 1: Design Your Dream Den (10 mins)

Every great building starts with a plan! Grab your paper and crayons. Think about:

- How big do you want your den to be? Just for you, or big enough for a friend or sibling?
- Where will the entrance be?
- What furniture can you use to help hold up the blankets? (Chairs, sofa, table - make sure they are stable!)
- Draw a picture of what you want your den to look like. Think about where the blankets will go.

Step 2: Gather Your Gear (5 mins)

Look at your design. What materials will you need? Let's gather our building supplies! Collect your blankets, pillows, clips, and anything else from our materials list that you plan to use. Remember to carry things safely.

Step 3: Build It! (20-30 mins)

Time to build! This is where your design comes to life.

1. **Set up your anchors:** Position the chairs or furniture you plan to use, leaving space inside for your den.
2. **Drape the blankets:** Carefully drape the blankets over the furniture to create the roof and walls. Overlap the blankets so there aren't too many gaps (unless you want a window!).
3. **Secure the structure:** Use the clothes pegs or clips to hold the blankets together or attach them to the furniture. Make sure they are clipped securely but not pulling too hard on the fabric. If using string (with help), tie it carefully to create supports.
4. **Make it stable:** Wiggle the structure gently. Does it seem sturdy? If not, how can you make it stronger? Maybe add more clips or adjust the blankets?
5. **Create an entrance:** Make sure you have a way to get in and out easily!

Safety Check: Make sure nothing heavy is balanced where it could fall. Keep the entrance clear.

Step 4: Den Test & Decoration (Optional, 10 mins)

Is your den ready? Time to test it out! Crawl inside. Is it cozy? Is it dark enough? (Maybe add a flashlight or battery-powered lights!). Add some pillows to make it comfortable. You could even draw a 'Keep Out' or 'Welcome' sign to hang near the entrance!

Step 5: Reflection & Sharing (5 mins)

Wow, look at your creation! Let's talk about it:

- What part of building was the most fun?
- What was the trickiest part? How did you solve that problem?
- If you built another den, what would you do differently?
- Let's take a picture or draw a picture of your finished den!

Step 6: Clean Up Crew (5-10 mins)

Part of being a great builder is cleaning up your construction site! When playtime is over, carefully take down your den. Fold the blankets, put the pillows back, and return the clips and furniture to their proper places.