



Made by Dad: 67 Blueprints for Making Cool Stuff: Projects You Can Build for (and With) Your Kids!

Scott Bedford

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The Snail Soup Can Decoy to keep the candy stash safe. The Customizable "Keep Out" Sign to deter meddlesome siblings and parents. A Bunk Bed Communicator made from cardboard tubes ("*Psst! Can you keep the snoring down?*"). Clever, whimsical, and kind of genius, here are 67 unique projects that will turn any dad with DIY leanings into a mad scientist hero that his kid(s) will adore.

No screens, no hi-tech gadgetry. *Made by Dad* combines the rough-edged, handmade ethos of a Boy Scout manual or *The Dangerous Book for Boys* with a sly sense of humor that kids love. Scott Bedford, a creative director by day and Webby Award-winning blogger by nights and weekends, wields an X-ACTO knife, magic marker, and prodigious imagination to create endlessly delightful projects for his two sons. He knows that kids like contraptions and gadgets, things that are surprising--a chair that appears to be balanced on eggshells. Things that are complex--a multilevel city, with buildings, tunnels, and roads, built from old boxes around the legs of a table. And especially things with humor--the Snappy Toast Rack, made to resemble a crocodile's gaping mouth.

The projects are shown in full-color photographs, and the instructions are illustrated in detailed line drawings that exude personality. Some are quick and simple enough to be done in a coffee shop; others are more of an afternoon project-- yielding hours and hours of rich, imaginative playtime.

Made by Dad: 67 Blueprints for Making Cool Stuff: Projects You Can Build for (and With) Your Kids! Details

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From Reader Review Made by Dad: 67 Blueprints for Making Cool Stuff: Projects You Can Build for (and With) Your Kids! for online ebook

Laura DeLuca says

My husband is definitely the kind of guy who can make the weirdest things out of the simplest of objects. When I saw this book was up for a review, I jumped on the chance, knowing it would be perfect for my husband.

This book is surprisingly much larger than I thought it would be and much less complicated too! Not only did my husband have a blast using this book, but my kids did too! Each project is easy to read, clearly stated what you'll need, has diagrams and wonderful pictures to go along with it. Makes it much easier for my youngest, who does not read, to look through and pick out a project she wants to do with her father by just looking at the photos.

This book has provided many nights of father-child play. Lots of family fun, especially when we created the Spaghetti & Marshmallow Eiffel Tower! For some reason we always have stale noodles and leftover marshmallows so this was very readily available for us to create! If you're curious to see how THAT turned out, check the book out for yourself right here, it's great fun!

***Reviewed by Jackie for New Age Mama-Complimentary copy received in exchange for an honest review**

Vivian says

Oh my. I'm going to have to buy my own copy of this one! Thank you, public library for putting this on my radar! Not only do I want to DO most of these projects, but the layout is genius -- just the right mix of illustrations, diagrams, photos, lists, and instructions.

Despite the fact that my own children are grown and my one grandchild is a 7-hour drive away, I am a Children's Librarian (heh-heh) and can still immerse myself into this kind of creative stuff and get away with it! I'm thinking of decor, family programs, and after-school programs. I can easily think of books (book-talks) to tie in to the fun.

My bucket list of projects from this book...

- Godzilla silhouette skyline (for the windows)
- Martian door decal (for my supply closet/office)
- Alien Abduction Mobile
- Beware of Stuffed Animal "cage" (for a display over the 599's)
- Trashy Lights (a use for my mom's plethora of light strings!)
- Table Leg Moon Mine (this is just too cool for words)
- No Place Like Home Twister (look out Dorothy & Toto!)
- Balloon Ballast Balancing Act (look out Oz the Great and Terrible!)
- Teddy Through the Center of the Earth (homage to Verne -- as in Jules)

- Gravity-defying Black Hole (for a display over the 520's)
- Sword Transformer (Pirates and Romans program "craft")
- Reversible Castle (princess for girls, knights for guys)
- Giraffe Growth Chart (for my grandson)
- Zen Napkins (no excuse needed)

For the less-artistically-inclined there are templates in an appendix.

Lisa says

Neat book. Great ideas that you can expand and make into your own projects. Author obviously makes these w/kids in mind, even marking areas where the kids shouldn't do it, only w/adult supervision. Enjoyed the blueprints. Might make a project or two from the book and will def put his techniques to use elsewhere on our own projects.

Jason Cobill says

Lots of fun ideas for building toys and decorations for kids.

Not sure how long many of the cardboard and tape projects would last in the hands of rambunctious kiddos, but the fun is in the making and sharing.

Myra says

Cute book of projects using mainly paper/cardboard. Might go as high as 3.5 stars, although even if I put on my 9-year-old child hat, there are really only a handful of projects that I really like.

Note: A lot of these projects are pretty technical and involved. Thus, made by dad and not by young child. Lot of measuring and the ability to be precise.

Kim says

Great book of plans for projects you can create with your kids for free or very little money. Lots of cool things to make with cardboard, and other simple items you probably have around the house. The projects are labeled Easy, Medium, or Tricky and come with detailed instructions and sketches. I would put the age range from 5-10 years old.

I especially would recommend it to Chris and Sarah, I constantly thought of them as I read the book.

Robert says

Lots of good crafty ideas. My daughter and I made a few things out of the book. They were very simple instructions to follow. Nice step by step. I also loved the cover and the side with the duct tape look. Makes it look like a homemade look to it. Would recommend this book to the dads to bond with their kids.

Sandy Brehl says

THis could have also been named "Made by Mom" or Made with adult mentor". but the "dad" hook is terrific to lure paired reading with dads and kids. The technical elements of this book (photo/diagram combos that are explicit and easy to understand) are balanced by the appeal of funny, original, and intriguing ideas for projects you won't find in magazines and other books. This should be a hit with kids and parents alike, and is a wonderful example of non-fiction text that requires close reading.

Jon says

This book doesn't include projects like the overused, "how to make a turkey by tracing your hand." Most are very original, clever, and well illustrated. I looked at them all several times. I thought, "wow, that's pretty clever" on a number of them. I even marked a handful to actually take on.

Unfortunately, I didn't do a single project. Not one.

Why? Most of them are a lot of work to end up with something that's cool to look at with limited use. Sure, we can spend an hour or two printing out bees, coloring them, and hanging them above the dining room table, but my kid will lose interest in that assembly line project long before I do. And when I'm done, I'm going to have a bunch of cardboard bees hanging above the table. Hooray?

Or I can spray paint a water bottle to make it look like a bottle of nuclear waste, but do I really want my kid drinking out of a spray painted water bottle? Not really. Maybe I could make the chair with eggs for feet that look impossibly cool, but will leave bits of eggshell all over the house in a matter of days. Or maybe we'll try something a little more sanitary.

Or what about a paper volcano, or the wall black hole, or the steampunk balancing robot, or the tornado that all look really, really cool, but just sort of...well...sit there? Maybe they'll be used for more than 5 minutes. But that's a pretty big maybe.

Of course there are other projects like the 3d cardboard moon mine or the 3d chutes and ladders game that should provide more than a one time use, but most of the book is really cool stuff that you will never have use for.

This book is neat. Instructions are clear and well illustrated. It is packed with cool stuff that will wow you. I want to tell you how much better this book is than other project books for kids. I really do. But, I can't. This is definitely a step up from other kid project books, but when you're done with most of them, you've spent a lot of time building what amounts to an extremely cool diorama with/for your kid. And how much time will anyone spend with even the coolest diorama after it's complete?

Not much.

Elaine says

Saw the first project on a blog (probably Boing Boing) and got it to find ideas for library programs. I was not disappointed! We will definitely be trying some of these for future Summer Reading programs!

Patricia Ann says

I'm the female, but also the "DAD DIY-er" so I loved this book. The projects are of simple construction, supplies most of which are already around the house, and ever so fantastically creative. E-Z enough so that even dad can make them! They are such marvelous ideas that ANY KID, male or female, and their dad will delight in the making. I am so impressed and highly recommend this book as a means of getting kids away from video and media, then inspiring their creative thoughts. I also believe that any kid that is the recipient of these projects will be the envy of the neighborhood kids.

Tracy says

This book is so cool! Moms don't let the title deter you because you can make the things in this book too! The blueprints are cool and easy to follow!

Things I want to make soon: Earthquake Coat Hook, Beware of Stuffed Animal cage, Snappy Toast Rack, Titanic Bookshelf Art, Spaghetti Marshmallow Eiffel Tower, Cheeky Fortune Teller (I remember making these in grade school), Shark Bite Paper Plate so much more.

Charlotte says

Tons of great ideas for indoor/rainy day activities.

Alison says

Arts and crafts turbo-charged with testosterone!

Leave the pre-fab model car kits at the store! Just in time for the kids to get out of school, MADE BY DAD brings kids and dads together to make fun, humorous projects using common household objects. You know Dad, he can fix or make anything with duct tape, but Scott Bedford has upped the ante and given dad some more tools - cardboard boxes, an X-acto knife, and glue.

The first thing I did when I got this book in the mail was hand it to my kids and asked them to find a few things they wanted to make with their dad. While the two flipped through the pages, I heard things like, "Cool!" "This looks awesome!" "I'm doing that!" The favorites were:

- Claw-Through-The-Wall Picture
- Titanic Bookshelf Art
- Customizable "Keep Out" Sign
- Snakes and Ladders

I am especially impressed by the artistic quality of the book. Scott Bedford mixes photos with illustrations, creating not only the crafts themselves, but an eye-pleasing and engaging book. Kids love this mixed media approach to their cartoons and books, so MADE BY DAD serves it up right.

Just now, as I'm typing this post, the hubby comes in and asked, "What are you doing with my book?" Ah, I see. It's HIS book already! This is good stuff. My boys love to do stuff with their dad - set off rockets, change the oil in mom's car, rake leaves - ok, maybe not rake leaves, but they like spending time with dad. If this book gives them some ideas in which to bring a purpose to their time together, I'm all for it. I just hope they have taken a look at the last chapter where there are several great handmade gifts for mom!

Go ahead, be the cool dad that makes cool stuff for his kids, like the Slingshot Car Launcher or the Cat-Trap birdfeeder!

**And, yes, Moms can make this stuff too!

Teri says

NOT JUST FOR DADS. I've made one and can't wait for our grands to be here. So many great things to make. I love love love this book. So many creative things to make. Anyone would enjoy.
