

# Busy Beavers!

A virtual lesson to enjoy at home.

## Read Aloud

Beavers are rodents, just like squirrels, mice, and rats. In fact, beavers are North America's largest rodent! They can weigh up to 60 pounds. A beaver's body is perfectly made for life in the water, which is where beavers spend a lot of their time. Beavers have large, flat tails to help them steer through the water, webbed feet for swimming, eyelids and ear and nose flaps that close when they're underwater, oily waterproof skin, and thick fur and blubber to keep them warm.



Watch a beaver  
build a dam at

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?  
v=yJjaQExOPPY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJjaQExOPPY)



Beavers build their houses—called lodges—next to streams, rivers, and ponds. The entrance to the beaver lodge is below the water, but the lodge itself is dry. Beavers make their lodges out of mud, rocks, and sticks that the beavers chew with their big front teeth. Each lodge has several rooms. Families of up to 12 beavers can live in one lodge!

**TO SEE A BEAVER LODGE AT ADKINS ARBORETUM, CROSS THE WOODEN BRIDGE OFF THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE PARKING LOT. THE LODGE IS ON THE FAR BANK TO YOUR LEFT.**

## Make It!

You can make a tiny beaver lodge with things you find in your backyard.

Materials:

- an old pie pan or tray that can get dirty
- small sticks
- shredded leaves
- a handful of grass
- pebbles
- mud!
- A cupful of water

How to:

Mush the sticks, grass, leaves, and pebbles together with a generous glob of mud. Shape into a lodge in your pie pan. Add a cupful of water to the base of your lodge so that it looks like it's sitting in a pond. What happens when you add water? Does your beaver lodge start to fall apart? This is a problem for real beavers, too. They have to constantly fix their homes, especially after heavy rain or snow. Maybe that's why we call them "busy beavers!"



## Get Outside!

Take a nature walk by a stream, river, or pond. Do you see any signs of beavers? Look for lodges, dams, and trees or sticks that beavers have chewed.