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Coffee Shop Construction Toy

By **Ian Gonsher** Illustrations by **Julie West**

COFFEE SHOPS ARE GREAT PLACES TO EXPLORE YOUR CREATIVITY and come up with new ideas. A little caffeine, some time to play, and the materials at hand can go a long way. With a little imagination you can use this construction method to build many other kinds of forms, and this basic component can be combined with other elements to create larger and more impressive pieces. The baristas don't tend to mind, especially if you tip generously.

YOU WILL NEED: Coffee stirring sticks (12)
» Straws (3) » Scissors optional

1. Collect and cut.


After you've customized your caffeinated beverage of choice at the condiment bar, pick up a few extra items: You'll need 12 coffee stirrers and 3 straws. Cut the 3 straws in half, creating 6 connector pieces (if you don't have scissors, you can do this with 6 full length straws as well).

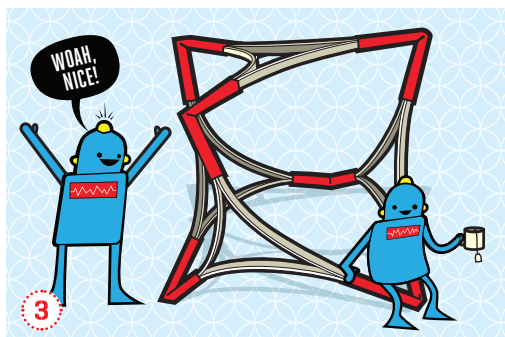
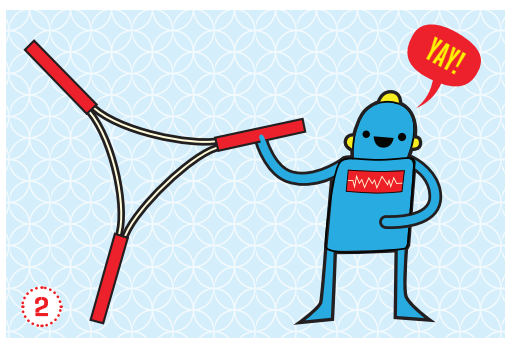
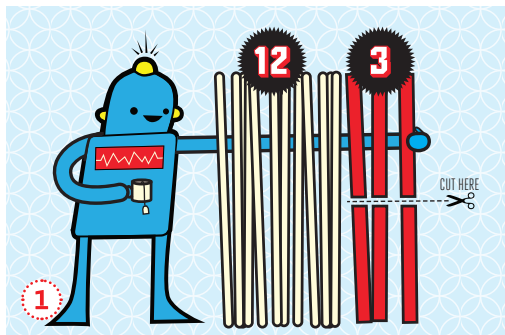
TIP. Soak the stirring sticks in water if you have trouble getting them to bend.

2. Build an element.

Build a basic triangular element with 3 coffee stirrers and three straw pieces. Push two coffee stirrers, pressed flat against each other, into the end of each of the straws to connect 3 coffee stirrers together.

3. Combine the elements.

Build and attach 2 more triangular elements together until you get a larger triangle. Fold the structure upward, and connect it with the final 3 stirrers. This should give you a cube-like structure. 



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