

Native American Rain Stick

History of the Rain Stick

Many Native American tribes, as well as other cultures around the world, have used the ceremonial rain stick as a way to please their gods into allowing it to rain. The sound that they make is meant to imitate the sound of raindrops falling. Rain sticks were particularly important to tribes that lived in more arid or desert climates as water was very hard to come by. Without the life giving water from the sky, their crops would not grow and animals and people could die of thirst. The first rain sticks were made of hollowed out cactus tubes or bamboo filled with small pebbles or sand. The sticks would then be used in important ceremonies to bring upon rain during the dry seasons.

Materials:

- Thick & sturdy cardboard tube. One from a roll of plastic wrap or wrapping paper work best.
- Hammer
- Nails. You want them to be no longer than the width of your tube.
- Thumb tacks, smooth topped.
- Rice
- Popcorn kernels (optional)
- 2 beverage caps or milk jug caps
- Duct tape

Instructions:

- Carefully hammer in nails into the cardboard tube. Parents should probably be the ones to do this step.
- Remove the nails from the cardboard tube. Have the child replace the nails into the pre-hammered holes. Have the child add thumb tacks to the tube as well.
- Secure one end of the cardboard tube with a beverage or milk jug cap.
- Add your rice into the tube, about $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup will be plenty. If you would like to add popcorn kernels feel free, only about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup.
- Secure the other end of the cardboard tube with a beverage or milk jug cap.
- Cover the cardboard tube in duct tape. If you would like to use a different color or design go for it.
- Decorate the rain stick however you like.

If you would like to see a rain dance ceremony, follow the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OznBbtrTrX4>

