

Desert Tortoise Habitat Craft

Adapted for the desert

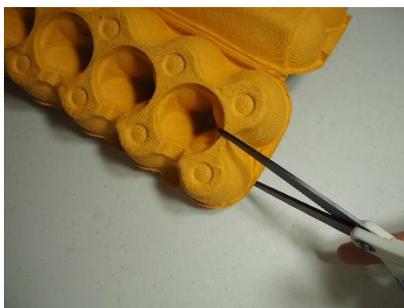
Living things need resources to survive. Desert tortoises have adaptations that allow them to survive using the limited resources of Utah's desert environments. This craft can facilitate learning about desert habitats and the survival strategies of the desert tortoise.



Step 1: Create your desert tortoise



Materials: Empty egg carton, colored paper, tape (or glue), scissors, marker.



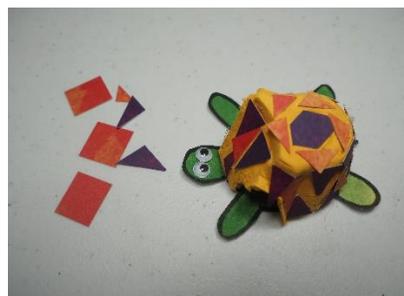
Cut one egg compartment from the egg carton to the tortoise shell.



Use the egg carton piece to trace the body of the tortoise, including legs, head, & tail.



Cut out your tortoise body and secure the tortoise shell on top using tape or glue.



Decorate your tortoise shell using shapes and colors of your preference!

Step 2: Create your tortoise burrow

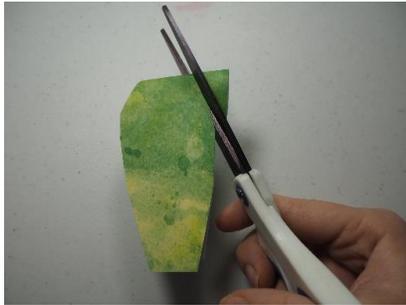
Desert tortoises have front limbs built like shovels with long, hard nails which help them dig underground homes called burrows. These burrows provide cool shade during the summer but are also cozy during the winter. They are comfortable in their burrows and spend up to 95% of their lives underground.



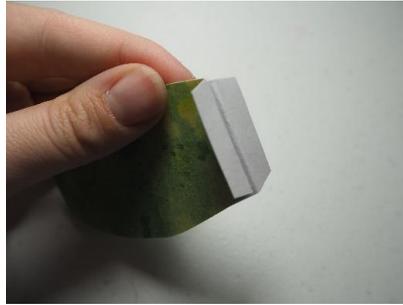
Cut the end off the top of the empty egg carton to create a burrow hide for your tortoise.

Step 3: Create a desert cactus

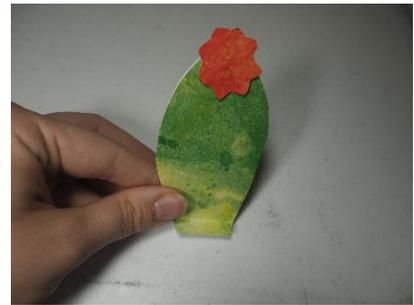
Desert tortoises are herbivores, meaning they feed on plants. One plant that desert tortoises may feed on are the flower blossoms of cactus plants. Plants like these help the tortoise stay hydrated even when they may not have access to fresh water.



Fold a strip of paper in half. Cut to create a rounded cactus shape.



Fold the edges of the bottom of your cactus to create a base for gluing or taping.



Add a blossom to the top of your cactus.

Step 4: Create your tortoise habitat

Desert tortoises need water, food, and shelter from the harsh elements of the desert environment.

Use a paper or cardboard based as your desert landscape. Attach your tortoise, tortoise burrow, and cactus.

Add a water source to your desert landscape. The desert tortoise digs basins in the soil to catch the infrequent rain that falls. The animal remembers where these “watering holes” are and walks directly to them after a bit of rain.

Feel free to add extra vegetation to add some final touches to your desert tortoise habitat,

