

Simple shelter for canadian winters - 1 or 2 cats



Tote boxes with smooth sides and bottom are the simplest to use.



Make patterns for the sides first, this makes the floor smaller so that when it all fits together the floor props up the walls. We use mainly 1 inch styrofoam and then attach a second layer of insulation using "reflectics", a padded plastic we buy in rolls. It is cut the same size as the styrofoam pieces and taped into place using Gorilla Tape, a very strong duct tape. Regular duct tape doesn't like the cold. We also used packing tape here, we were still trying to make regular duct tape stick. Use the same materials for the roof, the trick is to be able to still close the lid.



Most shelters have either holes or flaps at the entrance. Fredericton has had the good fortune of working with a creative mind for both our traps and our shelters. The entrance which acts as a wind break from the front, top and sides is a wastepaper basket with one side removed. The hole for the entrance is placed high on the tote, the cats come up under it. It takes some fidgeting to make the hole tight for the waste basket to fit into (from the inside - out) The rim actually stays on the inside to help hold it in place (with the help of lots of Gorilla Tape)



Fill the tote loosely to the top with STRAW (we wear straw hats, not hay hats). Straw is hollow which helps it wick away humidity. The cats burrow into it, their body heat warms the space around them. Smaller is better. A large space won't stay warm. Because the cold will come in the door opening, filling little spaces with chalking won't make the shelter warmer. This tote is large enough for 2 big cats if they are friends. The wastebasket position in the middle means that they can go to either side to curl up. Maybe for a single cat or friends, having the door to one side would be more comfortable.

Positioning the shelter ... next installment ...