

Making an Apple Bird Feeder

In the autumn there are often unwanted windfall apples lying on the ground, and there is often a sorry-looking apple or two sitting unwanted in fruit bowls. Why not use these apples in a fun activity that can help benefit the birds?

Things you need

- An old, or windfall apple
- A wooden kebab skewer
- About 40cm/16in of string
- Some sunflower seeds (black ones are better because they contain more fat)
- A pair of scissors (to cut the string)
- An old pencil or a screwdriver (to make a hole in the apple)
- A pair of cutting pliers (to make the perches)



Making an apple bird feeder requires adult supervision, and for some parts, adult help

Preparing the perches

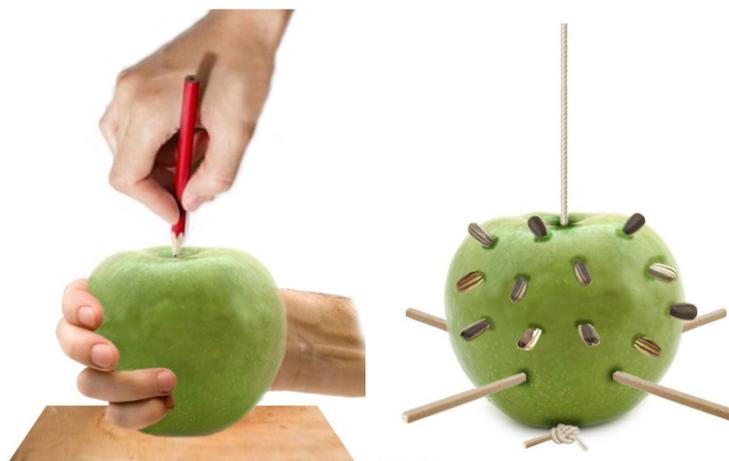
- Use the cutting pliers to cut about 2.5cm/1 inch from off the pointed end of the wooden kebab skewer. You need to save this bit for preparing the tie.
- Cut the rest of the kebab skewer in half to make two perches.

Preparing the tie

- Use the scissors to cut off about 40cm/16in of string and tie the end of this around the middle of the cut off pointed end of the wooden kebab skewer. This will act as a stop, holding the apple in place on the string tie.

Preparing the apple

- Twist off the apple stalk.
- This bit should be done by an adult. Hold the sides of the apple firmly with one hand and hold it against a hard flat surface. Take the old pencil or a screwdriver in the other hand and push a vertical hole right through the core of the apple, being careful to not go sideways so that you do not poke your hand.



Assembling the Apple Bird Feeder

- Thread the string right through the core of the apple until the stop holds the apple in place. Tip: use a perch to help poke the string through.
- This bit should be done by an adult. Hold the sides of the apple firmly with one hand and hold it against a hard flat surface (as above). Poke the perch right through the middle of the base of the apple, being careful to not go sideways so that you do not poke your hand. Repeat with the other perch at a 90° angle to the first perch.
- Then push as many sunflower seeds as you like, sharp end first, into the apple. You can do this in whatever pattern you like. Maybe you could write your name, or draw a picture?
- Your Apple Bird Feeder is complete. Hang it from a branch where you can see it and tick off the birds that you spot on the OPAL Bird Spotter Sheet.

When to use Apple Bird Feeders, and which species will use them?

Sunflower seeds and apples are foods that will benefit birds year-round, but there is the greatest need for additional food in autumn and winter. Sunflower seeds are favourites of Blue Tits, Great Tits, other tits, and Greenfinch's. The apple can be eaten by tits, Thrushes and Starlings.