



Durham Boats

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Build a Boat

Just south of Northampton County in Durham, PA, the Durham boat was built. These sturdy, flat bottom boats were extremely useful in carrying large, heavy loads of freight through the waterways in the area. George Washington and his men famously crossed the Delaware River in a Durham boat on December 25, 1776.

There are no known plans for building a Durham boat in existence today, but we do know they were strong, flat bottomed boats that made it easier to navigate in shallow, rocky waters. Watch this [video](#) to see a Durham boat replica at Washington Crossing Historic Park and learn more about their history.

Materials Needed

- Aluminum foil
- Pennies
- Container to hold water
- Water
- Planning/Recording sheet

Directions

- Watch the video on Durham boats to see what they look like. Draw a design for your foil boat on the Planning/Recording sheet.
- Use aluminum foil to create a boat. The goal is to hold as much weight as possible.
- Float your boat in a container of water and begin adding pennies, one at a time to the boat.
- Record the number of pennies added before the boat sinks or capsizes.
- Make adjustments to your design to see if you can beat your record.



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Planning & Recording Sheet

Use this sheet to plan your boat design and record how many pennies it can hold.

Design 1

- Number of pennies held:

Design 2

- Number of pennies held:

Design 3

- Number of pennies held:

Design 4

- Number of pennies held: