

# Make Your Own Shadow Puppet Theatre



## Materials:

- Screen
- Frame
- A source of light (use a flashlight, small lamp, clip-on lamp, or headlamp)
- Clamps, clips, rope, Velcro, or tape
- Craft supplies, cardboard, ribbons, etc.

## Step 1: Frame

You'll need to create a frame for your puppet theatre. This can be anything from a doorframe, table legs, a cardboard box, clothesline or a photography frame (that's what we used for the Canadian Canoe Museum's Family Day shadow puppet theatre, pictured above).

- [Example of a Doorway Setup](#)
- [Example of a Clothesline Sheet Setup](#)

## **Step 2: Screen**

This is what will be in front of your shadow puppets. You can use a white sheet, or light coloured plastic tablecloth, tissue paper, or vellum paper. Stretch the material across your frame and secure it to the frame using clamps, clips, rope, Velcro, or tape.

## **Step 3: Backlight**

A shadow puppet theatre requires a source of light behind the screen in order to make the shadows. Look around your house for a source of light: a flashlight, table lamp, or a clip-on lamp to name a few. You might even be able to use the light on a cellphone! Play with the way the light affects your scene by adjusting the light, moving it closer or further away, depending on the effect you want!

## **Step 4: Backdrop**

Set the scene and use your creativity to decorate your backdrop. You can use dried flowers, paper bows, construction paper, tassels, rocks, etc. to create a theme for your shadow puppet theatre. Once you have it to your liking, you are ready to stage your play!

## **Explore Shadow Puppetry Around the World!**

### **[Shadow Theatre, World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts](#)**

Learn the history of shadow theatre and the many cultures that practice this tradition all over the world.

### **[Chinese Shadow Puppets: A Documentary](#)**

This 10 minute documentary explores the Chinese tradition of shadow puppetry.

### **[Mouse and Cat - Chinese Shadow Puppetry](#)**

A short YouTube clip that tells the story of a mouse and cat with beautiful Chinese shadow puppets. You may be amazed by how intricate and detailed it is!