

ChicagoHistoryMuseum

Set Sail!

READ:

Lake Michigan and the Chicago River helped Chicago grow into the city we know today. Between 1850 and 1875 Chicago was the busiest port in the United States. Today, the Chicago River and Lake Michigan provide Chicagoans a place to relax and cool off in the summer. Beaches, trails and harbors line the 18.5 mile Lake Front Trail which stretches from Hollywood to 71st Street. From there you can see people enjoying powerboats, standup paddleboards, kayaks, sailboats and more. Sometimes, on a Wednesday night between May and September you can see sailboats racing out on the water!

DO:

- **Use** the “How To Make a Sailboat” instruction sheet to make your sailboat.
- **Sail** your boat! Fill a bucket or bowl with water and see how your sailboat floats and sails. If it doesn't float, try some different materials. Sometimes you might need an extra cork or a smaller sail.
- **Race** your sailboat! Time how long it takes to get from one edge of the water to another. Record your time and see how fast you can go!
- **Experiment!** What happens if you splash the water to make waves? Try a different shape for the sail. What happens then?

SHARE:

- Challenge others in your family to race your sailboats!
- **Post** pictures of your boats on social media with the hashtag #CHMatHomeFamilies.

Approx. Time: 30—45 minutes

Materials:

- ⇒ How to Make a Sailboat Instruction Sheet
- ⇒ Two Corks
- ⇒ Straws, Toothpicks, or Craft Sticks
- ⇒ Rubber Bands
- ⇒ Foam Shapes or Construction Paper/Tape
- ⇒ Scissors
- ⇒ Drawing Supplies



Sailboat race on Lake Michigan, August 2019. Photo courtesy of CHM Education Department

How to Make a Cork Sailboat

Materials:

- ⇒ Two Corks
- ⇒ Straws, Toothpicks, or Craft Sticks
- ⇒ Rubber Bands
- ⇒ Foam Shapes or Construction Paper/Tape
- ⇒ Scissors
- ⇒ Drawing Supplies

1. Find a piece of foam or construction paper- this is the sail of your ship.
Rectangle shapes work pretty well.
2. Decorate your sail using crayons, markers, and stickers. If you use paper for the sail, after you decorate your sail, use the tape to help 'waterproof' the sail.
Make two holes, one at the top and one at the bottom.
3. Use the straw/toothpick and slide it through the sail - this is the mast of your ship. A mast is a pole used to hold a sail.
4. Connect two corks with two rubber bands- the corks will be the bottom of your boat and will actually float.
5. Stick the mast between the corks to complete your boat and set sail.

