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Engineer It! Design a Boat

How many pennies can you float in a boat made from aluminum foil?

You'll need:

- Aluminum foil (about 5- or 6-inch square)
- Scissors
- 15-30 Pennies (or other small items such as washers or small stones)
- Container of water



What to do:

1. Use one piece of foil to make a boat and place it on surface of the water. Does it float?
2. Add pennies slowly – one at a time. Count how many pennies your boat holds before it sinks.
3. Try again. Can you improve your boat's design so it will hold more pennies?



Share your design!

Post a picture on social media and tag the museum:
#MuseumFromHome

- Tag us on Facebook: @oregonnaturalhistory
- Tag us on Instagram: @mnch_uo
- Tag us on Twitter: @UO_MNCH

Explore More: Oregon's First Engineers

Read below about early boat designs developed by Native American people in the Pacific Northwest and [watch this video](#)) to learn about how important canoes are for the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians.

CANOES - AN EARLY INVENTION

Early Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest developed methods for making effective watercraft using the resources available in their environment.



Men hollowing out a canoe with adzes, on the beach in front of Metlakatla in northern British Columbia, no date. Courtesy National Museums of Canada, 72-18064

Right: Miluk Coos Tribal members carve a dugout canoe. Photo: Morgan Gaines, Quuiich (Lower Umpqua) Tribal member

Left: photo from [Cedar](#), by Hilary Stewart



Cedar Dugout Canoe

Made of a single log hollowed and shaped with simple tools by skilled hands, the dugout canoe of the Northwest Coast was central to the way of life of the marine-oriented peoples of the area.



Tule Reed Canoe

Lightweight canoes made of bundled tule reeds were constructed annually for fishing and transportation.

Photo from the [Modoc Homeland](#) article on National Park Service website, NPS.gov. The Modoc people once lived on both sides of the Oregon-California border, in villages on and near Tule, Lower Klamath, and Clear Lakes.