

STEM Enrichment Design competition

Zookeepers and BEEZA* volunteers at Zoos SA enjoy creating species-specific enrichment items for all animals that call Adelaide Zoo home.

Get involved by creating your very own enrichment item for your pet (or wildlife in your garden) at home! You could win your very own 'enrichment pack' that will enrich your own lives, including a giraffe feed experience and retail pack valued at \$326.80.

** Behavioural and Environmental
Enrichment for Zoo Animals*

What is enrichment?

Enrichment is an effective method that Zoos SA uses to improve welfare by providing animals with things which keep them mentally engaged, physically active and behaviourally enriched.

Species-appropriate toys/challenges, opportunities and stimulation is key when developing enrichment. It is important to research and have a good understanding of the species natural behaviors and physiology prior to making your enrichment.

"You wouldn't give a duck the same enrichment as a meerkat"

Check out the [video](#) below to find out more information on how Adelaide Zoo uses enrichment





Getting Started...

1. Identify your animal

Firstly you need to select what animal you will be creating your enrichment for at home, whether that be a pet or the wildlife in your backyard.

If you have more than two pets we suggest creating an enrichment item for them each, for example you wouldn't give the same size enrichment dog toy to your Jack Russel as your Great Dane!

2. Research + Plan

It is important to research the animal you are creating an enrichment item for to make a species-specific item. Remember enrichment is an item that is designed to encourage natural behaviours as well as providing mental and physical activity.

Remember the enrichment item must be able to be removed from the animal's environment

Hot tip one – if you are creating enrichment for native wildlife it is important to research their natural diets, you don't want to give them anything harmful – this applies to your pets at home.

Hot tip two – Pet shops have a range of enrichment toys! Maybe go and look at your local pet shop, even speak to the friendly staff!

3. Create

This is the fun part – making your enrichment item! We have included an enrichment safety checklist on the next page which you can use during this process.

This might take a bit of trial and error but we know you will be able to create an amazing species-specific item for your animal!

Submitting your Enrichment Item

By submitting your enrichment item you go in the draw to win your very own 'enrichment pack'

All you need to do is send the following to competitions@zoossa.com.au:

1. A photo and/or video of your enrichment item
2. Tell us what animal your enrichment was designed for
3. Why is your enrichment item species-specific for your animal
(e.g. I used a large papier-mache shape as I have a large dog and anything smaller would be a choking hazard OR I provided a puzzle feeder for my parrot as they require cognitive stimulation)

Entries close on Sunday 10 September 2023 at 5pm (ACDT)

Winning entry will be chosen by a panel of judges including Nicholas Bishop who Zoos SA's animal behaviourist and creative programs manager.

If you have any further questions or need clarification please email events@zoossa.com.au





Checklist

This general checklist will help you create a safe enrichment item for your animal.

☐ **1. Materials:**

- Products used to make the enrichment item are free from wax, staples, glue, paint or plastic tape.
- Enrichment item does not contain toxic ingredients or pose an allergic reaction to the animal, including plant material (e.g. peanut butter must not contain xylitol)

☐ **2. Size:**

- Enrichment is large enough that it cannot be swallowed by the animal
- The item holes will not trap any body parts – needs to either be big or small enough dependant on what your enrichment item wants to achieve.

☐ **3. Removable:**

- This object can be added or removed from the animals environment easily
- Fixings and/or attachments cannot be removed or swallowed

☐ **4. Accessibility:**

- The enrichment is easy accessible and does not pose a danger to reach, for example the animal cannot be entrapped or entangled.

☐ **5. Weight:**

- The item is not heavier than the animal so they cannot be crushed or injured

☐ **6. Animal Behaviour:**

- This item offers your animal with the opportunity to explore and display its natural behaviours.

