

GET INVOLVED!

STUART BIRD

BUILD AN ARCH!



Stuart's dry stone moon gate draws inspiration from the stone walls that criss-cross the local landscape. The stone is taken 'as it comes' from a local quarry and laid 'dry' in a radial pattern. The style echoes the spokes and blades of the old water wheel you can see through it.

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

Stuart Bird creates remarkable stone arches and circles inspired by traditional dry-stone walling techniques.

His arches stand without cement or glue. Instead, they rely on carefully placed stones, gravity and balance.

For thousands of years, people have built arches that can support huge weights using just clever design and craftsmanship.

The secret is that each piece supports the next, creating a structure that becomes stronger as it comes together.

Can you build an arch that stands on its own?

GET CREATING!

Using the red and blue foam blocks in the box, see if you can build a self-supporting arch.

There isn't just one solution!

Experiment with different shapes, arrangements and heights.

Can you make an arch that is:

- ★ Tall?
- ★ Wide?
- ★ Elegant?
- ★ Strong?
- ★ Unexpected?

Work on your own or with friends.

WHAT YOU NEED

- ★ Red foam blocks
- ★ Blue foam blocks
- ★ A flat surface
- ★ Patience and imagination
- ★ A camera or phone (optional)



THINK LIKE A STONE MASON

When Stuart builds an arch, every stone matters.

Ask yourself:

- ★ Which block should go first?
- ★ What shape works best at the top?
- ★ How can the pieces support one another?
- ★ What happens if you change one block?
- ★ Can you build higher?

CHALLENGE CARDS

Can you:

- ★ Build an arch without it falling?
- ★ Create the tallest arch?
- ★ Create the widest arch?
- ★ Use every block?
- ★ Build an arch with a friend?
- ★ Make an arch large enough to crawl through (using your bodies)?
- ★ Create a human arch with your group?

PHOTOGRAPH IT!



- Take a photograph of your arch.
- Stand underneath it.
- Look through it.
- What can you see?
- What would you name your arch?

READY FOR THE NEXT MAKER?

Please:

- ★ Take your arch apart
- ★ Return all the foam blocks to the box
- ★ Leave everything ready for the next visitor

DID YOU KNOW?

Real stone arches can stand for hundreds or even thousands of years without cement. The secret is that every piece pushes gently against the next, creating strength through balance.

SOMETIMES THE STRONGEST STRUCTURES ARE BUILT ONE PIECE AT A TIME.

HAVE FUN ★ EXPERIMENT ★ BUILD
PHOTOGRAPH ★ RESET