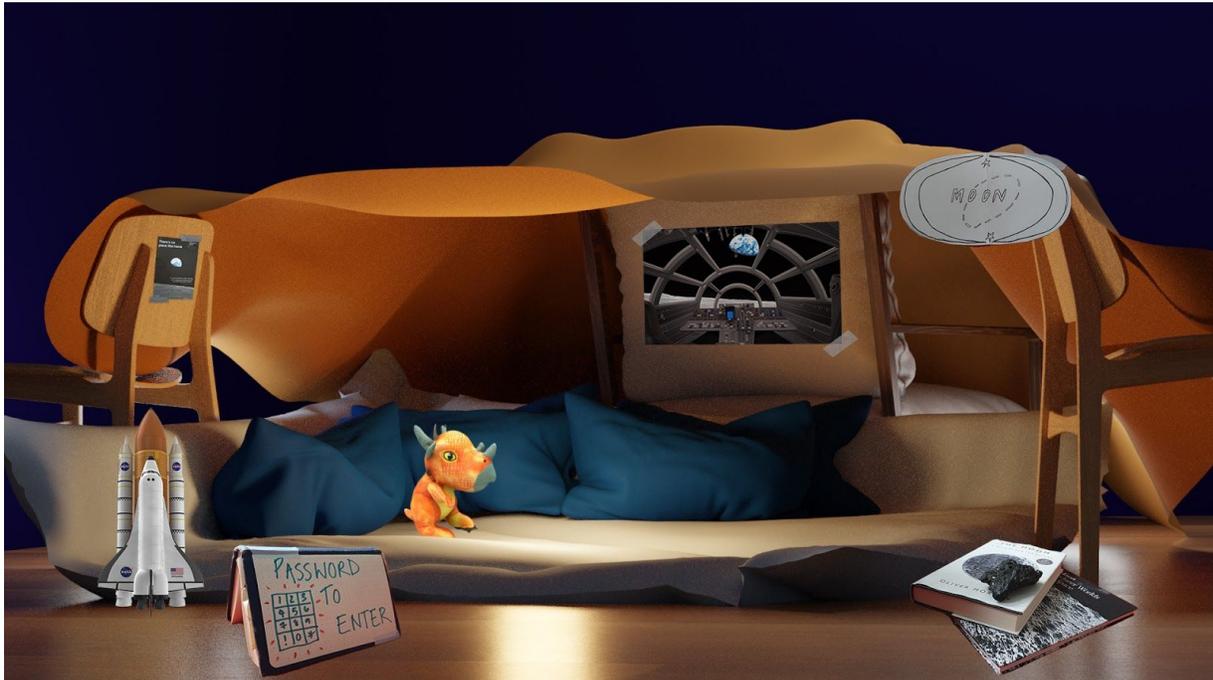


Build a Fort Sanctuary



Materials: Blankets/duvets, battery powered lights or torch, cushions, sofa cushions, pillowcase, elastic bands or string, tape, cardboard + pens/pencils.

Introduction: 2020 has been a very strange year for everyone. A lot of it has been spent in our homes, and this has made people think about what it is that makes a place comfortable and sturdy to live in. It's good to have a space that's just ours to escape from the outside world and make us feel safe: this is sometimes called a sanctuary. This activity will help you think about what you need from a sanctuary and then build one at home.

Instructions:

STEP ONE - Sanctuary means a place of safety: somewhere that makes you feel good. Write a list, draw a diagram, or talk to someone else about the things that make you feel safe and cosy. It might help to go on a walk around your home to remind you of what makes you feel comforted. Alternatively, think about a specific place (it could be real or imagined) where you feel cosy, you might want to design your fort to be inspired by that place.

STEP TWO - Sketch the first design of your dream fort. Using your list and inspirations, draw what your fort would look like if you were facing it straight on. Remember to

include all the things you would want to include inside it, and label the things you would need to build it. Remember that this is a dream version so go crazy. When you build the real one you can be more realistic with what you can achieve.

STEP THREE - Decide where in your home is the best place to build your real sanctuary fort. It should be somewhere that isn't in the way of the other people in your house, and in a room that you feel comfortable in. Place a duvet or comfy blanket on the floor where you want your fort to be.

STEP FOUR - Think about the main structure of your fort. Referring to your dream fort drawing for inspiration, decide whether you want your fort to be completely enclosed (so no one can see in), or just have a roof so others can easily see and talk to you. Use a lightweight blanket or sheet as the roof and walls of your fort. Prop the blanket up with chairs or sofa cushions or hang it from a tall piece of furniture. You could use hair ties, bulldog clips, string or elastic bands to help fix your blanket in place. A strong structure will have at least two walls and a roof. You could experiment with different ways of building it until you settle on the best one.

STEP FIVE - Sit in your fort and think back to the list you made of things that make you feel safe and cosy. Which of those can you bring into your fort? Use a pillowcase as a bag to collect the things you need. Don't forget some battery powered lights or a torch if it's dark inside.

STEP SIX - What is your fort called? Do you welcome visitors or is it just for you? Perhaps there's a password only a few people know to get in. Using cardboard and some pens or pencils make a sign for your fort letting people know these things. Fix it to the front or somewhere visible with string or tape.

STEP SEVEN - What food makes you feel comforted? Grab a snack to eat while you're inside your fort.

STEP EIGHT - Enjoy your fort! Read your favourite book, listen to music, make pictures for the walls or do something else that makes you feel good. Don't forget to photograph your fort to keep when it's time to take it down.

Abby and Alice are set designers and experience designers. We make environments that people can be in, that tell stories and rely on an active audience. Our own work is about discovery in interactive sets: inspired by video game storytelling and developed through an iterative design process.