This handy weather vane is a breeze to make

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Few things affect us as much as weather. It dictates how we dress, what we do for recreation, and sometimes what we eat for dinner. Weather conditions control a huge part of our lives each day.

A weather vane such as the one described here, will show you which direction the wind is blowing. The weather vane is one of the oldest instruments made to help predict the weather. It always contains a part that freely turns into the wind with one end usually pointed like an arrow and the other end wider so the wind catches both sides equally.

Today, early weather vanes are considered very important types of folk art. Some folk artists sculpted toys and decoys, such as ducks and geese, for their weather-vane wind indicators. This one uses a fish made from a foam meat tray to point the direction of the wind, but you could use any shape you prefer as long as one end is narrower than the other. The directions were found at Disney Online at www.familyfun.go.com.

Supplies needed
• Two large, clean foam meat trays
• Scissors
• Nail and hammer
• Three corks
• Permanent black marker
• 2-foot wooden dowel with one-eighth-inch diameter
• Six beads with five-eighths-inch holes
• Plastic drinking straw
• Tape
• Clay flowerpot with drainage hole in bottom

From one of the foam trays, cut a 1-inch circle to use as a washer and two strips of foam 1¼ inches by 3 inches for direction markers. Label the ends of one strip N (north) and S (south) and label the other one E (east) and W (west). With an adult’s help, use the nail and hammer to gently tap a hole through the centers of the foam pieces and the corks.

From the second foam tray, cut out a large fish. Make sure the mouth is narrower than the tail. You can decorate both sides with markers, if you’d like.

Tape the drinking straw vertically onto the fish.

Plug the hole of the flowerpot with a cork. Ask an adult to help you trim it so that it fits snugly into the hole. Fit the end of the dowel into the cork.

With this weather vane, you can keep track of changing weather conditions.

Thread onto the dowel in this order: one bead, a cork, the direction markers, two beads and the foam washer. Slide the straw onto the dowel and top with another cork and the remaining beads.

Set the finished weather vane on a deck or fence post, orienting the direction markers with a compass to show true north, south, east and west.