

Splash Erosion

When raindrops fall on bare soil, much energy is expended. Small clods of dirt are broken down by the impact of the falling drops and may be splashed into the air during the rain fall. You can see splashed soil in gardens and school yards, on sidewalks, on vegetables and flowers, on basement windows and picket fences. Soil erosion can be a very serious problem for farmers and gardeners. Make splash boards to study splash erosion.

You will need:

2 boards - 1 inch thick, 4 inches wide and 3 ½ feet long
White paint
2 small pieces of tin, 4 inches wide and about 9 inches long
Marker

Ask an adult to help you assemble your splash boards.

Sharpen the end of each board (so they can be pushed into the ground). Paint each of them white. Let them dry for 2 days. Mark lines across each board at 1 inch intervals beginning at the unsharpened end. Attach tin pieces (shields) to the top of each board. The shield helps to prevent rain from washing the splashed soil off the boards. Locate 2 places with different amounts of grass cover (examples are a nearly bare spot in a flower bed or a spot on one side of a farm fence where grass is heavy and one side that is bare). Push the boards into the ground about 6 inches. Check each board after it rains.



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