



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME!

From the coldest tundra to the hottest desert, animals make their homes in very different places. Whether underwater, underground, high on a mountain or deep in a forest, animals find or make spaces to provide shelter and safety. Some animals, like moles and prairie dogs, dig burrows or tunnels to make their homes underground. Birds and beavers carefully build their homes out of materials they collect in their environment. Other animals, like some spiders and bees, can make their homes using materials they produce from their bodies. Many large animals, like bison and whales, are so big that they don't need to build special homes – their home is wherever they go! No matter where they live, all animals have some sort of place that they can call home.

DAY 3:

A-MAZE-ING MOLES

Moles are small mammals that spend most of their lives underground as they look for earthworms and insects to eat and make tunnels to travel through and live in. Since it is dark underground, moles don't rely on their eyesight. While they are not blind, they have small eyes that cannot see well. Instead, moles use their other senses to help them get around. They use their noses to smell for food and have incredibly sensitive hands and snouts to find their way through tunnels using their sense of touch. Using these senses, moles can dig long and complicated tunnels that include different rooms called chambers. Let's see what it would be like to move around a mole's home!

Before you start, you should have:

- An area where you can move around and set up a maze
- Things you can use to build a maze and obstacle course (chairs, blankets, pillows and anything else from around your home will work)
- Optional: a blindfold (a bandana or something similar will work)

To play:

- 1) Set the boundaries for the area you are playing in – you'll need room to build an obstacle course that you can crawl through.
- 2) Choose the objects from around your home to build your maze. Since you will be trying to travel through the maze with your eyes closed, be sure to choose objects without sharp corners or ones that are fragile.
- 3) Pick a starting location and where the maze will start and end. The end of the course is the mole's home chamber.
- 4) Build the maze! Try to include areas to crawl over obstacles, a tunnel to crawl through, dead ends or other challenges.
- 5) When you are ready to start, stand at the starting location and close your eyes. You can use a blindfold instead, if you would like. Your goal is to make it through the maze to the home chamber without using your sense of sight!
- 6) Moving slowly on your hands and knees, crawl through the obstacle course with your eyes closed. Use your other senses to help you find your way through the course. Try using your hands and ears to help you.
- 7) If you get stuck in the course, cause it to fall apart, or open your eyes start over and try again.
- 8) Once you've made it safely to the home chamber on the other side without peeking, you win!

Keep exploring!

- Use a timer to see how long it takes you to make your way through the course.
- Have a partner set up the course for you, so that you don't know what it looks like before you begin.
- Have a partner hide different objects throughout the course. Just like moles trying to find food to eat, you have to find the objects as you make your way through the course.
- Try placing something with a smell in the maze, like a tissue sprayed with perfume, an over-ripe banana or coffee beans. Find the item using your nose as a guide!

What did you discover?

Upload a photo or video and tag the Sam Noble Museum on Instagram or Facebook. You can also use the hashtags **#samnoblehome** and **#summerexplorers** to share!

More information on moles and their tunnels:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toARdZKs-IE>



<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2017/04/star-nosed-mole-touch-pain-senses/>



<https://www.worldanimalfoundation.com/advocate/wild-animals/params/post/1292136/moles>



Sam Noble Home

