

IYRP DIY Scent Bell Guide

Scent bells (or scent jars) introduce the smells of rangelands into exhibits. They provide sensory engagement for visitors and can be made with simple, safe materials.

Materials Needed

- Small glass or plastic jars with lids (e.g., spice jars, baby food jars)
- Natural materials: hay, wool, dried sagebrush, grass seeds, or herbs
- Fine mesh or fabric (cheesecloth, muslin)
- Rubber bands or string
- Optional: essential oils (lavender, sage, cedar) for scent enhancement

Assembly Instructions

1. Fill each jar with a small amount of dried plant material or wool.
2. If scent is faint, add 1–2 drops of essential oil (optional).
3. Cover the top with mesh or fabric to allow airflow.
4. Secure fabric with rubber band or string.
5. Screw on lid loosely (for transport) or leave lid off when on display.

Safety Notes

- Use non-toxic, allergen-aware materials (avoid nuts, strong allergens).
- Label jars with contents to prevent confusion.
- Ensure jars are securely closed if used in child-friendly spaces.

Display Ideas

- Place scent bells in kiosks or other displays with “smell here” labels or longer prompts such as: “Come closer. These jars introduce the smells of rangelands—sagebrush, wool, hay, dried grasses.”
- Provide a set of different scents (e.g., hay, wool, sagebrush) to highlight rangeland diversity.
- Combine with interpretive text panels that explain the cultural and ecological roles of the scents.

