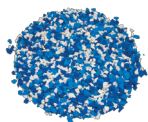


Materials and Tools Needed



Rubber granules



Mineral spirits



Acetone



Contact cement



Postal or food scale



Measuring cup



Mixing bowl

- 1-4mm premium rubber granules – for making a skin for the contact obstacles, table top and sides, and bottom of the chute barrel
- .5-22mm premium rubber granules – for making a skin for the rim of the chute barrel.
- Urethane binder
- Mineral spirits – for clean up. Get a quart if you're making just one or two skins or a gallon if you're making a full set (three contact obstacles, table top and edges, chute barrel mat and rim). I recommend buying odorless mineral spirits.
- Acetone – for thinning the binder. Get a quart if you're making just one or two skins or a gallon if you're making a full set.
- DAP Weldwood Contact Cement Original Formula – for gluing skins to obstacle surfaces. Get 2 quarts if you're doing an A-frame skin plus a quart for every other obstacle you're covering. You will find the Weldwood comes in both Original and Gel Formula. I prefer the Original Formula; the gel is much harder to brush on and is almost too thick for applying the necessary two coats.
- Postal or food scale – This is a must! The binder must be weighed, not measured, for proper proportions.
- Measuring cup – 4 cup (32 oz.) works best since 4 cups = 1 1/2 lbs. of rubber granules.
- 2-quart plastic* mixing bowl (with pour spout if possible) – for mixing the binder and acetone before adding to the rubber granules.
- Small plastic* mixing bowl (with pour spout if possible) – for weighing the binder when you make slats.
- Medium (16-quart) and/or large (33-quart) plastic* storage container – for mixing granules with the thinned binder. A 16-quart container works for: seesaw color section, seesaw contact zones, dogwalk contact zones, and the chute rim. You need a 33-quart container for: dogwalk color sections, A-frame color sections and contact zones, table top, and the chute mat. Preferably the container should have a flat, smooth bottom inside (no ridges) to make mixing easier.
- Clear plastic sheeting – 2 ml. thickness works best. You need a 14' x 14' piece of sheeting to make a complete set of skins (three contact obstacles, table top and edges, chute barrel mat and rim).
- Metal spatula and/or 1 1/2" or 2" putty knife – for spreading the rubber and binder mixture before smoothing and forming it.
- Rolling pin – for pressing the skin to the obstacle surface when you're gluing.
- Utility knife with extra blades – for trimming skins to size after they're cured.
- 14" rounded pool trowel – for smoothing and pressing the mixture into the desired shape.



Storage container



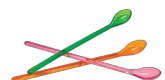
Putty knife



Utility knife



Pool trowel



Ice tea spoons



1' Painter's tape



Nitrile gloves



Spray bottle

- 2" C-clamps – for holding the strips of wood used to form the rubber slats and for holding the finished skin when you apply it to the obstacle.
- Long, plastic* ice tea spoon or paint stir sticks – I recommend using a plastic spoon because it's reusable without cleaning.
- 2" wide disposable paint brush – for applying contact cement to obstacle surfaces and the back side of the skins.
- 25' measuring tape – for the measuring necessary at different stages of the process.
- 1" painter's tape – for outlining the skin shapes on the floor or working surface.
- Duct tape – for taping the plastic sheeting to the floor.
- Marker – for marking your measurements.
- Disposable nitrile gloves – for working with the rubber and binder mixture. Nitrile gloves are required because they are solvent- and chemical-resistant; latex gloves are not!
- Chemical splash goggles – to protect your eyes when working with the acetone
- 1-gallon recloseable plastic bags – for mixing small amounts of rubber and binder, such as for making slats.
- Spray bottle with water – for misting the skin while it's curing.
- 2 wood boards – to use for edging when you're making skins. The boards can be any size and length, but 1'W x 6'L x 1/2" or 3/4" thick works very well because you can kneel on the board as you trowel the mixture into place.

Making Rubber Skins for Agility Obstacles



- The 1"W x 6'L boards are used to help keep the shape of the sides of the skins. You can also kneel on them while you work.
- 1/4"H x 2"W x 36"L poplar wood trim – to use as forms for making slats. It's available in the wood trim section of your local home store. At a minimum you should have 6 boards: 4 so that you can work on 2 A-frame slats at a time and 2 that you cut into 12"-long pieces so you have 6 wood forms for making dogwalk slats (that will allow you to work on 3 slats at a time). Be aware that measuring, marking, and setting up the forms for making the slats takes longer than making the slats themselves. So you may want to buy enough boards to set up all the slats you need at once. (If you want taller slats or you want rounded slats rather than square edges, buy thicker—3/8"—boards.)
- Terry cloth rags – for clean up. I recommend terry cloth rags because they stay wetter than paper towels and are longer lasting.

* Plastic is the material of choice for measuring and mixing because you don't need to clean the containers after use. Simply let the residual binder/rubber mixture dry for about 24 hours and then just peel it out of the container—the container is ready to use again.



Here I'm letting my use plastic storage containers and mixing bowl dry for 24 hours. I'll then be able to peel out the residue easily, and the containers will be ready to use again.