

# Tortoise Shell Scratcher

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## Description:

Now if you already weren't taking this blog seriously, reading an article called tortoise shell scratcher definitely won't help that. But after seeing many videos of tortoises having their shells scratched with various brushes, this is the best I



could come up with in order to facilitate that. Using a stiff brush that is secured to the height of the top of the tortoise's shell, this enrichment item allows a tortoise to fit underneath it and scratch its shell.

## Materials:

- About 6 feet of 2"x2" lumber or other scrap wood such as old 2"x4"s
- 2 scrap 1"x6" planks
- Screws
- Drill
- The stiffest old scrub brush head you can find

- Some rocks or other weights

## Building Steps:

1. Well the first step is the silliest step, your going to have to measure the tortoise your going to be making this for e.g. an African spurred tortoise is going to need a taller scratching toy then a star tortoise. So to do this your going to want to measure the tortoise when its standing up from the ground all the way to the top of its shell. You are also going to want to make sure the toy is wide enough for the tortoise to fit though.
2. Once you have this measurement you should minus about an inch or two from the height and this is going to be the height of your bristles. You then want to add the total height of the brush to this number and that will be the length of the two side pieces (legs) of the toy.
3. Once you have all of your measurements you are going to cut the length of the legs and the top rail.
4. You can't see from the picture above because they are buried in the dirt but there will need to be some feet on this back scratcher unless you want to secure it directly to the floor, for the feet I used some scrap 1"x6" planks, but plywood or other scrap pieces of wood will be fine. Cut these to a length that you think will give the toy enough stability, I've also placed rocks on these feet to give it extra stability.
5. Once the feet are cut you can screw the top rail to the legs and the legs to the feet. Then you can screw the brush head directly to the top rail. If you are using a plastic brush head I would recommend pre- drilling first.
6. This can easily be set up in an exhibit by placing it on a path used by the tortoises and placing the rocks or weights on the feet.

## Tips/ Comments

To get the tortoises to use the toy you may need to place their food on the other side of it and coax them though it.