

Anderson Shelters

Over the next few weeks you're going to build your own Anderson shelter. This afternoon I want you to research what an Anderson shelter was used for. Who had them and why? What would you need to keep in there and why? Make some notes in your book and complete the worksheet to help you.

You're not building your Anderson shelter today, however you may want to start collecting materials that you can use over the next few weeks.

The following slide, web site and power point should help with your research:

[http://
www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.u
k/war/shelters.htm](http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/war/shelters.htm)

The Anderson shelter was designed in 1938 by William Paterson and Oscar Carl Kerrison in response to a request from the Home Office. It was named after Sir John Anderson, who was responsible for preparing air-raid precautions immediately before the start of [World War II](#). See below for more information and Anderson shelter facts.

- Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain placed Sir John Anderson in charge of Air Raid Precautions in November 1938. Anderson then commissioned an engineer by the name of William Patterson to design and build a small, cheap shelter that people could have in their garden.
- The first 'Anderson' shelter was erected in 1939. It was built in a garden in Islington, London on 25 February, 1939.
- 1.5 million Anderson shelters were given to people before the start of World War 2. These shelters were distributed between February 1939 and the start of the war in September to people in areas that were expected to be bombed by the Luftwaffe.
- Throughout [WW1](#), another 2.1 million Anderson shelters were built.
- The shelters were given free to anybody who earned less than £250 a year. Anybody with a higher income could buy an Anderson shelter for £7.
- The construction of the shelters were quite simple. They were made from six curved panels of corrugated steel that were bolted together at the top. They had steel plates at either end, and measured 1.95m by 1.35m.
- Once they were built, the shelters were buried up to 1m into the ground. They would then have a thick layer of soil and turf heaped on top to keep them secure.
- The Anderson shelter was built to accommodate up to six people.
- The shelters were quite cramped for taller people. Somebody over 6ft would have found it difficult to fit inside comfortably.
- The Anderson shelter was incredibly strong. They were especially strong against a compressive force - for example the explosion of a nearby bomb - because of their corrugation.
- It was very cold inside the Anderson shelter. In fact, to try and prevent people from leaving their shelter to go back to their warmer homes at night, the Government issued some guidelines on how to make them warmer and more comfortable. The Morrison shelter was also developed to be used inside the home.
- People were expected to assemble their own shelters. Families would receive their shelter with an instruction guide and materials to put the Anderson shelter together.
- A lot of Anderson shelters still exist today. Many people dug up the shelters after the war and used them as garden sheds.
- Many families used to try and brighten up their shelters. They would often grow flowers and vegetables on the roof. One person actually wrote: "There is more danger of being hit by a vegetable marrow falling off the roof, than of being hit by a bomb!".
- Strategic German bombing of the UK from 1939-1945 killed around 50,000 people. UK attacks on German cities killed ten times as many people - around 500,000 - which shows just how effective the Anderson shelter was.
- A survey in November 1940 survey discovered that only 27% of Londoners used Anderson shelters. 9% slept in public shelters and 4% used underground railway stations. The remaining 60% of people were either on duty at night or slept in their own homes. They said that if they were going to die they would rather die in the comfort of their own home.