

Build a bear

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As a child, the things that make us happy are so simple. Whether it's a parent's attention or a mere stuffed animal, it sets our lives at peace and ensures us that everything is okay. I remember when I was a child and how important toys were to me. They'd be stuffed under my bed, behind the mini-blinds ...

I have to admit, I loved stuffed animals. You could tote them around anywhere, and no matter how filthy they got, you were still sleeping with them tonight. These days, stuffed animals have reached a new level of cool. You can actually build a bear, or rabbit or monkey for that matter, yourself. This is too ideal.

One day while strolling through the local mall with my family, I noticed a place called Build A Bear. At first I pondered the concept, then snatched up my little one to head in and check it out. My first thought was probably like many, why didn't they have this when I was a kid?

This is a great idea. Talk about being personal. You don't only pick out the animal of your choice, but you get to build it. This offers a certain personality to your stuffed toy. It's like no one else has ever held or touched it but you. You basically select an empty animal fur, then you get to help stuff it with cotton, and a cool little heart to make it seem more real. Build a bear is certainly a clever concept.

The process of building your own stuffed animal doesn't end with stitching it up. There are a variety of outfits to choose from for your special new friend. You can decide if it's going to be a girl or a boy. From dresses to overalls to shoes, you can choose. Another cool feature is the voice box you can put inside it. This way your build a bear friend can speak to you. Since this place started, a number of new animals have become available so my impression is that they are doing well. I've even seen other stores attempt to copy the build a bear idea, but that goes with the territory.

While Build A Bear is certainly a cool store, which I would have appreciated as a child, I'm afraid I shot myself in the foot when hauling my daughter inside. She now has a whole list of animals she wants to make. The bad thing is, I'm sure they will only continue to come up with new and appealing ideas, which means the list isn't even complete yet.