



Papier-mâché Mask

Here is an idea for a 3-D mask using newspaper and paste, a mixture which is known as papier-mâché.

Papier-mâché can take three or four days to dry, so make sure you make this mask well in advance if you want it for a party or for Halloween.

Make sure you cover your work surface before you begin. Wear old clothes and an apron - this can be a messy activity!



Equipment

1. A balloon (any colour!).
2. An old tray, such as a tea-tray.
3. Some wallpaper paste and water. You can buy wallpaper paste from any hardware store.
4. Some sticky tape, glue and a pair of scissors.
5. Lots of old newspapers.
6. A cardboard egg box (it doesn't matter for how many eggs: you'll only use part of it).
7. About one metre of elastic.
8. Some paint and paintbrushes. Poster paint or acrylic paint is best.
9. Some cotton wool.

Safety Stuff

Working with items such as scissors and staplers can be dangerous, so be very careful when you use them. Make sure that you never leave them open or lying around where smaller children can reach them. Be particularly careful when you are using the stapler.

Before starting to make any of the masks, cover the work surface you're going to use with some newspaper or an old cloth and make sure that you are wearing an apron or some old clothes. Glue can get everywhere!

When you've made your mask, remember that masks can make it difficult to see, so be especially careful when you're wearing it, especially near stairs. Running while wearing a mask isn't a good idea either!

Steps

Step One

Blow up the balloon so it is the same size as your head. Knot the end so no air can come out. Ask a friend to hold the balloon on its side on the tray, and then use four pieces of sticky tape to stick the balloon in place on the tray. This will hold the balloon still while you cover it with papier-mâché.

Tape the cone from an egg box in the middle of the balloon. This will form the nose for your mask.



Step Two

Now tear up an old newspaper into small pieces or strips.

In a bucket mix the wallpaper paste with water, as instructed on the packet, and dip the strips of newspaper in it. Make sure the paper is well covered with paste, but pull it through your fingers before you stick it onto the balloon (use rubber gloves).

Cover the balloon, including the nose, with at least five layers of the newspaper, making sure you use plenty of paste.



Step Three

Cover the top half of the balloon in this way, checking there are no bits of balloon showing through. Use plenty of newspaper and overlap all the layers carefully.

When you have finished, leave the balloon to dry in a warm, dry place. This may take three or four days, so be patient!

Step Four

When the mask is dry, remove the balloon. Hold the mask up in front of your face and mark the position of your eyes. Remove the mask and ask an adult to cut out the eye-holes for you.

Let an adult also make small holes in each side of the mask with a pair of sharp scissors. Measure how much elastic you will need to wear the mask, and thread it through each of the holes you have just made. Then tie the ends securely.



Step Five

Your mask is now ready to design a face on. You may want to make a witch, a monster, a clown or ... what else can you think of? Having chosen a character, paint on a face and then let the paint dry.

Use cotton wool to add hair and a beard to the mask. Stick it onto the mask with glue and wait for it to dry. You could also use other materials, such as wool, to add different features.

