

DIY MUMMY TUTORIAL

BY SARAH WHERRY FOR HALLOZWEEN



WHAT YOU NEED

- Chicken wire – 4 to 5 metres
- Garden stakes x 3 (you can use old broom sticks, or even a tiki torch)
- Plastic skull (does not need to be realistic)
- Old sheets/towels/pillowcases/fabric (for padding)
- Calico – 2 metres
- Cheesecloth/muslin – 2 metres
- Polyester wadding – 0.5 to 1 metre
- Heavy duty garden/work gloves – 1 pair
- Regular garden/work gloves – 1 pair
- Duct tape and wire and/or cable ties
- PVA glue
- Wire/tin snips
- Scissors
- Drill and heavy duty drill bit (to create hole in skull)

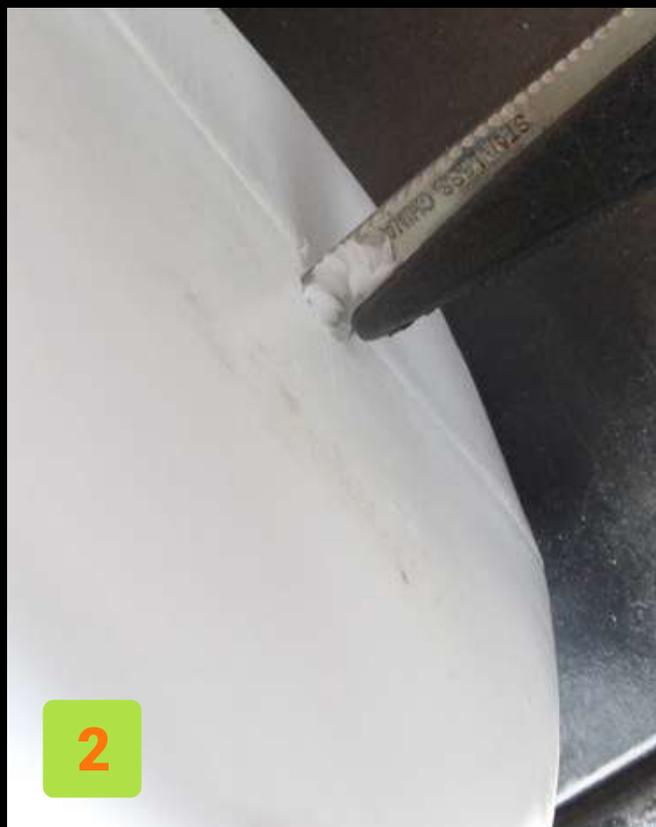


STEP 1:

1 I used an old bamboo tiki torch for this step because I had it lying around, however a regular garden stake will work just fine. My plastic skull you see in the photo was actually filled with lollies and it was very cheap. It works perfectly for this project as it doesn't need to be realistic, it just forms a base for the overall shape of the head. You'll need to create a hole in the base of it to allow it to sit on top of one of the garden stakes or poles you are using.

2 You'll find that most cheap plastic skulls have a very thick base which is very hard to get into. This was my first big build and being honest here, it never occurred to me to use a drill to create the hole. I used scissors and brute strength and it took well over 30 minutes. I have since realised you can use a drill with a heavy duty bit and you'll get your hole much, much quicker.

3 Make sure your pole or stake can fit snugly into the hole. You don't want it too loose, it's better to be a tight fit.



STEP 2



4 To make the body, you need to take your chicken wire and cut off around a metre or so. Roll it loosely to form a rough cylinder shape, then squeeze the top edges together to create shoulders, and push the bottom part in to form the skinnier hip section.



5 Place your head on a pole through the middle of the body shape, then using wire or cable ties, secure in place.

HINDSIGHT TIP

6 Use cable ties around the pole, pulling them super tightly, then secure your wire above that. Once you begin to form the arms and legs, if your body is not secured well to the neck it will slide down the pole and be eternally frustrating. Adding the 'bump' out of cable ties will prevent too much slippage further down the track.



STEP 3

7 To create the arms and legs, the process is the same as the body, but slightly smaller. Create a rough cylinder shape for each arm and leg, then attach to the body using wire or cable ties.

8 Your garden stake, or pole should sit inside one leg.



STEP 4

9 Use wadding to pad out the shoulder area. Place your wadding over the shoulders and use duct tape to secure it to the chicken wire.

10 Fill your regular gardening gloves with pillow stuffing or newspaper or whatever you have on hand. I had some leftover beanbag beans so I used those for his hands and feet. Once they are filled, tape to his wrist using duct tape.

11 Repeat that process in the heavy duty gloves for his feet. The reason for the heavy duty versus regular gloves is that you'll get a better hand vs foot ratio. Heavy duty gloves tend to be bigger and will sit flatter suiting the building of feet more than hands.



STEP 5

12 Here's where you start to fill out the rest of his body and he'll become much more 'mummy' shaped. Use old fabric, or pillow cases, sheets, towels, whatever you have to fill out his neck, and then his arms, legs, body and head. Save your calico and muslin/cheesecloth until step 6.

13 Cut the sheet/towel fabric into long strips, wrap the strips around the body parts.

14 Secure the ends using duct tape.



15 To pad out his fingers, cut small strips of sheet fabric, around an inch wide and wrap each finger individually, as if you were bandaging it. The feet can be wrapped as a solid block, not individual toes.



16 Continue wrapping strips of fabric around the body, arms and legs until you are happy with the size and shape. As you wrap, you can pull some areas tighter (like hips and wrists) to create skinnier regions. The internal chicken wire makes it very pliable. If you find your body is slipping, or doesn't feel quite secure enough, use the fabric strips to wrap between the legs, around the shoulders (like a mankini), and then up over the head, securing in place by firmly tying the fabric. Keep wrapping until you are happy.



16

HINDSIGHT TIP

Take your other 2 garden stakes or poles, and place one behind each leg after you've done a few wrapped layers. Wrap your sheet fabric around these poles from here on out. You won't see the poles once you've finished but your legs will be much more solid. Without this step I found our mummy tended to bend at his knees more than I wanted. I added poles exactly as I've suggested here a few years after initially creating him and it was perfect.



STEP 6

Once you've gotten the overall shape to where you want it, it's time to start the 'proper' wrapping.

17 Cut your calico and cheesecloth or muslin into strips about 2 inches wide (with some smaller 1 inch pieces for the fingers and hands). Instead of duct tape to secure these final layers of fabric, use glue. You can use hot glue, but I find a good water-resistant PVA such as Aquadhere to be much better at keeping things in place.



18 Wrap as if you were bandaging the body, head and limbs, using a dab of glue at the beginning of each fabric strip wrap, then a good amount of glue smeared over the ends to secure in place.



19 Repeat for the fingers and hands but using smaller strips.



20 The next step is to age him, because no mummy ever looks this white and clean! I took ours out to the front lawn (not sure what the neighbours thought!), and I poured strong coffee over him. You could use tea as well, but know that whatever you use, you'll need to leave him outside for a few days to dry thoroughly and air out the 'coffee' smell.

DISPLAYING YOUR MUMMY

21 Your mummy will need to lean up against something to stand up, but he should be stable enough that he won't slide down if you lean him against a wall. Because he is chicken wire, you have a lot of flexibility in terms of posing him. His arms will be relatively moveable, as will his legs to a certain extent.



22 We have a lot of fun each year putting our mummy (Ahk-Men-Rah) in various places. If you can rest his arm on the edge of a bench or dresser, or put him in a coffin, he becomes very stable and will happily spend the whole Halloween season in place.

