Prop Bodies

Here's an overview of several different types of animation mechanisms that are useful for haunted prop use. This is not all the possible mechanisms, not by a long shot - but its a start!

Reliability **Tips on Building Props**

REMEMBER

ALWAYS BE SAFE DESIGNING, BUILDING, AND USING ANIMATED PROPS
They have the potential to cause harm to yourself, family, pets, and anyone nearby.
Seriously, be very, very careful when building any animated prop!
NEVER place a prop where it could touch anyone when its moving. Its just not worth it.

-- DISCLAIMER --

Simple Prop Bodies

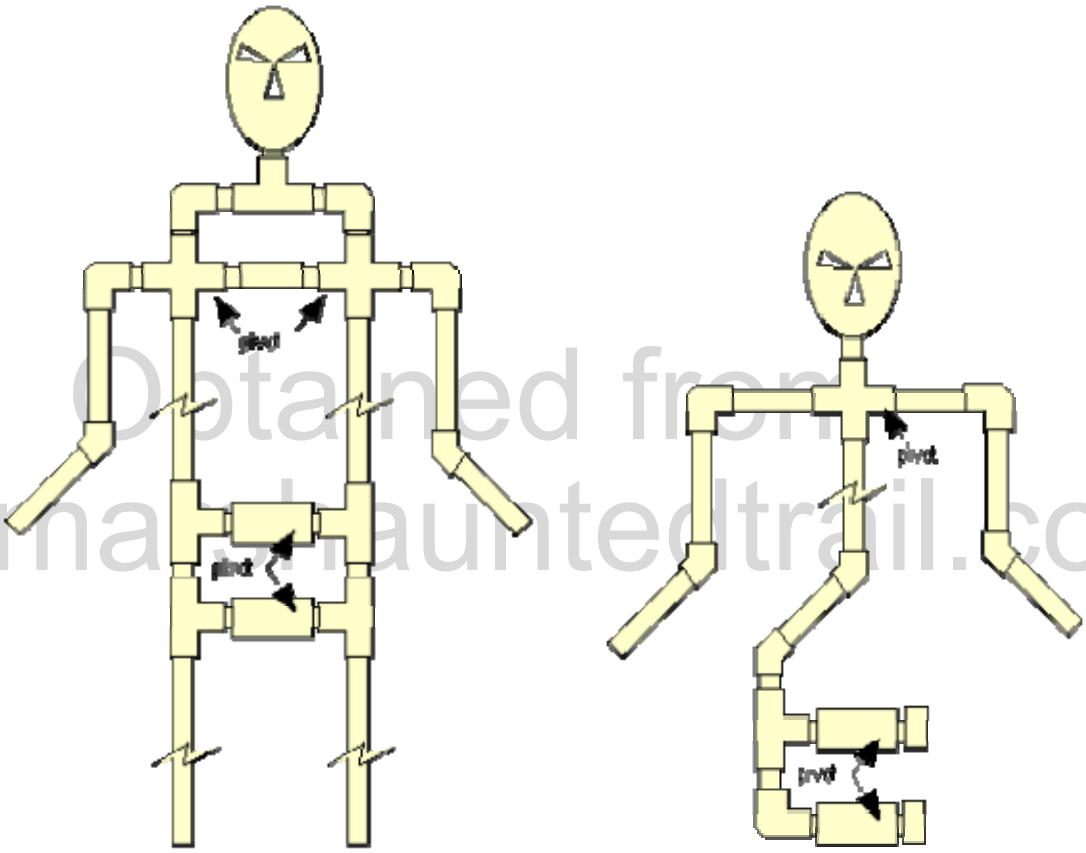
PVC pipe is a light, cheap alternative to using wood or metal frameworks for prop bodies. Using easily available fittings and pipe, you can prototype and finish a prop body in just a few minutes! See the Kicking Guy for a good example of a pvc body.

A styrofoam wig head makes a great base for your popup mask, and it comes with a hole that fits 1/2" - 3/4" PVC perfectly!
Attaching a wig head to PVC is easy:

- drill a few small holes in the PVC
- liberally apply construction adhesive to the pipe
- push the pipe into the wig head, let dry
- that's it!

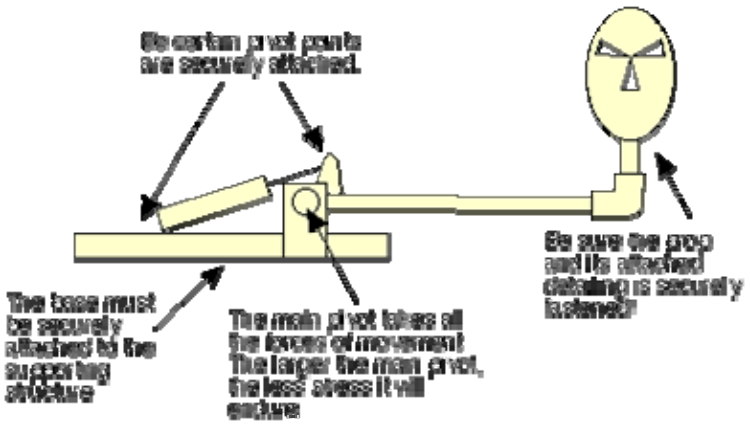
Pushing smaller diameter pipe through larger fittings lets you create pivot points so heads can turn, arms and legs can swing, and props can bend.

PVC pipe, Hightly Recommended!



Reliability

Here are simple, but easily overlooked points to consider when installing a popup. Remember, a popup must work reliably and **safely** for thousands of 'pops' or.. 'pop' goes the show!



Tips on Popup Building

Here's some pointers when building an animated prop.

Always, always remember to be safe first. If you can't, DON'T BUILD IT!!

- **Never** be Cheap over Safe.
  If you can't afford to do it safely, don't do it!
- Determine the effect you're after before you build.
- Always start with the scare!
  Work the scare as the center of your design process.
- Find the simplest mechanical design that will give the movement you're after.
  Always evaluate simple manually activated levers and simple pulleys as options.
  Your scare may not need pneumatics or hydraulics.
- Prototype the design using wood scrap and PVC pipe.
- Test your design for movement.
- Move the prototype by hand first!
- Look for signs of binding, seizing, or improper motion.
- Attach a pneumatic piston (if needed) and test at low air pressure (20 psi or less) first.
- Gradually increase pressure and continue to test.
- Look for signs of binding, seizing, or improper motion in your design.
- If, at any time, you find problems with the mechanism,
  STOP! Remove air pressure from the prop, and fix the problem.
- Do not use pvc levers with air pressures exceeding 70 psi!
  Pvc is a very sturdy material, but its still plastic, its not nearly as strong as metal.
- Using pvc pipe really simplifies the testing process.
  Its very easy to cut, attach, cut again, and re-attach until you get a popup that 'pops'.
- If your prototype works well, use it - go ahead and detail it for your needs.
- If you need to move a heavy prop, use steel tubing for your final popup design.
  Use your pvc prototype as a guide to cut and assemble your final metal popup.