



<http://demonware.horrorseek.com/scarecrow.html>

The Scarecrow

I saw a scarecrow that looked like this one in *Sleepy Hollow*. I was instantly captured by its amazingly simple and freakish looks. I had to have it, and as cheaply as possible. I was surprised how simple it was to make and how well it turned out. This is probably the most popular prop I have, and with good reason. I absolutely love it...



Materials & Tools

Required Materials

20 feet of PVC pipe
PVC Fittings: (2) tees, (2) 45° Angle, 2 straight
2 Yards of crinkled cotton (or other cheap material)
Fake Pumpkin
Sticks- 6 long ones for fingers, 6-8 short ones for ribs
Screws
Paint (to cover PVC)
Raffia (found at local craft store)
Wire
RIT Dye, 2 boxes of purple or black
5 Gallon Plastic Bucket

Optional Materials

Large cardboard box
Leaves
50 lbs of sand
Eye hooks
5ft 1/2 - 3/4 in metal pipe
PVC and connectors for stand

Tools

Hands
Drill/Dremel
Tool
Screwdriver
Hacksaw
Pliers
Staple
Gun
Black Water-based Marker
Fabric Shears

Obtained from
Omarshantedtrail.com

Step 1:

First figure out how tall you want your scarecrow to be and what color you want it. Mine was just over 8 feet tall and a deep purple. You also need to gather some leaves and sticks from your area. For the hands, long sticks that are curled at the ends are creepy, kinda like long knotty hands with long curled fingernails.

For the ribs take some shorter, thicker sticks. If you don't have any sticks in your area you may be able to fashion some out of heavy-duty wire and masking tape.



Step 2:

Take your fake pumpkin and with the black water-based marker, draw a scary face on it.

Put on your respirator and goggles, like with Styrofoam this stuff isn't pleasant either.

Now take the flat-ridged bit and set your Dremel router attachment to 1/16th of an inch. Cut out the face...

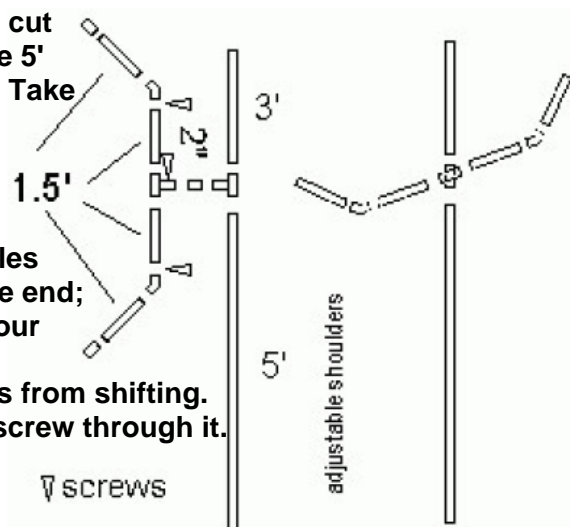
After that clean it up really well and put on a few coats of black acrylic paint.



Step 3:

Take one of your 10' long PVC pipes and cut it off at five feet. After that take one of the 5' sections and cut (2) 1.5' sections from it. Take the second 10' PVC pipe and cut it at the following measurements: 3' and (4) 1.5' sections. The other sections can be used on the headless horseman!

Take your drill or Dremel tool and cut holes along the five-foot pipe two feet from one end; these holes will be where you position your ribs. Then assemble in the order listed: The screws are in place to keep the joints from shifting. Drill a hole through the joint, then run a screw through it.



IMPORTANT NOTE:

The 5 ft of PVC that make up the body allows the scarecrow to flex and bob. This makes him more difficult to use, requiring his arms to be wired up to something stable. This 5 ft section can be substituted with a metal pipe that will cure the scarecrow of his aforementioned problems.

Step 4:

Disassemble the PVC pipe and paint it black or brown.

Step 5:

Reassemble the PVC pipes and gather your sticks and raffia for the ribs. Put a screw in a hole you've drilled and place a stick on top of it. Take a piece of raffia and wrap it around the stick and PVC. When you reach the end tie them together and run another piece, making sure to cover the screws. After it looks authentic, work on all the other ribs.

To do the hands take one of the straight fittings and hold it in your hand, as if holding a broom. Take a black marker and mark dots on either side of your middle finger.

Drill those holes with a bit smaller than the screws you are using. Take a screwdriver and run the screws into the holes leaving about half an inch sticking out.



Take your wire and cut off a couple feet. Now take three of the long finger sticks that will make one of the hands and hold one between each of your finger about 4-5 inches from the end. Start to wrap the wire around the end, pulling tighter and tighter. When finished shove the end in between one of the fingers.

Now place the hand over the connector fitting with the middle finger resting between the two screws. Now cut off more wire and secure the hand tightly to the fitting.

Cover that up good with raffia, letting some of it hang low and tada! A creepy-spooky hand. Now make the other one.

Step 6:

Dye! Crinkled Cotton Dye! Follow instructions included on package. Take your large five-gallon bucket outside and fill it up 3/4 of the way with water. Empty both packages of the RIT Dye and mix them in with the water. Put your crinkled cotton in it and let it soak awhile. Later, squish it and move it to make sure it gets dyed well. Pull it out, wring it, and put it back in a couple of times before wringing it out. Now run it through your washer in the rinse cycle a couple times until the water comes out clear. Then hang it out to air dry. Dump the water into the washer or down the toilet. (Read instructions for disposal)

Step 7:

Take your Dremel tool or a pumpkin carving saw and cut a hole in the bottom of the pumpkin about 1/4 in. wider than the PVC pipe. Make sure the pumpkin head fits kinda loose over the top of the PVC. Now take raffia, pile it over the top of the PVC, and hold it in place with rubber bands, this will give you a nice neck. Take the lid from your bucket and cut a hole in the center of it wide enough for your PVC pipe to fit through. Take your bucket, place it where you want your scarecrow to be.

Chances are that the scarecrow will be too top heavy so the way I dealt with this was to place the bucket on a board, put an eye hook in the end, and run wires up to the joints in both arms.

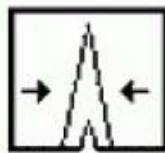
Pull the wires fairly tight and this will keep the scarecrow from tipping over. Anyway, back to the bucket, dump the 50 lbs of sand into it. Buckle the lid to it and place your scarecrow into it, wiggling it down as far as you can get it to go.



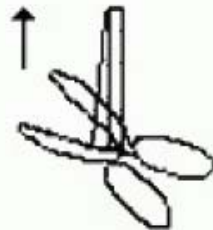
Get out a ladder or stepstool and attach the hands. Take a drill and drill a hole through the connector and through the PVC in the arm, then run a screw through it to keep the hands from falling over, do this to the other hand too. Put the pumpkin head on top and adjust till the scarecrow till he looks right.

Step 8:

Take your material and cut it in half so you have (2) 1-yard lengths of material. Drape them over the arms and adjust how you want them to fit. I brought my material down about 1/3 of the way on the front side. Wire the ends of the material down to the joints and sew a couple knots in the back where they meet to make it look like one piece of material. Now for the fun part :)



pinch up material at the bottom



Cut in short strokes upward



You end up with this...

Cutting the material can be a pain to make it look real, but I found a useful technique while doing this that works out nice! Pinch up the material and cut in short strokes working your way in and you get a nice, ripped cut. Cut out some odd shapes that let parts hang and cut holes in it. You can also pitch your clippers towards it and snip at it when you hit the material, this will give it more good cuts. Make every cut original and your scarecrow will be awesome!

Step 9:

That ugly bucket sticks out so cut up a box to make a skirt for the bucket. Then staple a BUNCH of leaves to it. Fit it around the bucket and pile leaves on top of that so it looks like the scarecrow is in a mound of leaves.

Some touches you may want to add can be an oscillating fan to make him move a little, or a strobe light to make him look really....WoW! Good Luck, this is my favorite prop!



Step 10:

Optional Materials

20 ft PVC - 3/4 in

2 cross-shaped connectors

(4) elbow connectors

(4) 45° connectors

(1) straight connector

In 2002 after we had moved to Connecticut I needed to replace the bucket, which I had discarded before the move. I set out to build a functional 4-legged stand from PVC. Our first job is to take one of the cross connectors and drill or dremel a 3/4 in hole through the center of one side, make sure you can fit a piece of PVC into it. The bottom of the frame consists of a cross shaped piece with 4 - 1 1/2 ft lengths of PVC coming out of it.



To create an angled joint of 45° we take an elbow piece, insert a small 1 1/2 in piece into it and place on a 45 to create our angle. Four of those pieces are made and attached to the ends of the 1 1/2 ft lengths of PVC. Then we cut 4 lengths of ~2 ft (cut them with an extra inch) and stick those into the angles pieces we previously made. Now take the other cross connector and cut a 3/4 in hole through the center of both sides and make sure that you can easily slip a piece of PVC through it. Now connect the 2ft length to the cross piece using some pieces and short lengths of PVC.

Now what is left to do is cut a 1 ft length, attach the straight connector at one end and place it in the bottom cross. This allows the scarecrow to be run through the top cross connector and is inserted into the straight connector, giving you a way to attach you scarecrow the base, and it adds another foot to his height.

The Completed Scarecrow



Obtained from
Omarshauntedtrail.com