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Ghoulishly Easy Arms How-To

I wanted to make a set of arms that would be extremely easy for beginner prop-makers. These were not made specifically FOR any prop...but the opposite actually happened. After seeing how well they turned out, I had to find a body to attach them to.

Note: Out of curiosity, I first taped everything together without using ANY wire. I wanted to see if JUST the bags and tape would work. Wasn't pleased...too floppy! I knew too that the latex window caulk would add even more weight so the wire had to be added for support.

Materials:

- Plastic bags
- Masking Tape
- Clothes Hanger Wire (for arm)
- Thin Wire (for fingers)
- Latex Window Caulk
- Fake Fingernails
- Styrofoam Scraps
- Paint (water-based)
- Primer (water-based)

Tools:

- Wire Cutters or Bolt Cutters
- Hot Glue Gun



Step 1: Take the 5 plastic bags and tie them together with the thin wire as shown here. If you want your arm and fingers to be thicker just use more bags.



Step 2: Beginning at the tied end, wrap the entire arm with masking tape as shown in Figure 2. Don't wrap the bags handles. Those will become the fingers and hand.

Step 3: Now wrap the individual fingers using two handles per finger. Then take another plastic bag, wad it up (where the hand and palm should be) and secure it with a layer of masking tape.



Step 4: Push the Clothes Hanger Wire into the arm until it was almost to the base of the fingers. (There's a risk of getting gouged if the wire punctures the masking tape...so be careful.) Leave enough of the wire protruding to make a temporary 'hook' so you can hang them up to dry. Then bend the wire at the elbow and wrist as shown in Figure 3.



Step 5: Take the thinner wire and insert it into the fingertips until it's well into the hand area. I used the side of my wire cutters to finish pushing the wire into the fingertip. Bend the fingers where the joints should be as shown in Figure 4.

Step 6: Create gnarly knuckles and arthritic finger joints with the bits of Styrofoam and secure with the masking tape as shown in Figure 4. Also any ridges

on the back of the hand can be done the same way. At this point, I put another layer of masking tape.



Step 7: Hot glue the fake fingernails on.

Step 8: Smear on the Latex Window Caulk to give it a 'skin' and let it dry completely.

Step 9: Paint with the water-based Primer and let dry. Basecoat with your color of choice and let dry.

Step 10: Give the knuckles and the back of the hand some 'shadow detailing' with a darker color as shown in Figure 5 and let dry.

All that's left now is to snip off that temporary 'hook' and you're done!

Below is a photo of Edgar the Ghoul. In a future How-to, I'll explain how he's put together.

