



HowlHaunter's Workshop

<http://home.comcast.net/~pumpkin1000/props/candleabra.htm>



Scary Candelabra

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If you are not comfortable with electrical work outdoors...don't attempt this prop. Or simply make it with no electricity! Your risk and your responsibility!

I wanted two scary candelabras on either side of my front door for my home haunt. Obviously, modified indoor fixtures won't work for this. Instead, I used the home haunter's friend...PVC pipe...and some C7 outdoor Christmas lights...to make it outdoor friendly. You can't use indoor "flicker" bulbs for this! Bulbs only rated for indoor use shatter when hit by rain. Dangerous. Don't even try it.

I saw another Web site that showed how to use PVC pipe to create the upright stems. The method involved boiling the pipe in water to make the curves. Well, great idea...but why do that when you can get exactly what you need for 50 cents a piece right off the shelf? And they are all exactly the same bend and length. No boiling water needed. It's the widely available gray conduit 90 degree bend pipe. You'll need 8 of these. \$4 total for them all. Cheap.

Obtained from
Omarshauntedtrail.com

I wanted a way to be able to store these candelabras later, so I designed it with a PVC collar that can be attached to any length PVC pipe you want (I used a 1.5" collar to make it easier to attach the "Tee" connection.

You'll want to buy eight "fender" washers with a 1/2" hole in the middle to make the candle "holders". About \$2 for eight of them at any hardware store.

I bought a \$4 C7 light set and snipped off 8 separate lights with an attached wire (with it unplugged!). On each socket, I snipped one wire piece close and covered it with electrical tape. I soldered (and taped) a "pigtail" extension wire to each socket wire to allow it to be fished through the conduit. Then, I mounted the socket inside 3" sections of 1" PVC pipe. Used epoxy to hold the socket in place just under the top lip of the pipe.

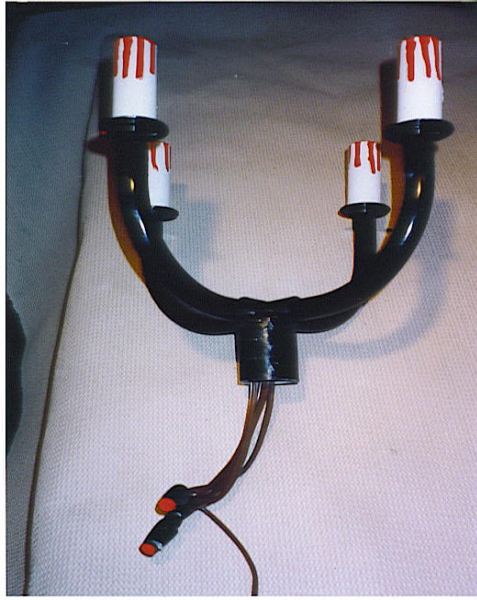


Here's a picture of all the components:

Drill a hole in the middle of the the PVC Tee big enough to let 4 wire pairs to pass through. This hole faces down. The PVC Tee was then mounted to the 1.5" collar by doing some Dremel work to allow the curves to fit. Then, JB Weld to the rescue. Smear it around the junction of the two PVC components to cover the gaps. Smooth it out when done. This stuff bonds like steel.

I mounted the fender washers to the top of the conduit with epoxy and let that dry overnight. A couple of quick swabs of PVC glue on the bottom of the conduit to mount the four upright stems. I then painted the whole bottom assembly with black "made for plastic" spray paint. Instead of mounting them exactly upright as I did, you may want to mount them "cockeyed" to make them look old and beat up...or to just look odd. Your choice.

I then painted the eight candle sockets with white "made for plastic" spray paint. Then, it's time to assemble the whole thing. Epoxy the candle to the tops of the fender washers. You have to fish the wire down through the washer, through the conduit, and the tee. I used a pair of needle nose pliers to pull the wires through.



You can then connect up the pigtails into one wire that can be connected later. How to do this? Just twist one wire from each socket wire pair---into a four wire connection. Then, connect one wire from your main extension pigtail into this. You now have five wires twisted together. To hold them together without soldering, use a big wire nut to safely keep them connected. Then, do the same deal on other socket wires and the main pigtail. Then, wrap each wire nut with electrical tape. You can see that in the photo.



For a great finishing touch, I used red "fast dry" enamel paint to simulate wax drippings (well, really to simulate blood). It looks great. Forget hot glue or silicon caulk for this. This paint works great...just put a drop at regular intervals at the top of each candle..and let gravity drip it down. I let the red paint splatter in drops on the tops of the washers too. oohh...scary! :-)



Here's the view of the finished candelabra

I found some gold C7 bulbs that look great for this prop. I didn't like the full brightness of the bulbs, so I plan to use my flicker box on them, or just put a inline diode to effectively cut the light output by half.

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UPDATE: I found some cheap styrofoam skulls at WalMart during October...that actually look quite realistic. I poked some holes in the top and bottom to run a tie wrap through...and added some epoxy to the bottom to hold it in place. Take a look at the results. Nice! The yellow glow from the lights really highlight it outside.

HAPPY HAUNTING!

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