

# Death Appeal

<http://www.deathappeal.com/>

## BUCKY SKULL

There seems to be tons of ways to make the Bucky Skulls weathered, aged, corpsed and any another twisted ways you can think of. This just happens to be the way I did mine. Like a lot of other people, I got my ideas from looking at others pages. Here is a list of what I used to create my Bucky.

- 1) Minwax Early American 230
- 2) Minwax Dark Walnut 2716
- 3) Devcon Weldit All Purpose Adhesive
- 4) DAP Joint Compound
- 5) Cotton Balls
- 6) Water Color Paint Brush
- 7) White Spray Paint
- 8) Latex gloves

The first thing I did was to strip all the hardware off Bucky. Take the little screws, clips and springs off to include the ones that hold his jaw. You can throw those away or store them for another project but you won't need them for this one. Most of the skulls I got had two basic problems and both can be cured pretty easy. The first on is the jaw usually doesn't fit correctly. I don't have before and after pictures of that process but the next time I'll be sure to get some but all I did was put the jaw in a vise and squeeze it together so that is was about the right setting to fit in the skull correctly. I then took a torch and just heated up the jaw so it would retain the new shape. It doesn't take much heat to do this and if you don't have a torch I understand you can use hot water to soften it up and bend it back into shape.

Once you have the jaw so it will fit correctly I took some epoxy and glued it into place. I used some Devcon Weldit I got from Wal-Mart. It worked fine for this application. Once it set I was ready for the next correction....the skull cap.

Most of the skull caps have either large gaps, over hangs or are just plain out of shape. Instead of using heat to put these back into shape I used joint compound.



As you can see from the photo I filled in the gap with joint compound. I didn't glue the skull cap because I found the joint compound held the cap in place although you could glue it prior to applying the compound. Don't cake it on the skull cap, just put some on your fingers and start working around the skull filling in the gap.

This will most likely take about 3 coats of compound to get it to the point where you can't really tell there was a gap.



After the first coat dries, take some sand paper and start sanding. Don't apply a lot of pressure because you are not trying to remove the compound down to the skull, but in fact you want to feather it so it's high on the seam and low on the upper and lower parts of the compound. This will cause the gap to be filled and then edges to sort of blend in with the rest of the skull.



If you apply too much compound, you can sand it down but if you don't you will probably see a bulbous bead all the way around the skull. Apply additional coats of compound as needed but sand every coat. Again, I found 3 coats usually worked fine and I had a few skulls that were really messed up. While you are doing this, apply a bit of compound in the holes where the springs were connected to the jaw.



After you have sanded the last coat you want to paint the skull. I've had skulls in several colors from gray, white, and some sort of other off white. I wanted a good base of solid white to work with.

Again, I used some cheap white paint I got from Wal-Mart. I usually applied 3 coats because I wanted the whole skull white when I started. Make sure you paint under the skull and behind the jaw. Once it is dry it's time to go on to the next step.



You could really leave the skull white but I wanted to age it and give it a better look.



I used two colors of stain. Basically a light (Minwax Early American 230) and dark (Minwax Dark Walnut 2716). I took cotton balls and one of those cheap water color paint brushes and went to work.



I put on some latex gloves and dipped a cotton ball into the light stain and started blotting it on. You will probably get some air bubbles but you can just blow on those and they will pop. Keep blotting to cover the whole skull except the teeth.

Pick up the skull and blot under the skull and behind the jaw. Stick a cotton ball with stain into the eye socket and push lightly.

Remember you don't want a even coat but more of an uneven coat. Use the brush to get into the hard to get areas. You don't want the stain dripping off the skull but just want to coat the skull lightly. Again, try not to get the teeth...yet and the brush will help you get close to the teeth.

All three photos are the same and the skull is not that dark. The third photo is more like the skull after the first light coat of stain but my basement is so dark the pictures don't show up well with normal light or a flash.

Once the first coat is dry you can apply the second coat of darker stain. Again they are all the same skull but the last two I used a flash.



I did the teeth last but you could do them after the first coat. In my opinion it was easier to get the right color when the whole skull was finished.



For the teeth you go back to the light stain and use the brush and apply it to the teeth. If you feel it is too dark, take a cotton ball and pat the heavy areas until you get to the shade you want. I wanted the teeth to be a bit lighter than the first coat but you can make it darker if you want.



After the final coat for the teeth and skull have dried, I sprayed on some clear coat finish. The stain already has a shine which is evident from the photos but the clear coat seals it in and since I was going to use these outside on a lamp post I didn't care about the shine.



Drying time was about a day between coats so this is not a one day project unless you want to rush it.



I've read where some people that use the stain put it on and wipe it off but I let mine stay and dry. The last 3 photos are the finished product. I was very pleased with the results and have done several skulls like this.

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