

# The Garage of Terror

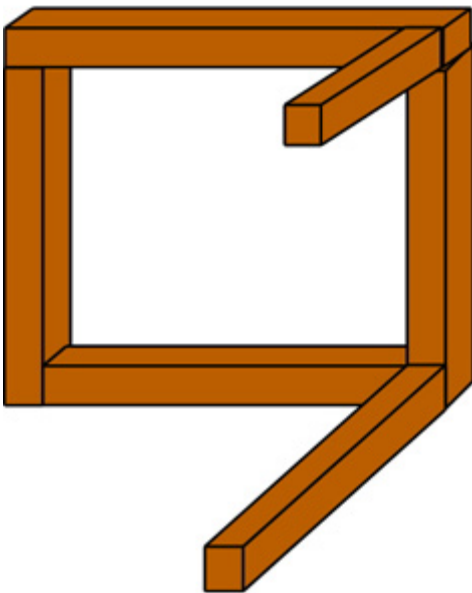
<http://www.garageofterror.com/spider1.html>

## 2005, How to Make a Giant Spider



To start, you will need to make a well. To make the bricks, I created several wooden frames from 1.5 x 3/4" boards from Home Depot as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1



I cut and glued cardboard to the frame. The front of the frame was 1.5 feet by 1 foot.

There is no need to create a complete box with the frame, just the front, top and parts of two sides.

Make a mixture of water, flour, Elmer's glue and decomposed granite or other rocky soil. I used 3 cups water to one cup flour to one medium-sized bottle of glue to one handful of dirt.

The dirt/granite gives texture. You might play with the components to get the right consistency.

Now, dip paper towels or newspaper in the mixture and cover the cardboard panels. Once dry, paint with a stone-colored spray paint.

I made two layers of bricks and used a stiff needle and thread to attach the bricks together.

Obtained from  
Omarshauntedtrail.com

I made the well into a semicircle that was four feet in diameter and two feet high. Use a misting of flat black spray paint along the edges of the bricks to add realism.

I wanted fog to raise up from the well, so I placed a small stool in the center, then covered the top of the well with a loose-fitting sheet of black painter's tarp (but attached it from the inside so it was not visible). I placed a pot of water on the (covered) stool and put in a Mist Maker from mainlandmart.com. The purpose of the plastic tarp is to help hold up the mist so that it spills out over the top of the well. The Mist Maker is not powerful enough to fill the well so the plastic is necessary for the effect.



For the back of the well, I painted a 4 foot by 6 foot foam board panel (Home Depot again) which I attached to a frame made of two by four boards.

I needed the support of a heavy wood frame because I hung a two-way mirror above the well. This way, I could hide behind the wall to operate the spider and still easily see the kids.

I bought that mirror at Spencer's Gifts on November 1 a couple of years ago at a big discount. It was not a two way however.

So, I looked up a glass house in the yellow pages and asked them the custom build a 12" round two-way mirror. That cost me, surprisingly, only \$15. Well worth it.



Sorry for the after-the-fact pictures here. To make the spider's head, I got a large sheet of styrofoam, cut it up and glued the pieces together into approximately the shape I wanted.

After the glue dried, I used a knife to smooth off the sharp corners a bit. Note of caution, shaving styrofoam makes a big mess. I did the same for each mandible.



I worked on the mandibles first. After shaping the styrofoam, I covered it with a thin layer of paper mache (water, glue, a little flour and newspaper).

This allows for a smooth, paintable surface. I thought about gluing fur onto the mandibles but I decided that if I put fur on those, I would have to make the whole thing hairy.

I made the fangs out of Skulpey sculptor's plastic (available at art shops). I incorporated a section of coat hanger wire into the fang to help attach it to the mandible. Some glue and paint and the mandibles are ready for the main head.

I glued the mandibles to the main head, then covered the head with Great Stuff spray foam. After the foam dried, I carved out holes for the eye sockets. I used Skulpey for the small eyes and styrofoam balls for the larger ones. After attaching the eyes, I gave it another layer of spray foam.



I painted the base green and black then striped it with fluorescent orange. The eyes I made fluorescent yellow. Your done. "But wait," you say. "What about those legs?" That is next.







The legs were made from PVC pipe and masking tape. I used Skulpey again for the hook at the end of the legs.

I bought several different sizes of PVC pipe so that I could make the back legs larger than the front legs.



I made legs with two joints so I used three different diameters pipe for each leg.

Using a hacksaw, I cut out a 2" wedge from one end of the largest diameter pipe. I then drilled holes through the remaining flap and a couple more through the very end of the smaller pipe.

I attached the two pipe ends with a small bolt as shown above. If done properly, the joint will flex freely.



I then covered the joint with 2" masking tape (Home Depot, painter's area) and repeated the process for the next joint.

I finished the leg by attaching a Skulpey hook foot and painting with glossy black and fluorescent orange spray paint.

I had to use a couple of coats as the paint crazed on the surface of the PVC pipe. Maybe I should have used a primer coat.

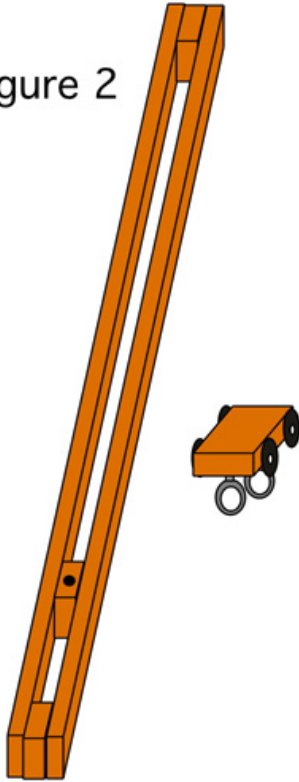


I attached the legs to the inside of the well with a bolt so that the leg could move freely.

I then used fishing line at the first joint to hold the legs in an upright position. I will not go into detail, but I actually set the legs up with a flying crank ghost mechanism similar to the one described at [softlyspokenmagic spells.com](http://softlyspokenmagic spells.com).

Now all that is left is to turn the spider into a marionette puppet.

Figure 2



There is certainly room for improvement with this design but it worked fine.

As shown in Figure 2, make a track using two 8' long 1.5" x 3/4" wooden studs (Home Depot) and attach them with three pieces of wood as shown so that they are 3/4" apart.

The first two attachments are about 1.5 feet apart. Drill a large hole all the way through the middle brace as your swivel pin will go through here.

Make a small car with a small piece of the same 1.5" x 3/4" wood (oriented broad-side facing the floor) and attach four wheels to it (Home Depot sells small plastic wheels in the sliding door section).

Attach two small screw eyes to the bottom of the car. These should fit between the gap in the wood brace without touching but try to make it a close fit. This will help keep the car on the track.

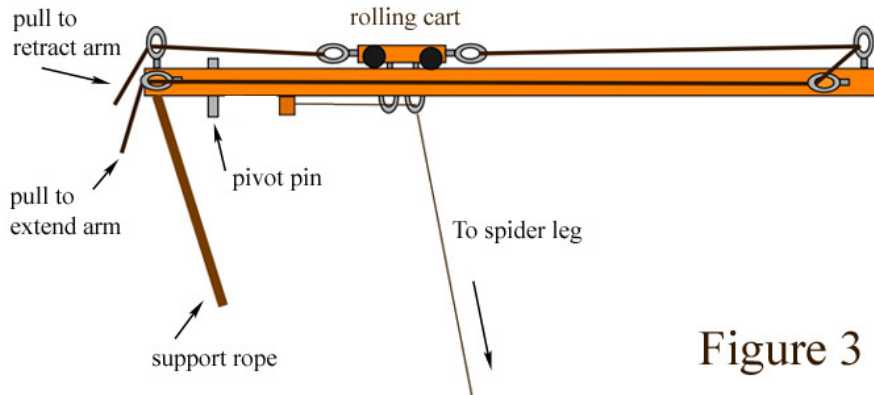
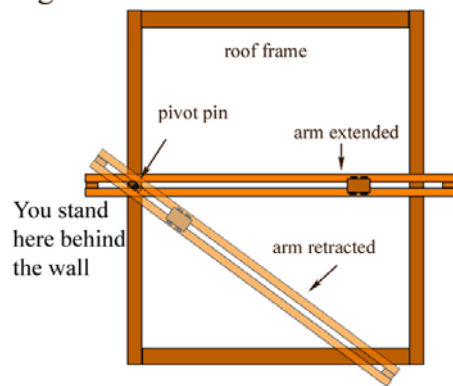


Figure 3

Now attach two more screw-eyes to the car (one in front and one in back) and four screw-eyes on the track as shown. It is best if you paint the track black. Tie some black string to the car as shown.

Figure 4



Drive a bolt through the roof frame (the top frame of the room the spider is in) and place the hole in the track through the pin.

The room should be small enough that the track can not fall down into the room. You can attach a support rope to the short end for safety (since this is above the kids, you don't want anything crashing down because something broke when the kid grabbed the basket of candy and yanked).



You are now ready to attach the fishing line to the spider. You will get a better reach if you attach the line a couple of feet from the end of the leg rather than at the foot (as shown below). You are now ready to operate your spider.

Pull down on the short end of the track to lift the other end a few inches off the roof frame. You can then pivot the track over to the kids. Pull on one string to extend the arm and the other string to retract it.

Get ready to yell at the kids when they get grabby. I put just enough candy in the basket for one piece each (letting just a few kids in at a time) and filled it between batches of kids. Since this was under black light, I got candy with glow-in-the-dark wrappers so that the candy would be easier to see.