

Paper Mache Maracas



Materials

*Two wooden dowels, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter
And 10 inches long
Fine sandpaper
Wood stain or paint
Polyurethane
Two medium size balloons
Two safety pins
Newspapers
White Flour
White glue
Water
Beads or pebbles
Strong goopey glue
Cloth or leather trim
Colorful paint*

Procedure:

1. Fill the balloons with air so they are the right size for your maracas. Tie the end. They may be as big or small as you wish. The bigger they are, the harder they are to handle, and they won't necessarily sound any better. I like to make my maracas the size of a small grapefruit.
2. Cut up strips of newspaper. Mix the paper Mache paste; two parts flour, two parts water, one part glue.
3. Dip the strips of newspaper in the mache mixture and cover the balloon with them. Do not cover the end of the balloon where you

tyed the knot. Leave an opening just about the size of a quarter. Try to keep the newspaper as flat and smooth as you can. You will need to put at least five layers of newspaper over the whole balloon.

4. Put the safety pin in the end of the balloon where you have left over after the knot. (Not through the paper mache, you don't want to pop it!) Hang the balloon from a string hung like a clothesline where it can dangle freely. This will probably drip, so watch what it's hanging over, you might want to put down a towel.

5. Do the same to the other balloon.

6. Sand the dowels smooth and coat them with a wood stain or paint. When this is dry, cover them with a coat of polyurethane to protect them and make them nice and shiny!

7. When the balloons are dry, probably three days after you paper mache them, take them down and pop the balloons while holding on to the safety pin. Now you should be able to wiggle the deflated balloon out easily.

8. Put a strong goopy glue on one end of the dowel and push it straight through the opening to the other side. You may nail this in place from the outside of the ball, but patience with the glue will work well too.

9. Put a handful of beads, pebbles or something into the ball to rattle.

10. Mix up more paper mache and use newspaper strips to seal the handle into the paper mache ball and cover the opening securely.

11. When this is dry, paint and decorate to your own creative desires. I like to cover the handle with painter's tape and spray paint the ball of the maraca first, the add details. You can even glue on baubles and sparkles if you want.

12. When the paint is dry, use some more strong goopey glue to attach a piece of cloth or leather trim over the part where the paper mache covers the handle. It will make your handle look much more finished.