

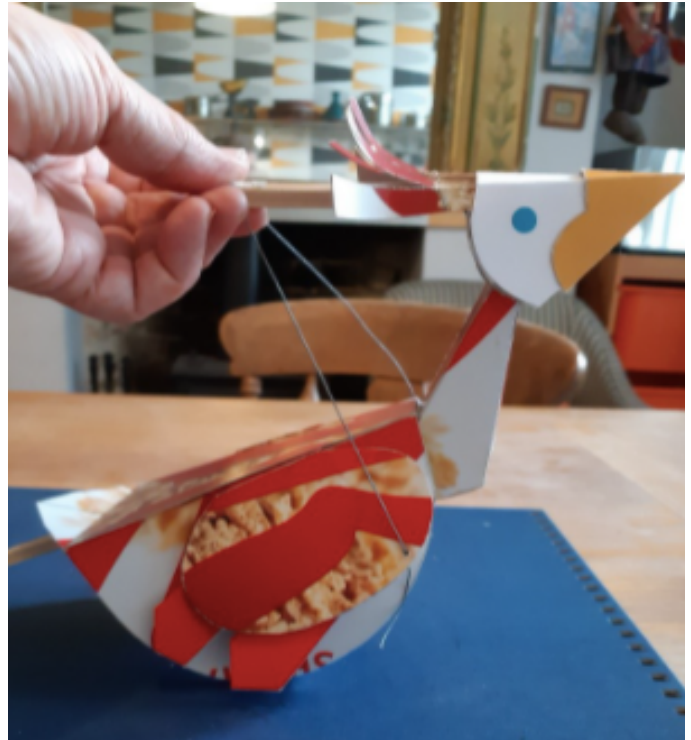
# How to make... a cereal box chicken puppet

By Peter O'Rourke, Little Angel Theatre  
Suitable for ages 8 - 11 independent working

Make this fun chicken puppet from a simple cereal box!

## You will need:

- 20cm of 2.5cm wide webbing, and 36cm of 2cm wide webbing. If you can't get this, you can use strips of cloth instead
- 2 or 3 cereal boxes depending on your design choices.
- 2 to 6 flat lolly sticks
- 8mm round sticky labels (optional)
- Strong thread
- Clear adhesive (for example Uhu or Bostik)
- PVA or wood glue (optional, as you could use the clear adhesive if you don't have any)
- Masking tape



## You will also need:

- A sharp pencil
- A pair of scissors
- A craft knife or Stanley knife (optional)
- Clothes pegs or mini clamps
- A drill with a 1mm drill bit (optional) or something else such as a drawing pin, a pair of compasses or a bradawl to make 2 small holes

## Instructions

### Preparation:

The lolly sticks are for the two handles attached to the head and the tail of the puppet. Lolly sticks aren't particularly strong, gluing layers of them together will make them stronger. Spread wood glue or PVA on the flat surface of one stick then place another on top and clamp them together with clothes pegs. For real strength, repeat the process with a third stick. Repeat again for the second handle. (Picture 1)



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This process is called laminating and we will be using this method with the cereal boxes too.

This package provides you with a number of “templates”. These will give you all the shapes you need to build your chicken from cereal boxes. Cereal boxes are printed with bold designs in bright, cheerful colours, so there’s no need to use paint. The colour of your chicken will depend on which cereal boxes use; so, a chicken made from Cheerio boxes will look really different from one made from Bran Flakes.



There are three kinds of line used in these template drawings: the first kind is an unbroken solid line and is used to mark out the outline of each shape to be cut out. The second kind is a line made of regularly spaced dashes and shows where you will need to bend the card. The third kind of line uses long and short dashes. In some cases, you will need to cut along this line, but not always. If this seems a bit confusing, don’t worry it will become clearer as we proceed.

Template A is for the chicken’s body.

Prise open the joins of your first cereal box so that it can be lain out flat. Cut out template A then carefully draw round it twice: once on the unprinted side of the box and once on the printed side.



With a pair of scissors, cut out both of these shapes.

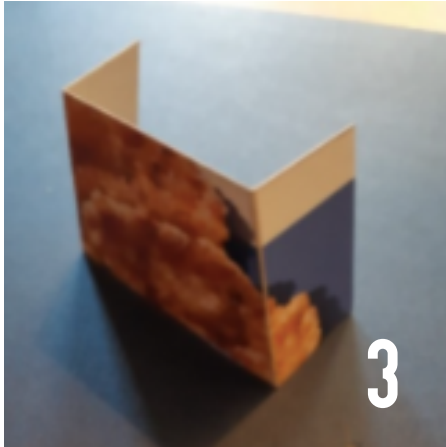
Next, draw the lines indicated with an x on the templates, on the “upper” side of each of your shapes. Then flip the shapes over and mark the lines indicated with a y on the other side. Take a ruler and a craft knife and gently score, not too deeply, along these lines. This is to help you bend the card.

If you are unconfident about using a craft knife for any reason, use a dinner knife from your cutlery draw instead. You don’t want to cut through the card, so an indentation made with the dinner knife will be just as effective.

ALWAYS score the line on the side of the card that you want to bend away from. Look carefully at the photograph and you will see that what will become the chicken’s tail bends up, while the sides of its body bend down. This explains why lines x and y are marked on opposite faces of the card to each other (picture3)

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Next, take template B, draw round it just once and cut it out with scissors. Then, on the printed side draw in the lines indicated with an x on the template. Then score along these lines and fold them over



Now take the first of the two body shapes A (the one with the unprinted side showing) and glue shape B into place using clothes pegs to clamp it in place until the glue dries. (picture 4)



We want to fit the second shape A over the first and glue it in place, but because both shapes are the same, the fit will be too tight. So, we need to make a slight adjustment.

Take the second shape A and cut it down the middle (line marked Z on the template) You now have two halves that are easier to align and you can do one at a time. (pictures 5 and 6)



Next, cut out template C and draw round it 3 times, then flip it over and draw round it three more times, all on the same side of the card. Then cut them out with scissors. (picture 7)



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Select two of these C shapes to be opposite wings with the print side facing up. Take two more shapes and glue one of these to each underside of the first two. It doesn't matter, which way their printed side is facing, but make sure that, when the time comes, the two remaining shapes can be glued with the printed side facing out (picture 8)



Cut out templates D and E and draw round each of them, three times with one side of the template facing up and three times with the other side facing up. Cut all of them out and put in groups of 3 stacked so that the top and bottom ones will have the printed side showing when glued together. Then glue them together. (picture 9)

*(Handy tip: with each group spread glue on the first layer, put the second layer on top of this, then spread glue on this second layer before putting the third layer in place) then put to one side with the two remaining wing pieces*

Next, cut out template F and draw round it twice on the cereal box card. Cut out them out and score the lines marked x and fold (picture 10)

This will be the head. When the eyes are stuck on you want them to read clearly, so, choose a fairly plain part of the printing on the box for the top layer.

Glue these layers together and clamp with clothes pegs till the glue is set



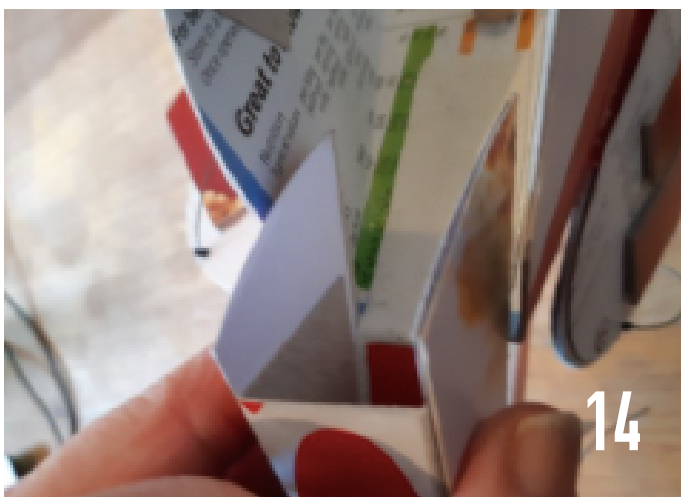


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Meanwhile turn the main body on its back and glue the 1" webbing down the middle to about half its overall length. Make sure it is glued firmly right up to the neck opening and that there is at least 11cm webbing to spare beyond the point where it leaves the body (picture 11)

Cut out template k and draw round it twice, making sure that at least one of the shapes drawn is on the printed side of the box. Score where the dotted lines are marked and fold.

Place one of these folded sections so that it is partly inside the main body with the line indicated with a dot on template K very close to, but not quite touching, the line marked with a dot on template A. Glue the webbing down its length as in the picture and leave the spare webbing still attached (see pictures 12 and 13)



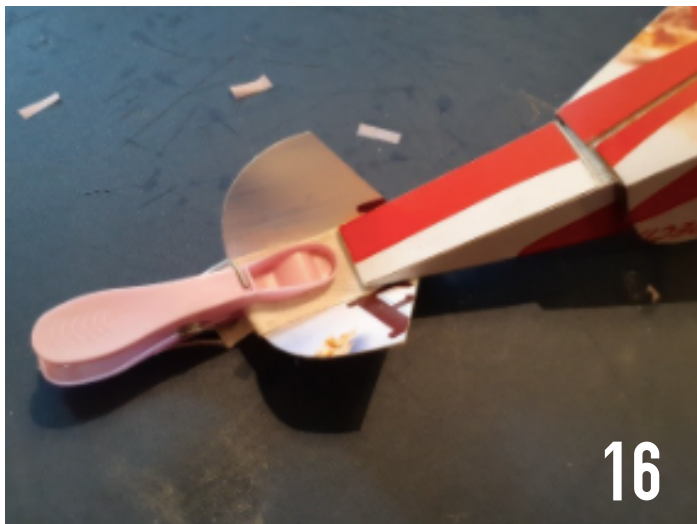
Next, cut out a long piece of card that will sit snugly on top of the part of the webbing that is glued to the neck, so that the webbing is in effect sandwiched between two pieces of card (see picture 14)

The webbing acts as a hinge.  
Your puppet has its first moving part.

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Now you can glue the second shape K over the first in the same way as you put the two layers of the body together earlier in the process.

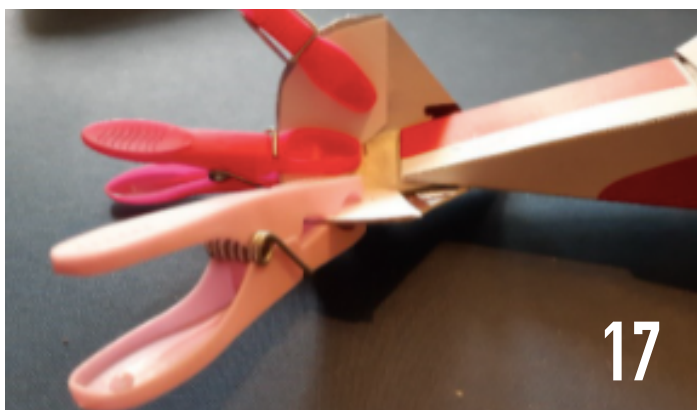
Then, cut out template L and draw round it once on the printed side of the box. Draw in the dotted lines, score them and then fold. This should sit snugly inside the K piece and close in the bottom of the neck. Glue it in place (see picture 15)



Once this is done, take the head, place it face down and line up the neck and the webbing as in the photo. You will need to spread glue down the inside of the head to about where the tip of the clothes peg is in the photo. The point beyond the tip of the peg should remain unglued for head movement (see picture 16)

While the glue is setting on this, cut out template J, draw round it, score the inner lines and fold.

Then glue this inside the head to stop the webbing from tearing off with use (see picture 17)



Next, measure 3.5cm from the base of the chicken's neck down its back, then glue 2 strips of 2cm webbing across the body as shown. If you don't have this then a strip of 4cm wide cloth will do. (see picture 18)



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Next, take template A and cut out the middle section (the bit between the rows of dotted lines) and draw round this on the printed side of cereal packet card. Cut this out and glue on the chicken's back to cover the webbing and to prevent it from tearing free. Use masking tape to hold the piece down until the glue sets (see picture 19)

Once the glue has set, you can fix the already laminated wing pieces in place by gluing them onto the remaining webbing. The webbing will act as a kind of hinge, so you will need to leave about 3mm of webbing between the chicken's body and the wing to give it room to move. If you glue the wing in what you think is the right place and then test its flapping movement, you will have a bit of time to make adjustments if you need to before the glue sets (see picture 20)



Once this has dried you can glue and clamp the final wing pieces in place. Then, once this is set, you can glue and clamp the feathers (see picture 21).



Next, cut out template G and draw round it onto card with the print side up. Then cut this out and score where the dotted lines indicate.



This is the chicken's beak. Glue and clamp it in place (see picture 22)



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For the underside of the beak, cut out template H and draw round it on card with the printed side facing up. Cut this out, then score it and fold on the dotted lines which will give you a triangle with a thin tab on each side. Spread glue on these tabs, then hold the piece in place until the glue sets (see picture 23)

Then, cut out template I, draw round it once on the printed side of the card and cut this out.

It is important here that you make the right cuts in the right places. Remember that the unbroken lines are cut with a pair of scissors and the lines made with dashes are scored lightly to help you bend the card at those places. This is the sort of feathery bit coming from back of the chicken's head. You will need to bend the shape at the dotted lines, then with finger and thumb, gently curl the loose "feathery bits" as shown (see picture 24)



We want this plume to fit as indicated in the next picture, but there will be webbing in the way. To get round this problem you will need to cut the point off shape I so it can be slid into position. Once this is done, glue it in place (picture 25)

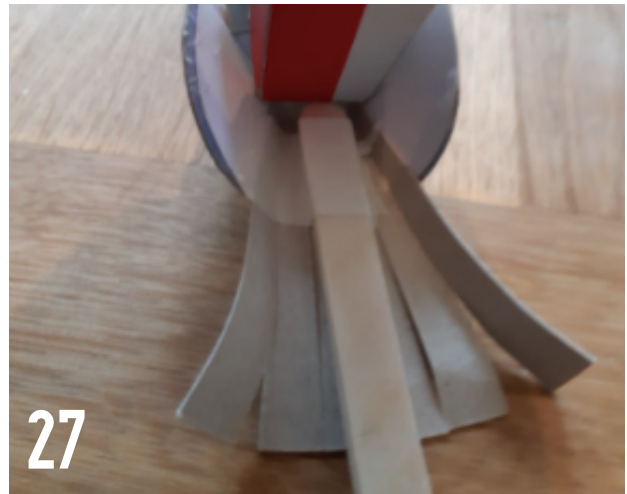
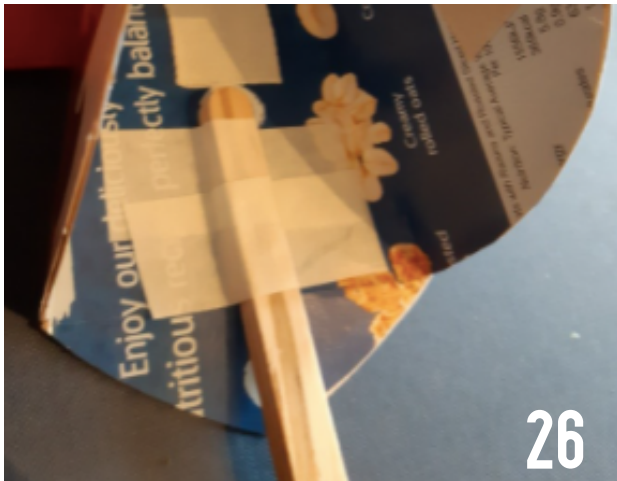


## You're nearly there!



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Now take the two lolly stick handles (the ones you made by gluing layers of lolly sticks together) and glue them in place as pictured, using masking tape to hold them in position until the glue sets (pictures 26 and 27)



Cut approx. 40cm of strong thread. Find the halfway point of the thread and then tape and glue this to the head handle as shown (picture 28)



Then make two holes in the wings for the string using a fine drill bit if you have one, or alternately use a bradawl, the point on a pair of compasses, a drawing pin etc

The thread will be hanging in two equal lengths, one on each side of the handle. With a thick sewing needle pull each thread through the hole you have made in the wing on its side. You will eventually want to make the thread secure by knotting it and gluing it in place but before this you might want to just make provisional knots or use masking tape until you are happy both sides are the same and at an ideal length. You want to be able to move the head some times without the wings moving too; so, the string shouldn't be too tight. If the thread is too slack then the wings won't respond quickly enough when you pull them. Just play about, changing the lengths till your happy, then fix them permanently (see picture 29 and 30)



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Finally, stick on the self-adhesive dots for the eyes, or draw them on with a felt tip pen.



**And you're finished!**  
**Meet your new home-made puppet!**

