

How to make... a running bear puppet

By Sam Wilde

Suitable for ages 7-11 independently

Suitable for ages 3-6 with adult help

You will need:

- Thick double walled cardboard
- A short length of wire
- A bamboo skewer or short stick (cut down to about 12cm)
- A pencil
- A hot glue gun
- A craft knife and cutting mat
- Paint and paint brush for decoration
- A small piece of red card (or red paint)

Instructions

Step 1:

Cut the shapes out of the cardboard, you can use the template provided or sketch them out yourself.

Ideally you will cut the main body and the legs out twice and then glue these together (so that your body piece and the legs pieces are double the thickness).

Top tip:

Cardboard has a grain to it, you can see the lines running up and down your sheet when you look closely, this is because of the waves found in the cardboard's core you can see when you look at the edge. If you cut the body and legs out, then rotate the card before cutting them out again (so the grain runs first vertically then horizontally) you will end up with a much stronger puppet!



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Step 2:

Attach the arms to the body and then decorate your bear.

Top tip:

Remember that cardboard can get a bit soggy and bendy when it gets too wet, so be careful when painting. Why not try painting your bear to give it colour and then when it's dry you can add more detail with a pen, pencil or even glitter!



Step 3:

Once your bear is dry it is then time to start putting the spinning legs together. Start off by cutting a strip of cardboard about 20cm in length and glueing it to the flat end of your skewer.

Top tip:

Cardboard tends to fold and roll better when it is cut perpendicular to the grain - why not try cutting a few strips with the grain going different ways and see which is easier to roll.



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Step 4:

Now attach this piece to the back of the bear, have a look at the template for a rough location.



Step 5:

Punch a hole in the centre of the legs and put these onto the skewer. Then glue another strip of card to the end of the skewer. Make sure to leave enough space for the legs to spin easily when pushed, but not so much that it wobbles as this will stop the movement being smooth.



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Step 6:

Hooray!! You have your running bear!! Now for a bit of fun why not add a triangle of red card to the end of the wire and attach it to the back of the bear, he can then run after his hat as it's blown in the wind! Or maybe attach a pesky cardboard rabbit and help our noble bear catch the thief! Hours of fun!

