

BALLOON & PAPER MACHE LANTERN



Need:

- Balloon, blown up to desired size
- Glue & water mixture, 50/50 mix
- Tissue paper, torn or cut into small pieces
- Small paint brush – 1” works well
- Thin bendable wire or string for handle (green gardening wire works well)
- Tea light (battery-operated is safest) or votive candle
- 1 inch of a toilet paper or paper towel roll (for tea light base)

Not necessary but helpful:

- Plastic “to-go” bowl to hold balloon during gluing process
- Hole puncher
- 1 ½ foot stick or pole to carry lantern (if using a votive candle instead of a battery-operated tea light)
- Paint, crayons, yarn, string...
- Stick to hold lantern (especially if you are using a lit candle)
- Tape

1) Take blown-up balloon and hold it by the tied end. This is the top of your lantern. Consider how far down from the top you want the opening to be. Remember the opening needs to be large enough for your fingers &/or hand to place the tea light inside. The tissue paper will be glued around and below this opening.



PLEASE NOTE: We DO NOT suggest that you work with glue on carpet! These photos were taken in an artist's studio where it was ok to work this way. Spread newspaper or plastic sheeting over your work area – or work outdoors!

2) Take a piece of the torn tissue paper. Using the small paint brush, glue the paper lightly to the balloon. Cover the balloon with tissue paper. The paper will wrinkle as you glue it down, but this adds to the character of your lantern. The edges of the paper can (and should) overlap.



3) Cover the balloon with 5 to 6 layers of tissue paper all over (except for your tea light opening). You will need this many layers so your lantern will be sturdy enough.

Suggestion: use light colored (or white) tissue paper for the first 3 or 4 layers. If you want to add some patterned paper, designs, or colors, do that with the top 2 or 3 layers. You want your lantern to let light shine through it, and if you use too many layers of dark tissue, the light will have trouble getting through.





Notice plastic bowl underneath to help balance balloon during gluing process.

4) DECORATION OPTIONS to add while gluing:

- In between the final layers of the tissue paper, you can add leaves, which will show up nicely once the tea light is on. Make sure to add a layer of tissue paper over the leaves to hold them in place.
- Cut designs out of colored tissue paper and glue onto top layer
- Make designs with string or yarn and add them on



Tissue Paper folded & cut to make designs to add to lantern.



5) Tie a string (or use tape as pictured below) to your balloon and hang it to dry. Let the lantern dry overnight.



6) Pop the balloon once the papier mache has dried. The lantern will stick to the balloon as it shrinks and will “suck in” a bit! But don’t worry, you can easily and gently push the sides of the lantern back out, and the popped balloon will release from the inside and can be removed easily.

7) You can flatten out the bottom of the lantern a bit by pushing on a tabletop. This will allow the lantern to stand upright.

DECORATION OPTIONS to add after the lantern is dry:

- Draw designs with Sharpie Markers or crayons
 - Paint – the water in the paint may cause the glue to come off a bit, so try to paint quickly
 - Use an awl (very carefully) to poke holes in the sides and make a pattern for light to shine through
 - Add stickers, handprints, a drawing of your favorite place, glitter...the list goes on!
- Use your imagination and make your own unique lantern!

TEA LIGHT BASE:

Cut 1 inch off a toilet paper or paper towel roll. Make 6 small ½ inch long cuts along one end. Bend these flaps outward. Glue the base to the inside bottom of the lantern. Let dry. Battery operated candle (safest) or votive candle will fit in nicely.



HANDLE:

Use a hole puncher (or with adult supervision - something sharp) to make a small hole on both sides of the lantern near the top. Thread the wire or cord through the holes.

For the ***InLight Richmond Community Lantern Parade***, we are recommending that participants use battery-operated tea lights in their lanterns for safety reasons. They are available at Target, most drugstores, Michaels and A. C. Moore Art Supply Stores, Bed, Bath & Beyond, etc. HOWEVER, if you have trouble locating a battery-operated candle, bring your homemade lantern down to the parade, and we can provide you with one.

If, however, you choose to use a votive candle in your lantern, you will want to use a stick or pole (1 ½ foot) to hold your lantern so that your hand does not get burned when you hold the lantern. Just secure the lantern handle to the end of pole with duct tape. Double wrap the end of the pole with the tape to make it less sharp too!

For more information about ***InLight Richmond*** please visit www.1708gallery.org/inlight.

We look forward to seeing you at the parade!
-1708 Gallery