

# How to make a lantern

## What you need

**Willow withies** - these are strong, light and bendable and are used for making the structure of the lantern. They come in bundles of various lengths, the shorter withies (120-150cm) are quite thin and can usually be bent without soaking. Mainly used for small lanterns. The longer, thicker withies (180cm) need to be soaked overnight to avoid snapping when bent. Leave them in the bath or sink. Handy tip - When making the lanterns keep the withies damp to keep them pliable.

**Bamboo Cane or Light Stick** - to carry your lantern. If using a cane, cut to required length.

**Masking Tape** - Used to join the withies together. Don't use low tac tape, it's not strong enough! Handy tip - Tear or cut strips ready for use.

**Gaffer tape or Duct Tape** - Used for strong, structural joints eg fixing in the carrying stick.

Handy tip - Cut down the centre of roll with a craft knife to make thinner strips.

**Tissue Paper** - used to cover the structure. Only use wet strength tissue paper for structure. It's very strong and doesn't disintegrate in the rain. You can use ordinary tissue paper to colour over the top of the wet strength tissue paper.

**Thin wire** - this may be needed to strengthen key joints.

**PVA Glue** - use diluted with water 50/50 to stick tissue covering over the structure.

**Lights** - To light the lantern. Small torches, bike lights, strings of battery powered Christmas lights, glow sticks or battery powered bulbs can all be used to light your lantern.

**Tools and equipment** - Pliers or secateurs to cut withies, craft knife to shape the ends of withies, scissors, plastic sheet or bin bags for table covering, glue brushes/sponges and containers. Cable ties for moving joints.

## To make lantern

1. Join withies together to make required shape

### **5 pointed star** (see illustration 1 )

- a. Cut 10 withies the same size, arrange into 2 stars and tape the joints.
- b. Lay 1 star on top of the other, matching shapes as best you can. Tape the star tips together.
- c. Cut 5 small, thick pieces of withy (spacers), make sure there's room for

your light source.

- d. Pull the centre of the stars apart and fix the spacers to the 5 joints in the middle, creating a 3D star.

### **Sphere** (see illustration 2 )

- a. Make 4 withie circles the same size.
- b. Put 3 circles together to make a rough ball shape and tape at top and bottom.
- c. Turn 4th circle on its side and pull over to the centre of the ball and tape in place.
- d. Make smaller circles to fit over top and bottom of the sphere

### **Pyramid** (see illustration 3 )

- a. Make a base of thick withie with cross struts to strengthen, ( can be square or circular).
- b. Cut 4 withies the height of the pyramid. Fix them all together at the top.
- c. Tape the bottom of the 4 withies evenly on to the base.
- d. Use flexible withies to strengthen the sides

### 2. Prepare carrying stick

- a. If using a bamboo cane, make a hook from strong wire and attach with gaffa tape to the end of the cane.
- b. Remember to make a wire loop at the top of the lantern before its covered in paper to attach to the carrying stick or light stick.
- c. If not using a light stick Remember to arrange and attach lights on to the withies before covering in paper!

### 3. Cover your lantern

- a. Cut the tissue paper into suitable sizes.
- b. With a large brush or sponge paint both sides of the paper with diluted PVA glue and cover lantern shape. Handy tip- this is great fun, but very messy. Make sure you have protected tables and surfaces.
- c. Paper will become transparent when dry, tightening over the structure.
- d. Try not to overlap paper too much.
- e. As you cover the frame paint the withies with undiluted P.V.A to help the paper stick.
- f. Decoration can be applied with coloured tissue paper once the lantern is completely covered with wet strength tissue paper and is dry. Handy tip - do not paint your lantern - it blocks out the light.
- g. Leave open areas or flaps so you can access your switches and light source.

### 4. Ready to go

- a. Turn on your light source.
- b. Attach your lantern to your carrying stick or light stick and you are ready to go.