

# Papier maché balls tutorial

## Materials



- Coloured balloons
- Plastic sheet to protect table
- Vinavil glue
- Inexpensive toilet paper
- Brushes for glue
- Container to dilute glue with water
- String of simple led lights (undecorated)
- Glitter or other decorations (optional) eg.artificial gold leaf as below



## Method

- Blow up balloons to desired size and close each of them with a simple knot in the neck. Coloured balloons are best as you can see whether they are covered or not as you start to

- glue on the paper
- Dilute about 2 tablespoonsful of Vinavil glue into some water in the ratio 1:3 parts water. Mix thoroughly with a wooden skewer or similar. The cut off base of a plastic bottle is a good container to use.
  - Prepare about 20 strips of toilet paper, each with one or two sheets
  - Use a fairly large brush to begin to pass the diluted glue over the surface of the balloon, adding layers of toilet paper as you go. Use the brush to daub more glue on top of the paper to make it stay in place. It is not essential to have a perfectly smooth coverage.
  - Keep covering in this way until you have built up about 3 to 4 layers and it becomes difficult to see the colour of the balloon through the paper. **Always leave a small area around the balloon knot free.**
  - Once you are satisfied with the amount of paper added, hang the 'balls' to dry, preferably where they will not touch one another and air can circulate all around them. Make sure you add some newspaper underneath them if you are drying them indoors. They will drip quite a lot for the first couple of hours. It is also a good idea to put a plastic bag under the newspaper.



- You will probably need to leave the balls for at least 24 hours to dry. If when touching them they feel 'cold' this probably means that they are still damp on the inner layers.
- When you are absolutely certain that they are dry – they will feel quite solid to the touch – take hold of the knot and with a sharp needle, prick about 3 or 4 holes in the balloon around the neck area.

- Do not try to extract the balloon at this stage, but just let the air come out slowly by itself. You will probably hear some 'cracking' noises for a few minutes.
- When you can see that the balloon has pulled away from the sides of the 'ball' you can gently ease the balloon through the hole at the top of paper ball, taking care to make sure that the ball does not collapse on itself.
- At this stage, if you wish, you can add a little decoration to the outside of the ball, preferably using a dry glue of some sort.
- Take your string of LED lights and push about 4 or 5 of them inside each ball (less if the balls are smaller)
- Makes a great table centre piece.
- **NB – never leave these lights unattended. If you go out of the house, make sure you turn the lights off!!**



*We have added 3 of these large 'baubles' under the tree this year to hide a disastrous tree base!*