

HINTS & TIPS FOR MAKING A BIRD SCARER OR SCARECROW

Bird scarers and scarecrows are used by gardeners, farmers and people growing food to frighten birds away and stop them from damaging new plants and crops.

Scarecrows are usually found in farmers' fields. These are big (the size of children or adults) and scare birds away from an area surrounding the scarecrow.

Bird scarers are normally smaller than scarecrows and are used by gardeners or on small areas of land to protect fruit and vegetables.

The most important thing to know before you make a bird scarer or scarecrow is to know what birds respond to. Because what scares birds, and what people think scares birds, can be two different things!

Birds can be scared of things that look like a human or a predator such as a bird of prey. They can also be scared of other things that frighten them like flashing light, unusual moving things or noise.

Use your imagination! You can design your bird scarer or scarecrow to look like anything including a spaceship, monster, person, animal or favourite book or film character. The brighter the bird scarer or scarecrow is, the more likely it is to scare the birds!

How to make a Bird Scarer

Bird scarers are easy to make, especially for smaller hands. You are likely to need recycled plastic bottles, milk cartons, foil, paint, cello tape, duct tape, glue, plastic bags, card, string, ribbons, etc to make your item.

You can put your bird scarer on a bamboo cane or stake, or strong string, or something like a coat hanger to make it easy to hang.

How to make a pretend bird of prey or person

You can make pretend birds of prey like owls or hawks from plastic bottles, milk cartons, even foil wrapped in masking/duct tape. The important thing is to get the right head shape like an owl or bird of prey. You can make big eyes for your bird of prey to make them look real using material like leftover buttons or glossy plastic. If you make your bird scarer like a person, try to make big eyes and make it look as bright as possible.

How to make flashing light bird or unusual object bird scarer

If you want to make a bird scarer with flashing lights then reflective ribbons or CDs or other reflective objects will help the light bounce around. Unusual moving things could include brightly colored items or things that rustle or make a noise in the wind. Plastic bottles that rattle and look like people or animals can be good.

Try to make your bird scarer as strong as possible so it survives in the wind.

How to make a scarecrow

Scarecrows can be made by groups of children or individuals and are easy for individual children with bigger hands as they can take a long time to fill!

You are likely to need something to make the arms like a sturdy stick or bamboo cane, about 1 metre long, and a sturdy stick or bamboo cane about 2 metres long for the body. You will also need something to make a head like an old pair of tights or a bag. You are also likely to need old clothes (shirt or jumper, trousers, hat), string/rope and something to fill the body and legs like plastic bags, old newspapers or straw. If you would like straw, Angela Mill your local RHET representative, will be able to help you get some (07521 145325 angelam@rhet.org.uk).

The following information is just a guide and will not influence the judge's decision.

How to make a frame for your scarecrow

- You can do this by using your stick/bamboo (tie tightly the 1m stick to the 2m stick about 15cm from one end, in a cross shape and then tie the other stake in the same way about half way down)
- Next make a head, cut one leg from the tights and fill with plastic bags or straw, push these firmly to the end and make it into a head shape. Tie a piece of string around the tight leg to stop the stuffing falling out.
- Decorate the head. You may want to add hair and hat, etc at this point. Then tie the head onto the top of the frame.

How to dress your scarecrow – remember you can dress your scarecrow as you want

- Put the top on the top crossbar and the trousers/skirt on the smaller bar is the standard scarecrow design.
- Tie off the bottom of the legs of the trousers with string and stuff the legs of the trousers with straw/paper or plastic bags.
- Button up the shirt and tie the ends of the arms then stuff the body and sleeves with straw/paper or plastic bags or leaves.
- You can push some straw/rope (or something else) under the hat and leave it dangling out to look like hair.