



<http://www.widowsbluff.net/Tombstones%201.html>



Get an inspiration picture off the net, or take a trip to the oldest graveyard you can



Use only adhesive for foamboard.



You will need a cutting tool (I use a steak knife), pencil, tape measure, caulk gun and beverage of your choice.





I use the blue Dow foam board, one inch. Make sure you peel off the plastic sheeting. I have heard some areas have pink foam; I think they are much the



Trace your design and cut out.



Now you have your first layer; cut out two



It is okay if the three pieces are not exact, however, the more precise the less work later on.

Obtained from  
Ormarshantedtrail.com



Using the foam board adhesive, glue the three pieces together. It helps if you glue so the black writing is on the inside.



Weight and let dry overnight.



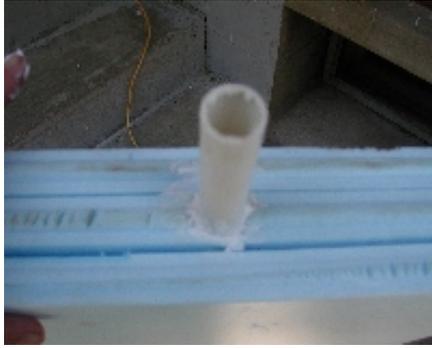
In the center of the bottom drill a hole big enough for 1/2 inch pvc pipe.



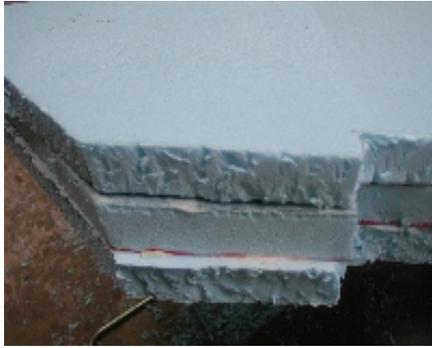
Cut about 6-8 inches of 1/2 inch pvc pipe. Coat half the pvc with the foam adhesive. Place in the hole; lightly tap with a hammer to make sure the pvc is snug.



The pvc will later be placed over rebar; this keeps your stones stable in the wind and makes for easy set-up.



Seal the gap with water proof caulk or foamboard adhesive.



Time to clean up any uneven edges.



This old metal file is perfect for this. You could use a hotwire foam cutter.



Use some sandpaper to get a smooth and even edge.



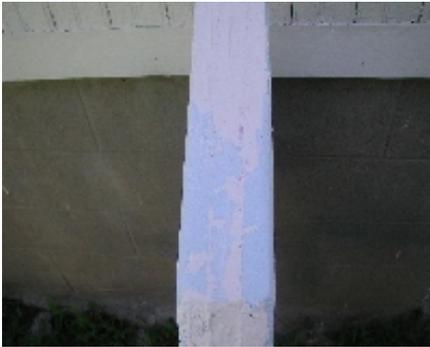
I use drywall joint I use drywall joint compound to fill in the cracks. You want the seam of the three pieces to disappear.



Don't get this too thick, you will have a lot of sanding to do later. Just fill until smooth.



Set up some rebar in the yard, slip the tombstones over the rebar and let dry. For Halloween you would hammer the rebar further in the ground so there is no gap between the ground and the stone.



Sand, sand, and sand until the edges are smooth. Also bevel the edges, old tombstones are very rounded from weathering. Sand until you get the look you want.



Wet down the stone.



Use a flame to warp the stone, make sure the stone is wet or you will burn up the foam.



Here are the results of "wet warping"



control.

Spray paint will also eat "raw" blue foam. You can spray paint the raw foam to get the same effect as "wet warping"; however with spray paint you have less



Give the stones two good coats of white latex paint.



Let dry

Get wet, again!



You will need spray paint (black, moss green, rust...) and watered down black craft paint and a brush.



Brush the thinned down craft paint on the top of the stone. Let it run down. If you don't like it, just hose it off. Practice on a spare scrap of foam and check out the weathering patterns of some old tombstones in your area.



Let dry, do again for a darker effect.



After the stones have dried I will spray paint while hosing down the stone. Let dry between colors. I use black, dark green, yellow and rust spray paint. Do this through the stream of the hose spray. Again, practice this on a scrap of foam.



After the stones are dry I will give each a light coating of fleck stone for texture. One can will lightly coat eight to ten stones. I emphasize light, you do not want to cover up all the aging you just did, just give the stone some depth.



The fleck stone is also good for touching up stones from last year.



When you are happy with the look of your stones, seal with a spray clear sealer. I use the cheap stuff, and the stones have held up for four years now. Don't forget to seal the bottom!



I got seven stones from two, 1 inch thick pieces of foamboard, two tubes of adhesive, one can of fleckstone and one can of sealer.



You can use floral pins to anchor moss and greenery to the stones.

This how-to is for the plain version of the tombstones. You can embellish these with a variety of objects. I have used foam letters for raised epitaphs and a Dremel for etched or a wood burner for really deep cuts. You can glue on wood or foam cut outs, Christmas ornaments (crosses). Add your details



before you paint the stones with the two coats of latex paint.

Foam letters from the craft store.



Cut out from craft foam. The pattern was from a Pumpkin Master page.



Got a little crazy with the Dremel and the wood b burner!



Dremel, foam letters, Christmas ornament

None of these techniques are original; I have gleaned ideas from a multitude of Halloween websites and forums. Thank-you to all home and professional haunters who have shared their expertise so freely on the web. The best inspiration will come from spending some time in old cemeteries. My other "off season" hobby is Genealogy. This takes me to some remote and neglected cemeteries. Old tombstones in my area are made of white limestone. If other colors and types of stones are native to your area, I

would suggest going with a more native color and look. If you go to a cemetery for ideas make sure you take a camera, pencil, paper and a tape measure!



This is a picture of Old Manchester Cemetery in Illinois. It was a very rainy and foggy day. I was supposed to be researching the Ash family, but I was definitely thinking about Halloween!

Obtained from  
Omarshantedtrail.com