



<http://usersites.horrorfind.com/home/haunts/monstermaze/>



The Monster Maze Makes a Castle Facade Under \$100

Requirements:

- \$40.00 - 5 pieces of 4' x 8' plywood
- \$ 3.00 - box of nuts, bolts, and washers
- \$ 4.00 - 2 plant hangers (\$1.99 ea from K-Mart)
- \$ 4.00 - 5 Gallons of Oil based Grey Paint (mistake paint, marked down and black dye added at my request)
- \$ 5.00 - 1 pint of Oil based Black Paint (yes, my pint cost more than my 5 gallon bucket)
- \$ 8.00 - 1 plastic blown skeleton (from Big Lots)
- \$20.00 - 2 faux flame urns, bought AFTER Halloween at 1/2 off
- \$ 5.00 - 1 pint of Stain and Polyurethane
- \$89.00 - <- **TOTAL COST**

Obtained from
Omarshantedtrail.com

Tools Required:

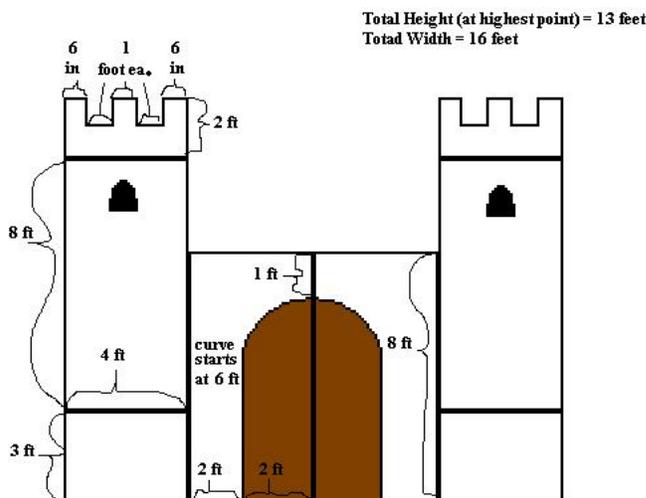
- Saw (to cut plywood)
 - Paint Brush (for stain and polyurethane)
 - Roller Brush (for oil based gray paint)
 - Wrench (for nuts and bolts)
 - Tape Measure
 - T-Square (to draw mortar lines)
 - Pencil and then gone over with Permanent Black Magic Marker (to draw mortar lines)
 - X-acto knife (to cut blown plastic skeleton bones in half)
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HOW IT STARTED OUT:

I wanted a facade that would be easy to make, and would look easily recognizable from a distance. So I chose a castle (some of my other choices were a pyramid, a movie theater ticket booth, or a standard house front-> which would have looked weird sitting right in front of my own home I thought...)



There is a member on the Halloween-I list named SpookDawg, and she made an awesome crypt facade, I liked it so much that I decided to steal....er.... **BORROW** ..yea...borrow, her brilliant idea and build upon it and take it to the next level and incorporate it into a castle facade.



INITIAL CONCEPT DRAWING

from

Omar's haunted trail.com

Don't laugh, but here is my initial concept drawing, I wanted a general idea on paper on how it would look and how the measurements should be using the common 8' x 4' plywood.

DOORWAY



First, I measured out the first door and cut it out using a jigsaw, after I cut out the FIRST door, I placed that half of the entrance archway onto the other piece of plywood and traced the outline. Why did I do it this way ? So that the doors would be identical to each other!

Initially, I thought of having a WORKING drawbridge, just like a real castle, with plastic chains and a winch. I finally decided against it and went with the standard 'door' look because I was afraid of laying the drawbridge on the ground and having people trip as they walked over it. Not only that, but the drawbridge would get lots of wear and tear as people stomped across.



After the doors were cut out, I stained and polyurethaned the doors (3 coats) to protect them from the elements and to give it a nice 'wooden' appearance.



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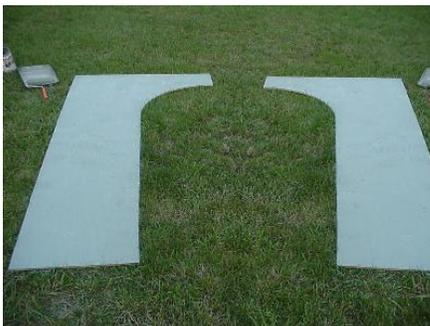


Here are the doors after staining, looks pretty good I thought.



Here, a couple of my volunteers start to bolt on some hinges and door handles, both were spray painted flat black first.

ARCHWAY



The remaining two pieces of plywood from cutting out the doors would be the entrance archway. They were painted with an oil based paint. (Remember, they need to be water resistant, this is all going to be outside.) Color = grey

Obtained from
Omarshantedtrail.com

TOWER



Of course, every castle needs towers, I cut out a small window in the towers using a jigsaw, after I cut out the FIRST window, I placed that piece of plywood on top of the other piece of plywood that would become the other tower. I then traced out the outline. Why did I do it this way ? So that the windows would be identical to each other!



Tracing the window outline so that both towers will have symmetrical windows. (I did the same exact thing with the doors previously.)



Painting the tower gray.

TURRET



From the fifth piece of plywood, I trimmed off 2 sections that were 3' x 4'. I then drew a zig-zag pattern onto the plywood. It alternates between 1' at the lowest and 2' at the highest.

This breaks the 3' x 4' piece into two sections, I cut one of the sections right in half. The larger piece of the turret will be for the front and the two smaller pieces will be for the sides. (If you look verrrry carefully, you can see the pencil marks we made using our t-square to make sure everything was straight and even.)



At this point the tower was only 8 feet tall, I needed more height! I cut out two 3' x 4' sections from the sixth piece of plywood. This gave it a total height of 11'. Add another 2' for the turret and the towers total height is now a whopping 13' tall !



ALMOST THERE !!!!

ADDING MORTAR LINES



Using a T-Square and a pencil, create a brick stone pattern (Each brick was 2 ft wide, and 1 foot high.) After drawing the pattern in pencil, we went back over the lines (still using the T-Square) with a permanent black marker. (We decided to use that instead of a paint brush because the paint brush method tended to **NOT** be as 'neat and clean'.



Here are the two doors and one tower, starting to look good, in the garage, you can see the two turrets laying on thier backs. If you look REAL close in the upper left hand corner, you can see a Troll (made with pvc pipe and Great Stuff) that we're making to be in one of the turrets.

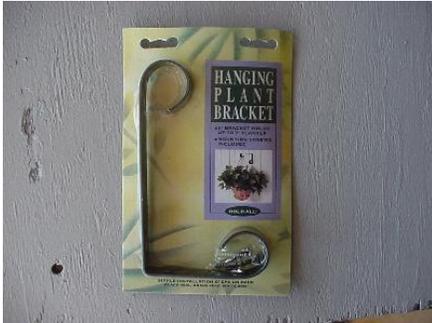


**THE FINISHED FACADE !
BUT WE'RE NOT DONE YET !**

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We actually had to reduce the extra 3 feet of height that we added because we found that the wind caught the towers like a kite and created quite a bit of stress and pressure. As you can see from the pics, the castle facade looks quite nice without the extra height.



HOOKS FOR THE FAUX FLAME CAULDRON'S

\$1.99 each from K-Mart, I needed two (one for each tower)



Here is the faux flame unit hanging on the inside of the castle facade, please notice the window that we saved and painted black. By simply adding a hinge, we could shut the window for night time security (less tempting if you can't see it) and to protect it a little from the elements outside.

SKELETON



A cheap plastic blow skeleton was cut in half (length-wise) using an Xacto knife and each half was filled with Great Stuff expanding insulation foam. Since the skeleton was hollow, it needed 'fill' so that there would be a greater surface area to attach to the castle walls.



The excess that sticks out past the level of the bone needs to be sanded down to a flat surface. I will then use liquid nails to attach the Great Stuff to the plywood.



HOWEVER prior to gluing the skeletons to their intended wall panels, I placed them on **OTHER** wall panels, then spray painted them black, making sure that I sprayed just a smidgen off the bones and onto the board. When the paint on the bones will dry, I will remove the bones and glue them to their intended wall panels **AND** this will leave the outline of the two skeletons on this second set of wall panels ! **TWO FOR ONE !**





Here, we are painting some pedestals to match our castle colors that will hold some faux flame urns.



Here is the final castle facade, at night, with doors open, the first things the guest sees are the two skeletons!

Obtained from
Omarshauntedtrail.com