
Gardening - making a scarecrow

Summary

- Making a scarecrow is great fun.
 - A scarecrow looks great in the garden, and keeps the birds away from your crops.
 - You will already have most of the materials you need.
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Making a scarecrow is great fun. It can add to the appearance of your garden and keep birds away. The appearance and personality of your scarecrow is limited only by your imagination.

What you need to make a scarecrow

You can gather most of the materials you need to make a scarecrow from around your house and garden. To make your scarecrow you will need materials for:

- The frame
- The head and face
- The hands and feet
- Clothes
- Hair
- Headwear
- Accessories
- Stuffing.

The scarecrow frame

To construct the frame or body of your scarecrow, you will need:

- A tall wooden or bamboo garden stake, or a broom or rake handle (approximately two metres long)
- A shorter wooden or bamboo garden stake that forms the arms (approximately 1.5 m long)
- A short (20 to 30 cm) wooden or bamboo garden stake to form the waist
- String, gardening twine, or nails and a hammer to hold it all together.

Scarecrow head and face

For your scarecrow's head, you will need:

- An old pair of stockings, an old pillow case or a calico bag
- Acrylic paint or waterproof markers
- Stuffing such as straw, soft-toy filling or old stockings.

Scarecrow hands and feet

For the hands and feet, you will need:

- Gloves
- Socks, old stockings or tights
- Straw or soft-toy filling.

Scarecrow clothes

To dress your scarecrow, use clothes and shoes that you can spare from your wardrobe, or find some at your local op shop.

Scarecrow hair

To give your scarecrow some hair, you could use a wig, raffia, straw, wool, strips of fabric or even bunches of lavender.

Headwear and accessories

Finish off your scarecrow with a hat and accessories from your own wardrobe or from the op shop. For headwear, you could use a cap, a beanie, a scarf, a ribbon or even a tiara.

Accessorise with:

- Glasses, scarves, a hand bag, jewellery, imitation flowers
- Gardening tools such as an old wheelbarrow (plant this with flowers, vegetables or herbs), or an old broom, rake or spade
- Stuffed toys, such as a toy parrot to sit on the scarecrow's shoulder.

Stuffing for the scarecrow

To stuff your scarecrow's head, body, arms and legs, use straw or soft-toy filling.

Putting your scarecrow together

1. Attach the shorter stake (arms) to the tall stake either by tying with string or nailing them together. The shorter stake needs to be attached 10 to 15 cm down from the top end of the tall stake.
2. Attach the shortest stake about halfway down the tall stake to form the waist or hips, either by tying with string or nailing it on.
3. Dress the scarecrow. Attach the waist of the skirt or pants to the shortest stake with string, tape or staples.
4. If you want to stuff the arms, legs and body, tie off the ends of the sleeves and pants and fill them with your stuffing of choice. To stop the filling falling out at the bottom, either pin the base of the top to the pants, or tuck the top into the pants and use a belt or string (in the belt keepers) to attach them.
5. For the hands or feet, fill the socks, gloves or feet of the old stockings with your stuffing of choice. Attach the feet to the bottom of the pants by sewing or using safety pins. Attach the hands to the arms by pushing the hands onto the stake and tying them on with string or taping them with heavy tape. If using straw or lavender for the feet or hands, push it into the ends of the arms and legs of the clothes and allow it to stick out. To stop it falling out, tie some string around the end of the sleeve or trouser leg.
6. To make the head, either fill the pillowcase with your stuffing of choice, or cut one leg from the tights or stockings and stuff to make a round shape. Tie the end of the pillowcase or stocking off with string. Draw or paint a face on the head and allow it to dry.
7. Tie or tape the head onto the top of the stake.
8. Put a wig on top of the head, or attach straw or lavender stems or wool by taping, sewing or tying it onto the head or inside the hat. Place a hat on the head.
9. Decide where your scarecrow is going to stand. Push the bottom of the long stake into the ground or attach the scarecrow to another stake driven into the ground. You could also attach your scarecrow to a fence or gate post.

Other scarecrow ideas

Further ideas for making a scarecrow could include:

- Use a straw broom or mop upside down for the body so the straw or mop becomes the head. The face can be painted on, or the eyes and nose made from thin plywood or polystyrene and painted, and then glued or tied onto the straw or mop.
- Make scarecrows in different sizes to make a family of scarecrows. You could use children's clothes to dress the small ones.
- Scarecrow animals could also be a feature of your garden. A horse would look good, or maybe a trusty dog to join your scarecrow. Frames could be made from garden stakes or bamboo poles with wire netting to form the body. This could be covered with straw (tied or wired onto the netting), or strips of material or lengths of

wool tied onto the wire. Horses and dogs wear blankets and coats, so you could add some clothes. The heads could be made of wire netting, or polystyrene (from boxes), plywood or thick cardboard and painted. Don't forget animal accessories.

Where to get help

- Community or local garden groups
- Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria Tel. (03) 9836 1128
- Cultivating Community Tel. (03) 9429 3084
- Department of Health Victoria, Prevention and Population Health

Things to remember

- Making a scarecrow is great fun.
- A scarecrow looks great in the garden, and keeps the birds away from your crops.
- You will already have most of the materials you need.

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Horticultural Therapy Association Vic.

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