

How to Make a Tutankhamun Mask

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King Tutankhamun is famous for his young age when he became pharaoh as well as his elaborate death mask. When most people think of ancient Egypt or mummies, one of the first things that come to mind is the beautiful gold mask with a blue and gold headdress. While it would be very difficult to create a solid gold face mask (not to mention expensive!) it is possible to make a similar one at home using items from the craft store!

Things You'll Need

- ☐ White, full face mask
- ☐ Thin cardboard
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Glue and water
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Craft blade
- ☐ Gold spray paint
- ☐ Blue and black acrylic paint
- ☐ Paintbrushes
- ☐ Paper clay
- ☐ Craft foam
- ☐ Toilet paper roll



1 Buy a plastic face mask. Choose a plain mask that covers your entire face. It can have eye holes, but the mouth needs to be closed. The mask can be colored, but it needs to have a smooth surface, with no texture or embellishments.

- You can find these sorts of masks in arts and crafts stores and party supply shops.



2 Place the face mask onto a sheet of thin cardboard. The cardboard needs to be about 12 inches (30.5 centimeters) larger than the face mask on all sides. You need to have more room on the bottom of the cardboard than on the top.



3 Draw the headdress around the face mask. Draw around the face mask first. Next, draw the shape of Tutankhamun's headdress around it. It curves above the forehead and dips down past your shoulders.^[1]

- Look at reference pictures of Tutankhamun's death mask for this step.



4 Cut the headdress out. Begin by cutting out the entire headdress out first. Next, cut the gap between the shoulder pieces, then the inside oval.



5 Secure the mask to the headdress. Place the mask back on top of the headdress. Use small pieces of masking tape to secure the face mask to the cardboard. Flip the whole thing over, and secure the back with more tape.^[2] Alternatively, you can secure the mask to the headdress with hot glue.

Part
2

Part 2 of 5: Adding the Details



1 Cut two semi-ovals for the ears. Cut an oval shape about the same size as your own ear out of cardboard or craft foam—the color does not matter. Cut the oval in half to make two ears.



2 Secure the ears to the mask. The ears near to be between the nose and eyes, with the straight edge should be facing the front, and the curved edge against the headdress. For a more realistic mask, tape the ears at a slight angle to the mask, so that the straight edge is touching the side of the mask, and the curved edge is touching the headdress.

- You can use hot glue for this step as well.
- Make sure that you use masking tape for this.



3 Glue a thin strip of craft foam for the crown base. Cut a 1-inch (2.5-centimeter) wide strip of craft foam, long enough to go across the forehead, from one edge of the mask to the other. Secure the strip to the forehead using masking tape or hot glue. The strip should be level with the tops of the ears.

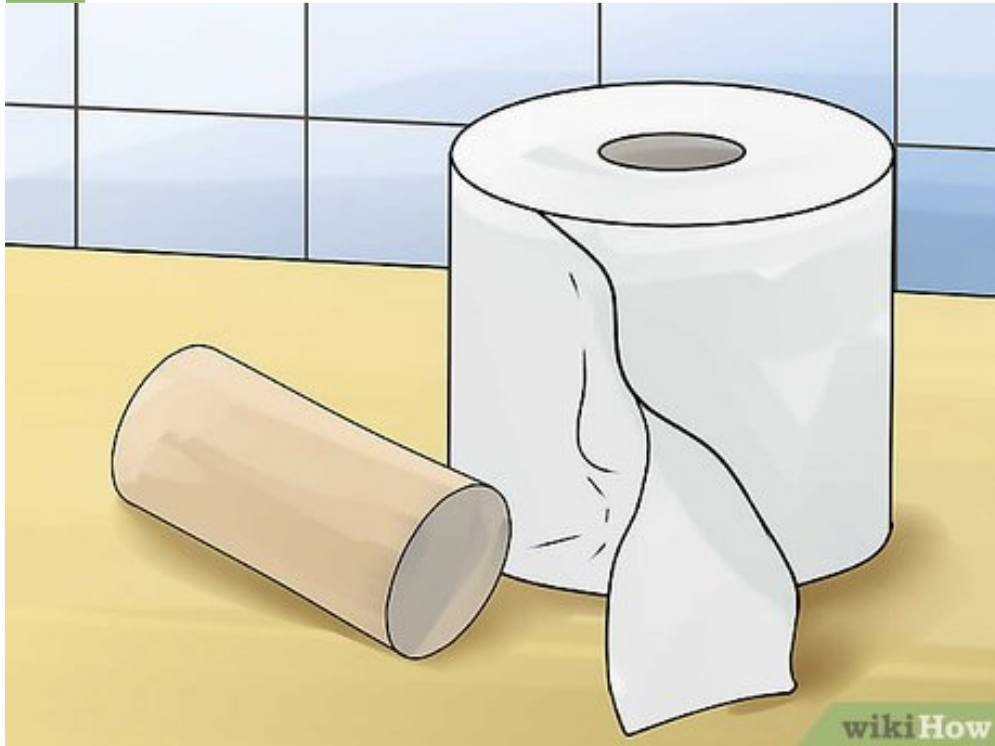


- 4 Sculpt a cobra and an vulture head out of paper clay.** Look at reference pictures of Tutankhamun's mask for these. Start with a coil of clay for each, then twist the coils into a rough S-shape. Use your fingers to pinch a beak for the vulture, and a hood for the cobra. Add eyes using a toothpick, pen, pencil, or any other pointy object. Let the pieces dry.
- Make these about the same height as the nose, with the cobra being taller than the vulture.



- 5 Glue the cobra and the vulture to the forehead strip.** Use hot glue, or any other strong glue, to secure the pieces to the 1-inch (2.5-centimeter) wide strip on the forehead. The cobra goes on the left-hand side, and the vulture goes on the right.

Part 3 of 5: Making the Beard



1 Find an empty toilet paper roll. If you don't have one, cut an empty paper towel roll in half, and use that instead. You can also roll a 6-inch (15.25-centimeter) wide strip of thin cardboard or poster paper into a tube, then secure it with tape.



2 Cut two slits into the top of the tube. Each slit needs to be about 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) long. Make the slits right across from each other. Your tube will now have two tabs on the top.^[3]



3 Cut off one of the tabs at the top of the tube. Fold down one of the tabs to make a crease. Cut along the crease, and discard the tab. The top of the tube will now be 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) shorter on one side.^[4]

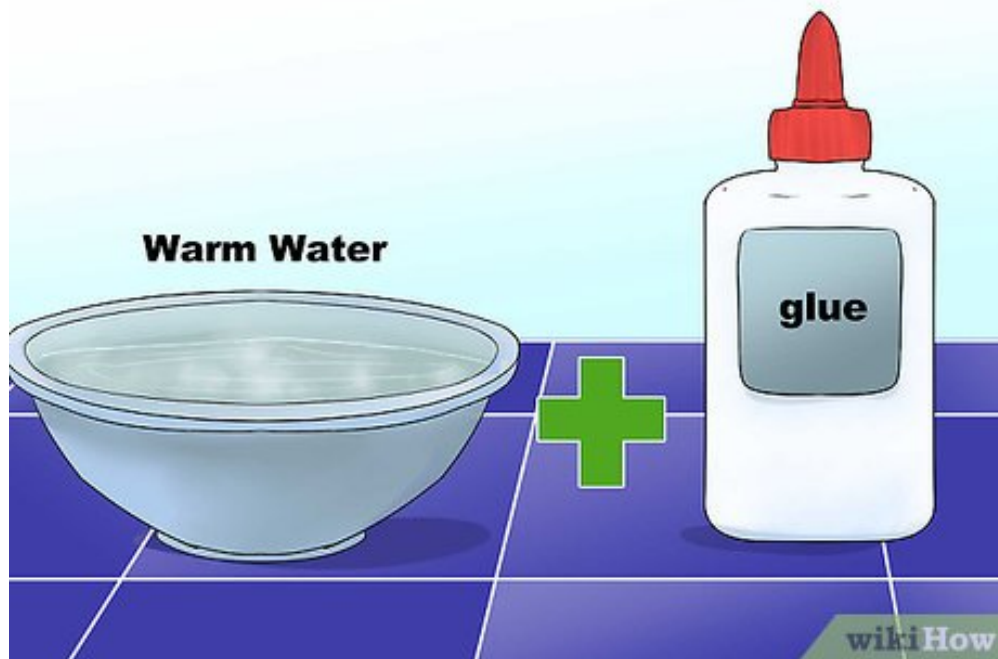


4 Secure the tube to the chin part of your mask. Place the tube against the chin of your mask. Rotate it so that the longer edge is covering the front of the chin, and the shorter edge is under the chin. Secure it with strips of tape.^[5]



1 Tear newspaper into thin strips. It is better if you tear the newspaper rather than cut it; the ragged edges will blend in together much better. Plan on making the strips between $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 inch (1.25 and 2.5 centimeters) wide and 2 to 3 inches (5 to 3.75 centimeters) long. Try to have different sizes. This will help you fill in all those curves and angles.

- If you don't have newspaper, you can use blank newsprint, tissue paper, or even paper towels.[6]



2 Create your paper mache glue. You can use your favorite recipe, or you can mix together equal parts of thick, white glue and warm water.^[7] If you don't have any glue, you can mix together equal parts of white flour and warm water instead.^[8]

- If the glue is too thick, stir in more water.

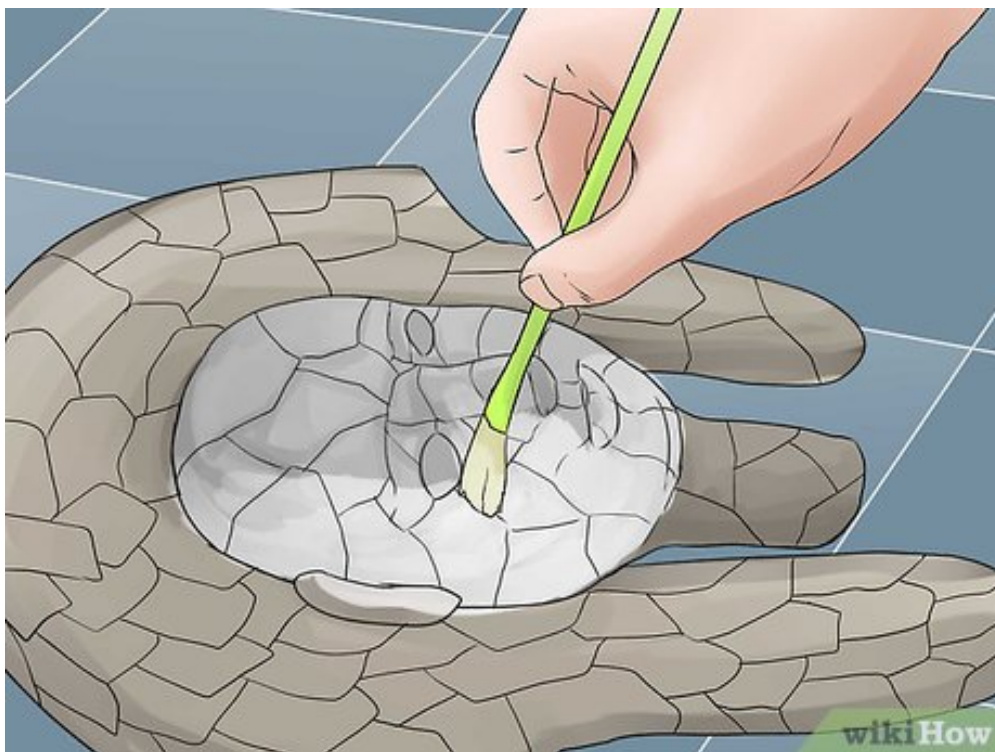


3 Dip the strips into the glue, then apply them to the mask. Apply the strips to the seam between the mask and the headdress first. Apply them to the rest of the mask next, including the headdress and beard.^[9] Use your fingers to smooth the paper mache down, and apply no more than 2 to 3 layers.^[10]

- Run the strip over the edge of the bowl to get rid of any excess glue.
- Work one strip at a time. Don't soak all of the strips all at once.
- Your second layers may not need any glue; the glue from the previous layer may be enough to make them stick.



- 4 Stuff the beard with paper, then cover the bottom with more paper mache.** Scrunch up a ball of newspaper and stick it up the bottom of the beard. Place a few strips across the bottom of the beard to cover up the hole.^[11]

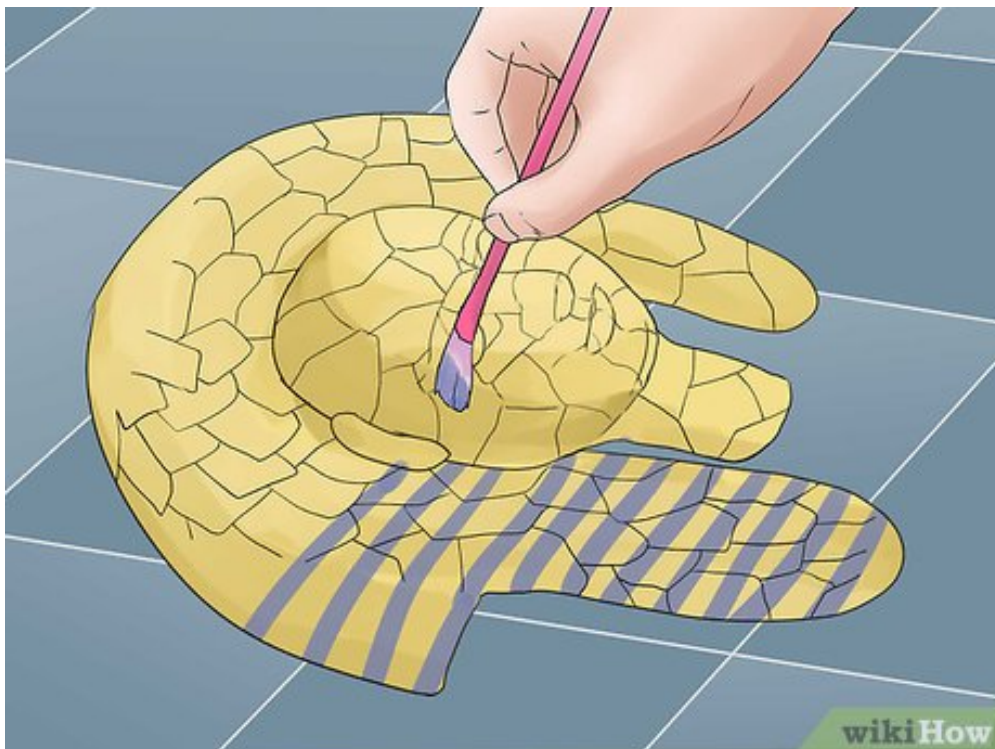


- 5 Let the mask dry overnight, then paint it white.** This will give you a smooth base to paint on, and make the paint show up better. If you want a smoother finish, you can paint it with white gesso, then sand it lightly with a fine-grit sanding sponge. You may have to do the gesso and sanding step a few times to achieve a smooth finish.
- You can also use spray paint primer instead.

Part 5 of 5: Painting the Mask

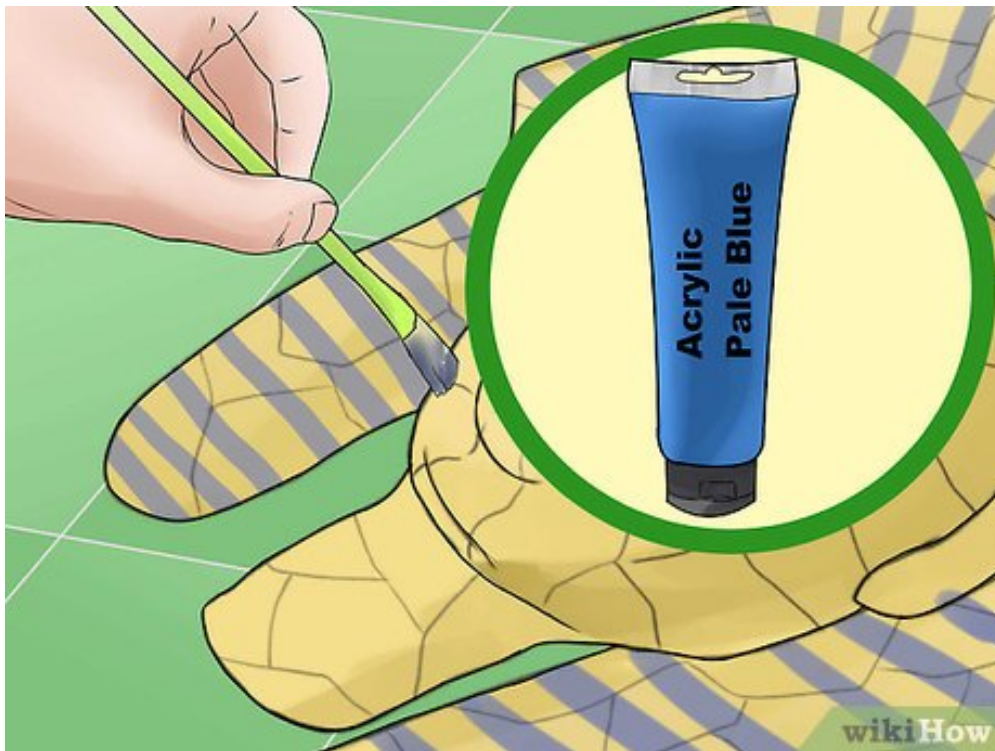


- 1 Paint the entire mask, including the headdress, gold.** You can do this with spray paint or with acrylic paint.^[12] If you need to apply another layer, let the first layer dry.

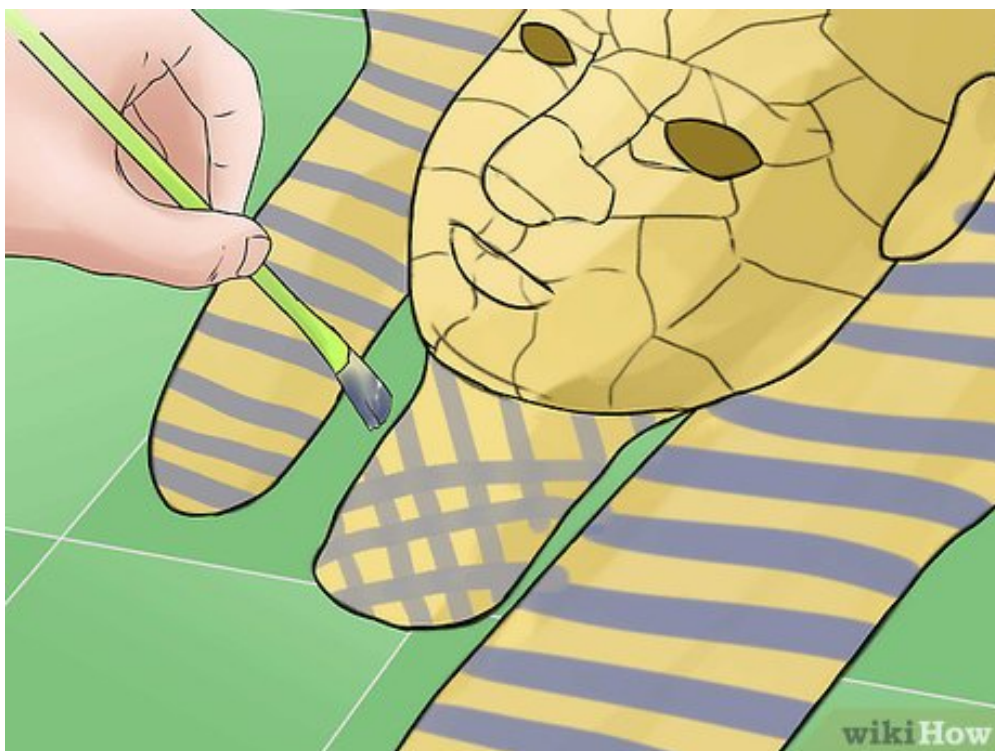


- 2 Add ½-inch (1-centimeter) blue stripes to the headdress.** You can do these with paint or with dark blue paper. The stripes need to be horizontal on the shoulder parts, and vertical at the top, above the forehead. Make them curve downwards on the upper corners of the mask so the change between the vertical and horizontal stripes isn't too abrupt.^[13]

- Make sure that the stripes are symmetrical on both sides of the mask.



3 Paint the beard blue using acrylic paint and a paintbrush. You can use the same color as you did for the blue stripes on the headdress, but a pale blue or turquoise would be more accurate. For a even *more* accurate mask, leave the bottom of the beard gold. Once again, if you need to apply a second coat of paint, let the first coat dry completely.



4 Add a crisscross pattern to the beard. You can do this with a thin brush and gold acrylic paint, a gold marker, or gold puffy/dimensional paint.^[14]



5 Add kohl to the eyes. Outline the eyes using a thin paintbrush and black acrylic paint or a black marker. Next, draw a 1 to 2 inch (2.5 to 5-centimeter) long horizontal line in the outer corner of each eye. For an even more accurate mask, draw curved eyebrows above the eyes. Make them follow the curve of the eyes and stop at the end of the kohl.



Community Q&A

Question

Can I make something out of metal for the mask?



T. Chinsen
Top Answerer

A mask needs to be lightweight to be comfortable if it is to be worn for any length of time. Metal adds a lot of weight that has to be balanced, and is more difficult to repair if damaged. Holographic and metallic finish tapes can add the metal appearance without the added weight.

Helpful 8 Not Helpful 4



Tips

- For a smoother finish, coat the paper mache with gesso before painting it.
- Print out some reference pictures of Tutankhamun's mask.
- Staple or glue a 1-inch (2.5-centimeter) wide elastic to the back of the mask. This will be sturdier than thin string or elastic.
- Seal the entire mask with glossy sealer to make the paint last longer.

- Make a matching collar to wear under the mask.
- Glue the mask to a backwards baseball cap to give it more support when you wear it.

References

1. ↑ <http://www.yac-uk.org/activity/make-an-ancient-egyptian-death-mask>
2. ↑ <http://www.yac-uk.org/activity/make-an-ancient-egyptian-death-mask>
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