

St George's Dragon Moneybox

You will need

- Newspaper, torn into strips
- White paper, torn into small squares
- Wallpaper paste
- Prepared papier-mâché pulp (optional)
- Balloons or small/medium gauge metal mesh
- Metal wire ties
- Card
- Cardboard
- Modelling clay
- Paint (green and other colours)
- Tissue-paper
- Collage materials and papers
- Sticky tape
- Glue
- Paintbrushes
- Wirecutters or strong sharp knife

What you do

- Blow up a balloon or make a balloon-shaped frame in chicken wire. If you are making a wire frame, hold edges together with metal wire ties (found in freezer bag rolls and so on).
- Make a long straight neck in card (by creating a narrow cone shape) and stick it to the fat round end of the balloon, with the narrower end of the cone pointing upwards. You may need to cut the end of the cone to create an angled join with the 'body'. Do the same in mesh if using a wire frame, and join to the 'body' with wire ties.
- Make a tail shape and two wing shapes in cardboard (or mesh) and tape (or wire) to the body.
- Make four small balls of modelling clay and stick them to the underside of the balloon/mesh frame as stabilising feet.



Your frame is now ready. Using strips of newspaper dipped in wallpaper paste, cover your frame completely, to a depth of at least four layers. If you then want a layer of knobbly prepared papier-mâché pulp to make a skin texture, add that as a top layer now. The model will take about 48 hours longer to dry if you do this.

Mould a head-shape using a ball of newspaper strips soaked in wallpaper paste. Attach to the end of the neck using more strips of newspaper. Cover the entire dragon in one or two layers of white paper to create a finished surface for painting. Leave your dragon to dry for a week. Painting time! Popular prejudice is in favour of green dragons, but you can go to town with yours. Using paint, tissue-paper and any collage materials you can get together, decorate your dragon. Try a red paper tongue, or felt flames coming from its mouth, tissue-paper scales, feathery wings, and so on.

When the decorations are finished, the slot for the money needs to be made in the middle of the back. This needs to be wide enough to retrieve the coins again by shaking the dragon upside down, since there is no stopper. Cut or clip a slit with wire-cutters or a sharp strong knife (adults only) and fold any metal pieces well inside to avoid injuries. Balloon-framed dragons are more fragile, so don't lean too heavily when cutting downwards. You can hang the dragons up as a display if you prefer, rather than making moneyboxes - make wire loops and suspend from supports or the ceiling. Remember to paint the underside.