



Activity of the month

Make an orb web spider!

September

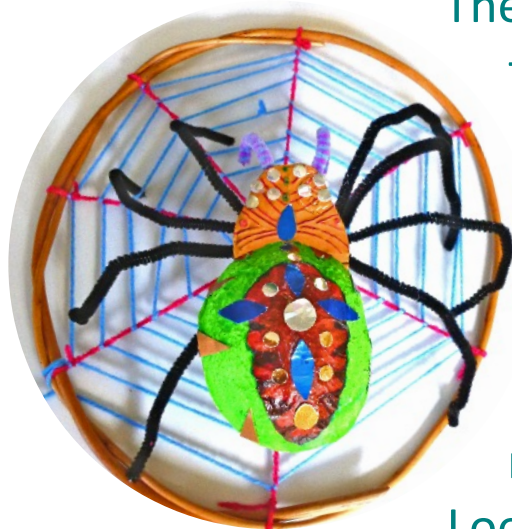


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September is a good time to see the orb web spider when the female is carrying her eggs and is much bigger than normal.

The orb web spider is the weaver of the classic spiral web that you might find in a spooky storybook. This web is covered in sticky droplets that help to catch

prey such as flying insects. As the trapped insect starts to struggle, the spider senses the vibrations of the web and moves in for the kill, using its fangs to inject venom, paralysing its victim before turning it into a soupy meal!



The garden cross spider is a member of this family. With a distinctive cross on its back it is easy to recognise and is sometimes called a diadem spider because this cross looks a bit like the jewels on a diadem (crown). Why not gather some recycled materials to make your own funky orb web spider!

Look at the template (page 4) to find out what body parts you will need.



You will need ...

For the spider

- A cardboard fruit tray (of the type used for avocados and peaches)
- Thin card
- Shiny or colourful recycled materials such as sweet wrappers, wrapping paper or foil
- Four pipe cleaners
- Wool or thread
- Glue
- Double sided sticky tape and masking tape
- Scissors
- Paint/pens for decorating your spider
- An adult helper

For the web

- A willow withy
- Some wool



Making the spider

1. Cut out a domed section from your fruit tray. This will be your spider's **abdomen**. (If you don't have a fruit tray, you can use flat card and cut out the shape from the template). Decorate this using paint and recycled materials.

2. Use the template to cut out a **cephalothorax** shape from thin card. Decorate this using recycled materials or coloured pens.



Remember to include

- Pedipalps (these could be made from pipe cleaners or card)
- 8 eyes



3. Bundle up your four pipe cleaners and tie a piece of wool in the middle to secure them. Stick them onto the base of your **cephalothorax** with some masking tape.



4. Using a sharp pencil, make a hole in the abdomen about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way along. Thread some wool through this and use a piece of tape to secure it .



5. Bend the tab on your spider's **cephalothorax** up. Stick this tab into the underside of your spider's abdomen using double sided tape.



6. Arrange your spiders legs then take her for a walk - by jiggling the string you can make her scuttle like a real spider!



Making the web

1. Soak your piece of willow in water (preferably overnight) to make it flexible. Hold the middle against your tummy and bend the ends round into a hoop twisting to secure.

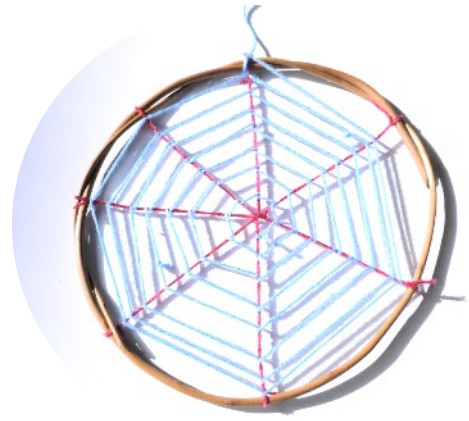
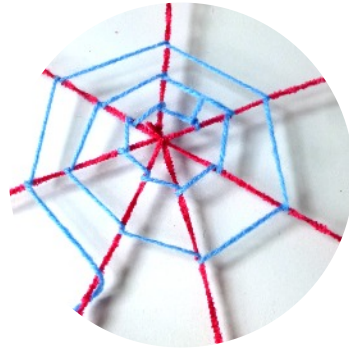


2. The orb web spider starts her web by securing a thread horizontally.



3. She then takes a line from the middle down to make a Y shape.





4. Threads are added to make a star shape. Tie each thread onto one side, pass through the centre and tie to the opposite side.

5. The spider then makes a spiral. To do this, start by tying a piece of wool in the centre and work outward looping round each of the radial threads as you cross them.

Template for spider

