

# Halloween Besom and Witch



The smell of woodsmoke, carving wicked faces in fleshy pumpkins, bobbing for ruby red apples – it can only mean that Halloween is here! Gathering natural materials and making this broom will develop your child's technical skills, and will also give them a sense of what real technology is: finding a solution to a problem. In the past, people needed to find a way to sweep mud, wood or stone floors. At first, they used whisks of twigs, which later developed into a simple but effective besom broom (I still use one today in my farmhouse kitchen – with my penchant for flowing black velvet skirts, my huge herb garden and my cats, people are beginning to talk...and I WAS born just after midnight on Halloween...)

The besom could be made alone – but the cute witch would be a great decoration to add for a Halloween party!

You need:

Besom:

Pole – either a long thick branch or a broom handle from a hardware store.

Bundle of twigs – broom or birch are great but any twiggy bundle will do.

Wire or strong string and duct tape

Sticky tape

Witch:

Old tights

Small piece of wadding (fist sized)

Needle

Thread

2 black beads

Black fabric or crepe paper

Black card  
Black wool  
PVA glue  
Metallic gel pen

What to do:

Besom:

1. Make bundles of twigs – as much as you can hold in your hand – and tape round them with sticky tape.
2. Tape the bundles round one end of the broom handle.
3. Tie the bundles as tightly as you can to the broom handle.
4. Tape round the top of the bundles of twigs with duct tape. It will fasten them more securely and cover the sticky tape/string.
5. You can, of course, customize the broom handle with painted or collaged pictures of stars, bats etc!

Witch:

1. Cut an adult – hand – sized section of the tights.
2. Place the wadding in the centre of the tights and stitch round the edge of the tights with a running stitch as though you were making a small drawstring purse.
3. Draw the thread tight to enclose the wadding.
4. Flatten the ball gently with your hands. To make eyes, pull the needle and thread through the back of the ball to the front and attach a bead. Stitch on securely.
5. To make a mouth, pull the needle and thread through the back of the ball to the front and stitch two sides of a triangle to make ‘V’ shape.
6. Make a long baggy dress for the witch from black fabric or crepe paper. Gather a piece of fabric in your hand to make a wide tube and tape the top. Glue this to the witch’s head.
7. To make arms, cut card strips and glue them to the body of the witch.
8. Make a witch’s hat from a circle of black card folded into a cone. Add stars and moons with a gel pen, and tape wool inside the hat for hair before you add the hat to the model.
9. Tape the witch’s arms securely to the broom, and prop her up for everyone to see as she flies around on her own traditional besom broomstick!

More fun: You can use this method with thick black opaque tights and add felt or card wings to make a bat – cream tights to make a ghost etc.