

How To:

Viking and Saxon shield making

The history:

Shields have been an essential part of a warriors kit from the distant past and are still used by police forces today.

However the shape and size of shields, and how they are made, varies widely depending on the materials available, and the way that the shield is going to be used.

This type of shield was especially popular in Europe between the 6th and 10th centuries, although it was used at other times too. It was a good general purpose shield and is useful for fighting individuals or for standing in long defensive lines (called shield walls) where it would protect you, and the person standing next to you!

Towards the end of the Viking age it was replaced by a teardrop shape shield that gives better leg protection. This is especially useful if you are fighting from horseback.

Equipment

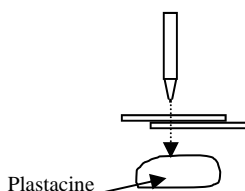
Scissors
String
Pencil/ ballpoint pen
Lump of blue tack or plastacine
Paint Brushes
Ruler or meter stick

This will make an average child sized shield. To make a shield that fits you, use a square of card with an edge that is twice as long as your forearm (plus the handle!)

Materials

Thick (corrugated) cardboard	min 50cm X 55cm
Thin cardboard	A4 recommended
(or paper bowl)	
Tinfoil	
Paper fasteners	(minimum of 4)
Paint	(various colours)
Glue and sticky tape	

Technique: Punching holes in cardboard

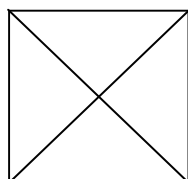


1. Place layers of cardboard on top of each other
2. Place on top of lump of plastacine
3. Place pencil where you want the hole to go
4. Push!

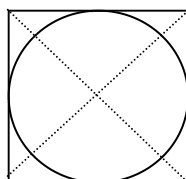
Cutting the shield and handle



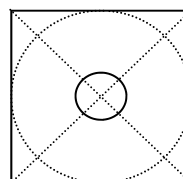
Trim the card to make a square. Keep a strip 5cm X 50cm to use as the handle.



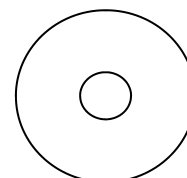
Find the middle of the square by drawing a two lines between opposite corners.



Draw as big a circle as you can. (read **Drawing Circles** on the next page!)

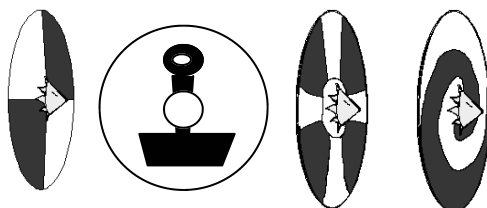


Draw a smaller circle inside the large one. Make sure it has a radius of more than 7 cm



Cut out the shield, it should look like a flat donut.

How will you decorate your shield?



Paint the shield and leave it somewhere safe to dry while you make the centre boss. (see over)

Attaching the Handle



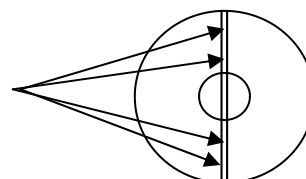
1. Make holes in the handle and the shield



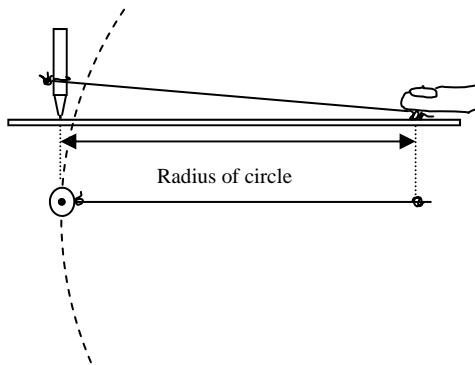
2. Push the fastener through both holes



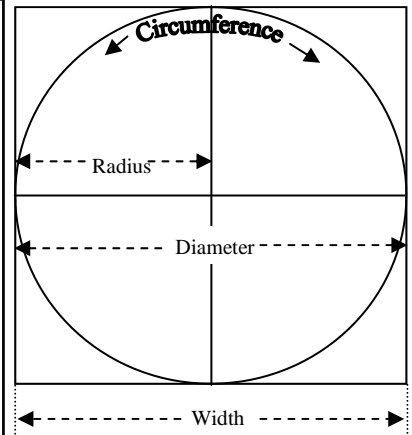
3. Fold over the ends of the fastener to hold the handle firmly



Technique: Drawing Circles



1. Find a piece of string that is a bit longer than the radius of the circle you want to draw.
2. Tie a knot in the end
3. Tie a pencil to the string so that the distance from the pencil to the knot is the same as the radius of the circle you are drawing.
4. Hold the knot with one hand and draw a line with the pencil. If you keep the string tight and the knot doesn't move you will draw a circle round the knot!



$$\text{Width (of Square)} = \text{Diameter (of circle)} = 2 \times \text{Radius (of Circle)}$$

$$(\pi = 3.14)$$

$$\text{Circumference} = \pi \times \text{Diameter}$$

Making the Centre Boss

If you hold the shield after you have attached the handle, you may feel that your hand is a bit exposed!

To protect the warriors hands craftsmen would attach a 'boss' made of metal to the centre of the shield.

A simple round boss like the Vikings used can be made by covering a paper bowl in tinfoil and then following the attachment instructions.

To make your own conical centre boss:

1. Using a pair of compasses or the pencil and string method, draw part of a circle on the card. (to make a tall thin cone make the corner of the card the centre of your circle, to make a low wide cone make the centre of the circle in the place that allows you to draw the longest possible amount of circumference.
2. Whichever size of cone you choose, remember to leave some room to draw tabs (the spiky bits) that you can then use to attach the cone to the shield.
3. Cut out the cone
4. Curl the card round into a cone shape and stick with glue or sellotape. (if you use sellotape stick it to one edge first and then curl the other over until they touch.
5. Cover the centre boss in tinfoil, or decorate in another way.

Attaching the Centre Boss

Use glue or paper fasteners to attach the centre boss to the shield in the same way as you attached the handle.

You can fold the tabs out to make a pattern, or fold them in to hide them.

If you are using paper fasteners follow the technique shown overleaf. And space the fasteners evenly around the circumference of the centre boss.

Once the boss is attached, use two more paper fasteners to secure the handle near the middle (As shown)

