

Spiral-Cut Chandeliers

Whimsical, colorful, and much easier than one would expect, these paper creations make festive decorations for mere pennies

Interior designers have known for centuries that a chandelier is more than just a functional piece of lighting. It creates a focal point, energizes a space, and sets a desired mood.

Artist Dale Chihuly has created colorful glass chandeliers that adorn museums and public spaces around the world. Constructed from as many as 3,200 individual pieces of glass and towering more than 40 feet high, these chandeliers make an awe-inspiring statement of light, color, and beauty.

Far less complicated than a Chihuly installation, a fanciful hanging piece with multiple spirals and swirls can be created using just a few sheets of paper.

A simple spiral cut — a line that starts on the edge of a circle and continues to the center — is the only skill needed. No glue, no extra construction. The secret is starting with multiple conjoined circles.

Although these chandeliers could be made with just about any type of paper, this project introduces Plastic Posterboard. It's brightly colored, outdoor-friendly, cuts easily, and it resists tears.

For extra pizzazz, "bling" the spirals with glitter paint, sequins, plastic gems, or anything that sparkles. Hang as a collaboration in a classroom or to add excitement to parties and indoor or outdoor spaces.

GRADES K-8 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.



Materials (required)

Pacon Plastic Posterboard, 22" x 28" sheets, assorted colors (13155-); share a minimum of 2 sheets across class

Maped Ultimate Scissors, 5" ambidextrous (58470-1005); need one per student

Hygloss Book Rings, package of 50, silvertone (64203-1001)

Materials (optional)

Plaid Mod Podge Sparkle Finish, half pint (02916-1005)

Elmer's Glitter Glue, 6oz assorted colors (65304-)

Creativity Street Peel-and-Stick Gemstones, assorted varieties (611764-)

Creativity Street Cupped Sequins, 1 oz (60717-1003)

Hygloss Holographic Self-Adhesive Paper, assorted patterns, package of 5 (12493-)

Hygloss Book Rings, pkg of 50, silver-tone (64203-1001)

Blick Studio Brush Markers, assorted colors (24532-)

Blick Construction Paper, assorted colors, 12" x 18" sheets, package of 50 (11409-)



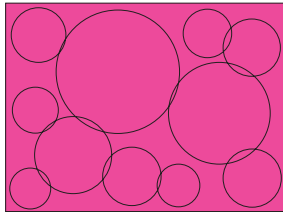
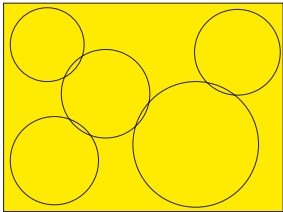
Process, continued

Preparation

1. Cut plastic posterboard (or other paper) into smaller pieces that measure approximately 7" x 9" to 9" x 12".
A sheet of plastic posterboard cut to an 8-1/2" x 11" size produces six pieces per sheet. A sheet cut to a 7-1/2" x 7" size produces 12 pieces per sheet.

Process

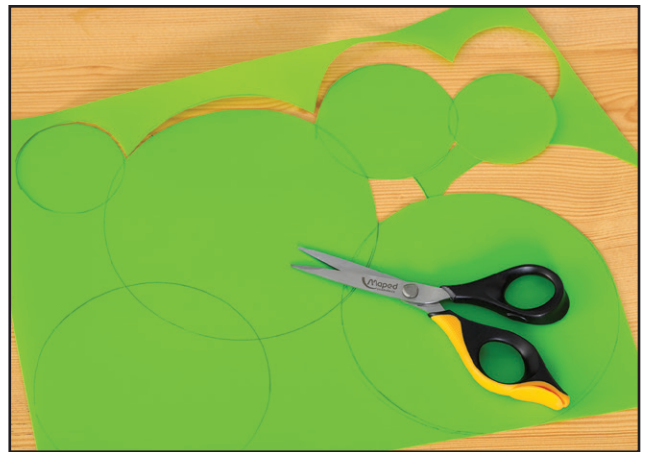
1. Start on the side of the plastic posterboard that has a slight texture. Using a pencil and a compass, a circle template, or multiple round objects such as lids or cups, draw circles of varying diameters. Each circle must be in contact with and slightly overlap one more circle.
Examples:



2. Cut along the outside of the circles, so that one shape remains. Erase pencil lines, if desired.
3. Choose one circle. Start at the point where it meets the adjoining circle and begin to cut a rounded line. Watch the outer edge of the circle and follow its curve. The cut does not need to be even. Turning the paper while cutting is easier than turning the scissors. Continue until the center of the circle is reached.
4. Continue cutting spirals into all the circles, starting at each joining point. The paper will remain in one piece.
Plastic posterboard will be more forgiving than paper, so cutting small spirals without tearing them will be easier.
5. Unfurl the cut piece and hang it. Some of the spirals may need a "tug" to stretch them out and make them more spring-shaped.
6. Enjoy a single section as a "twirler," or cut more and hang multiple pieces together to form a chandelier. Snap together with a metal book ring.

Options

- Before cutting, apply decoration and glittery, sparkly items to make the chandelier glow. Some suggestions:
 - a. Permanent markers or gel pens
 - b. Glitter paints or glitter glue
 - c. Glitter paper
 - d. Stickers
 - e. Gem shapes
 - f. Sequins
- Display collaborative pieces in classrooms, hallways, or hang them outside. Wind will add motion and a rustling sound to the pieces.



Step 1: Draw multiple adjoining circles and cut them out.



Step 2: Start at the point where the circles meet and cut a rounded line that follows the outer curve of the circle. Continue cutting to the center. Repeat for all circles.



Step 3: Enjoy as a single "twirler," or snap pieces together with a book ring to form a chandelier.