

COVERED BOWLING BALLS FOR THE GARDEN

(Instruction from Jan Burgon, Ambassador Horticultural Society)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bowling Balls** - Find at garage sales, charity shops, etc. (available in large (ten pin) and small (five pin) The smaller ones are more difficult to find.
- Ball Support** - From inside of bowling bag (can be used as a stand while working on the bowling ball)
- Grout** - Available at any store that sells tile. Can purchase either sanded or unsanded. The unsanded gives a smoother finish.
- Course Sand Paper** - 50X (very course)
- Grout Sealer** - Use sealer suitable for outside.
- Pliable Rubber** - Small pieces of heavy pliable rubber or a spatula will do.
- Sponges** - Small pieces of a dense sponge
- Paint Brushes** - For cleaning spaces between china pieces after excess adhesive has been removed and also to apply grout sealer.
- Adhesive** - LePage P.L. Premium Construction Adhesive. Available at Home Depot.
- Chalking Gun** - Available at any hardware store.
- Bowls** - Stainless Steel works well. Use for mixing grout and cleaning excess grout from between china.
- Old Towels**
- Old China Plates, Saucers, Cups, etc.** - Find at garage sales, charity shops, etc. Note: The china should have as much pattern on it as possible.
- Glass Stones** - Available at Dollar Store. Should be complimentary colour to china being used.
- Newspaper** - Lots of it!
- Goggles or Safety Glasses**

- Hammer and Pliers** - Hammer to break china. Pliers to snip corners etc.
- Face Mask** - Available at hardware stores. Use when mixing the grout powder with water
- Palette Knife (flexible)** - Available at Dollar Store. Use to apply adhesive.
- Acrylic Paint** - Available at Dollar Store. To mix with grout to add complimentary colour to go with applied china.
- Q-Tips & Toothpicks**
- Nail Polish Remover** - To remove excess adhesive
- Measuring Cups** - To measure grout and paint
- Styrofoam or Paper Plates**
- Polyfiller** - To fill in finger holes on bowling balls.
- Long Nail or Screwdriver** - To plug adhesive cylinder when not in use
- Knitting Needle** - To puncture membrane in adhesive cylinder prior to use
- Large Spoon** - For mixing grout (be sure to wear your mask)
- Piece of Copper Pipe** - To hammer into ground as support for the ball if you are not using a stand. Pipe does not have to be very long.
- Thin Rubber Gloves** - Use when working with grout – **it is corrosive**

METHOD

FIRST – The Fun Part

Using lots of newspaper, place china plate on newspaper on a hard surface (your driveway or garage floor work). Put approximately 5 pieces of newspaper over the plate, put on safety goggles, and with a hammer relieve your frustration and break the plate into pieces of varying sizes but not too large.

Thoroughly Wash Bowling Ball - Use strong soapy water and **rinse well to remove all soap**. Let dry thoroughly.

Fill Small Finger Holes in Ball - Fill with Polyfiller almost to the top. Let dry.

Place a paper towel or rag in Thumb Hole to keep it open and free of materials.

Scrub Balls with Sand Paper - Rough up entire surface of ball with the 50X sandpaper. Wipe well after done.

Place Adhesive Tube in Applicator - Cut end and pierce the membrane with the knitting needle.

Pump small amount of adhesive on Styrofoam/paper plate

Choose pieces of China - Sand each edge of broken china with the 50X sandpaper. Do this one piece at a time.

Using Small Palette Knife - Put glue on back of piece of china/stones and press in place on ball. Continue in this way but only cover an area of the ball so that the pieces do not slip. Let this area dry for approximately one half hour. Then continue covering another space.
When ball is completely covered let ball dry completely for approximately two days.
Note: Make sure you work around the unfilled Thumb hole in the ball as this hole will be used to set the ball on a pipe in your garden.

Clean off Excess Glue using Q Tips dipped in Nail Polish Remover

Seal your adhesive tube with a nail in between uses.

Mix Grout - When handling grout be sure to wear a face mask!
Each large ball will require approximately three cups of dry grout.

If using Acrylic Paint to colour your grout, mix paint with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cold water (amount of paint will be determined by how dark you wish your grout to be). Be sure and beat your paint/water mixture so that it is well blended. Add liquid mixture to grout and mix thoroughly (you may require more water) as wet grout should be the consistency of thick cake batter. **Let stand for 5 minutes and then mix again.**

Applying Grout

With a spatula or pliable piece of rubber, drop small amounts of grout on the ball and press the grout in between the china/stone pieces. **Note: Be sure that the Thumb Hole on the ball has material in it to keep it open.** Working in one small area at a time - Scrape off excess grout and using a damp well-squeezed sponge go **GENTLY** over the area you have grouted. Do this twice, rinsing out the sponge in your bowl of water between applications. In approximately 5 minutes the area can be rinsed again using a clean damp sponge and clean water. Wipe with an old towel, making sure that you get all the grout off the china/stone pieces. Continue until the entire ball is grouted. Let dry for approximately one week. Polish with a dry towel.

Sealing Grout

Apply sealer to grout with a small paint brush. Let dry and apply a second coat.

Choose a base or the ball can be placed on a pipe, which has been driven into the ground, using the open Thumb Hole.

DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PROJECTS OUT IN THE WINTER!!

BONUS:

If the china you use is coloured on the back then you can use both sides of china when applying the pieces to the ball.

If you are using this method on hypertufa planters or large concrete/terra cotta pots, plates, etc. can be broken and left as a unit on the newspaper and then be applied intact on some of the large surface areas. Note: It is not recommended that you use plastic containers.

You can use combinations of items to decorate your balls/pots, i.e. glass discs, pebbles, display names of manufacturers (i.e. Royal Dalton) can be displayed on balls. Hands, heads or feet of figurines can be used on pots.