

Entry Sign

Last Updated Tuesday, 22 October 2013 13:31



Parts:

- Foam
- Adhesive ground coat
- Paint
- Exacto knife
- Dremel

Description:

First of all you will need to come up with a design for your haunt's logo. I used the shield because I already had a coat of arms that inspired me to make the haunt in the first place, so the shield part was easy. I also went with the scrolling banner to give it a medieval/magical look. After I made the design I used an overhead projector to shine the image on the foam to be transferred. You could just print out an image on several sheets of paper and then use either pins or spray adhesive to hold it in place while you cut out the sign.

First, cut out the outline to make the thing easier to work with. Then just pick an area and start carving. I first cut out the lines for the scroll ends with a steak knife holding it vertical and cutting in about a half an inch. Then I laying the blade flat against the foam and tipping it slightly into the foam to make an angled cuts. Just make sure that the area that you cut away is the area that would be below the other area.

The detail in the shield was achieved by using a Dremel tool to sand down the low areas, and

then the Exacto knife was used to finish off the tiny areas the Dremel couldn't reach. If you have a router attachment for your Dremel tool, it would be a good idea to use it. But if you are like me, and do not have one, just let the side of your hand rest on the foam and slowly drag the tool from the left most areas to the right (if you are right handed).

The letters were carved using only the exacto knife cutting in at a 45 degree angle towards the middle of the letters. Make sure if you are using a template to do this step, that you start with the center of the letter such as in letters like "e", "o", "p", etc. Otherwise you will have to replace the center part of the template to finish carving the letter.

After the whole thing is carved, paint it with a thin layer of ground coat adhesive (a rubbery concrete mixture) to make it hard and tough. If you do not have ground coat adhesive in your area, ask your local paint store or concrete supplier if they have something that can form a hard coat over the foam without losing the details.

Once the ground coat dries, paint it whatever color you choose, or leave it grey as I did and then mix up a wash (paint thinned down with water) and drip it on the sign along the top edge and allow it to run down over the whole thing flowing into the cracks and other features to add more depth. You could even go back and brush in a thicker wash where you want more shadow to appear. I chose not to do this since I was planning on lighting it from above to produce natural shadows in the letters.

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