

Make your own Sutton Hoo Helmet

In 1939 a massive, and very important, ship burial was discovered at Sutton Hoo, near Ipswich. The wooden beams of the ship had rotted away many centuries before but left a ghostly imprint in the ground.

The burial was discovered to have been Anglo-Saxon royalty and contained all the things somebody so important would need in the afterlife. One of the most famous finds was the Sutton Hoo helmet, one of only four complete Anglo-Saxon helmets that we know of. The helmet was also very unusual because it has a facemask.



When it was found, the helmet was in hundreds of pieces as the burial chamber had collapsed. Conservators at the Royal Armouries have reconstructed the helmet by precisely locating the remaining fragments and assembling them as if they were a 3D jigsaw puzzle! You can see the reconstruction in the British Museum.

Laura Peck

Adult supervision is required.

Type of Activity : Crafting

How many people required (minimum) : 1

Safety Measures : Please ask an adult to help you with the scissors and craft knife.

Ages : 8+

Time Required: 4 hours+ for the paint to dry.

Materials Required:

- Cardboard
- Sticky Tape
- Scissors
- Craft Knife
- Gold and Silver Paint

1. Cut a strip of cardboard about 3cm wide and tape it together to make a circle. You can use your head to measure it if you'd like to be able to wear the helmet. Make sure it's a little loose at first to allow for the sections you will stick inside it.



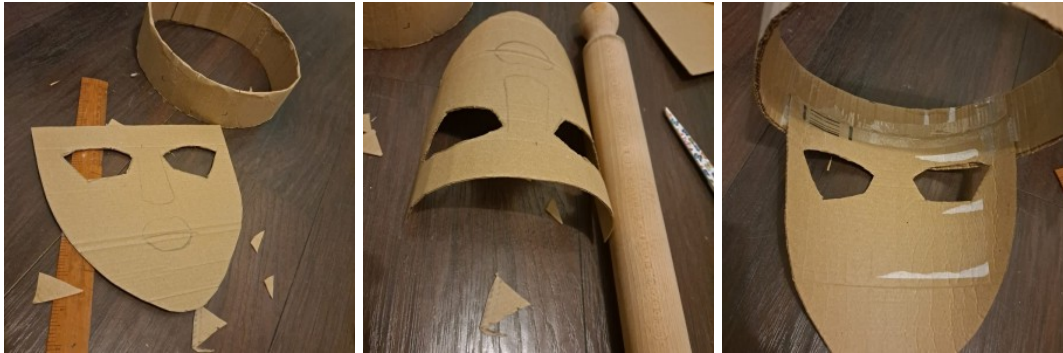
2. Draw a section the size of a face on the cardboard. This will be the front section of the helmet so make it's wide enough to fit around the front of the band.

Draw some eyes, a nose and a mouth. These will show you where to stick eyebrows and a moustache later!



3. Cut out the eyes and bend the face section so that it fits around your face. You can use a rolling pin or another heavy object to hold the shape.

Use sticky tape to attach the face section and band together.

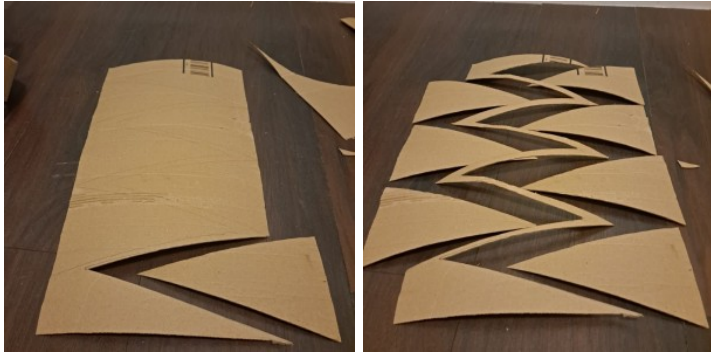


4. Using scissors or a craft knife, cut the sides and bottom of the nose section. Make sure not to cut it off completely, you want it to stick out.

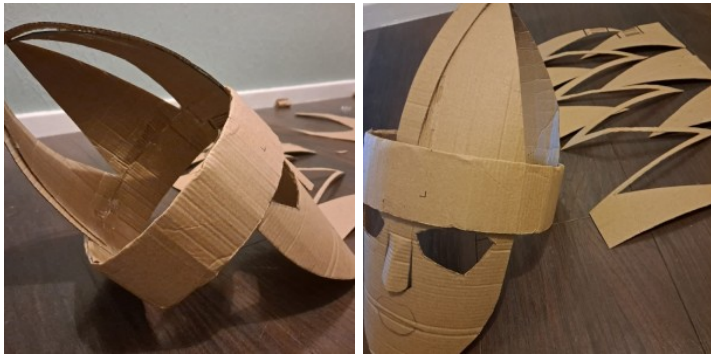
Ask an adult to help you with the scissors or craft knife.



5. Draw equal-sized triangles on a piece of rectangular cardboard and cut them out.



6. Attach the triangular pieces to the band using sticky tape. You can add another piece of cardboard from the front to the back to make it easier to attach them if you like.



7. Make sure all the pieces connect at the top. You can also add another piece of cardboard here to keep them all together.

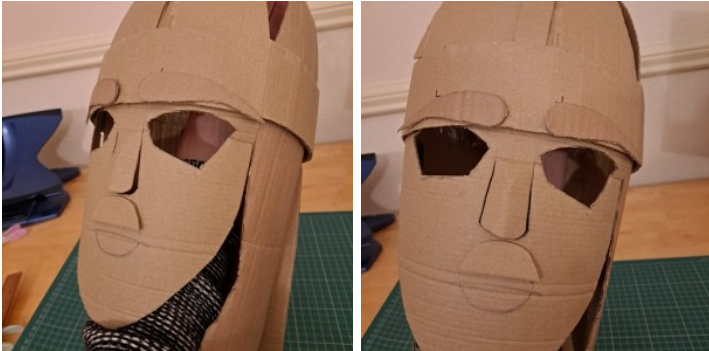


8. Next, you need to attach a neck guard to the back of your helmet. Cut out some panels, around the same length as your face section and attach it to the inside of the band using sticky tape.

If you'd like to be able to wear the helmet you might want to attach them to the outside in order to make sure it is not too small afterwards.



9. Use some of the leftover pieces of cardboard to make decorations for your helmet. You can add eyebrows and a moustache like the Royal Armouries reconstruction.



10. Paint the main sections silver, leaving the decoration plain.



11. Now paint the decorative sections gold or any other colour you think would look good.

Leave the paint to dry before trying it on!

