

# Lantern Making for St Martin's Day at Nightingale Garden



**Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> November 4-6pm**

Nightingale Garden  
CB1 8SG

[www.nightingalegarden.org.uk](http://www.nightingalegarden.org.uk)

In preparation for our first St Martin's Day celebration at Nightingale Garden this year, we thought it might be nice to give you some ideas on simple ways you could make a lantern to bring along.

Growing up in Germany, St Martin's Day or Martinmas was a huge part of my childhood. St Martin's Day is celebrated on the day or eve of the 11<sup>th</sup> of November in many central European countries in honour of St Martin, a Roman soldier who lived in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The legend goes that Martin was riding on his horse in Amiens when he saw a freezing beggar sitting in the snow and felt so sorry for the man that Martin used his sword to cut his officer's cloak in two and shared it with the poor man. He later became the Bishop of Tours and patron saint of the poor.

St Martin's Day is usually celebrated with a lantern walk lead by a rider on a horse who is dressed up as St Martin. Songs are sung, a fire is lit and at the end, the children receive a sweet treat. Different regions have their own traditions for this. In preparation for the lantern walk, the children make lanterns that they bring along on the day.

We hope that you can join us on 11<sup>th</sup> November from 4-6pm at the Garden and that you can bring along a lantern to light up the garden. At the garden, we will tell the story of St Martin, talk about the charitable aspect of the celebrations, sing songs, walk together with our lanterns and share and enjoy the light, warmth, smiles, singing and a sweet treat together.

We look forward to seeing you at the garden!

The Nightingale Garden Volunteers

# Jam Jar Lanterns

Using jam jars is a beautiful and easy way to make lanterns. You will need some jam jars, translucent or tissue paper torn into pieces, PVA glue, a brush and a little bit of string or wire.



First, dilute some PVA glue with some water and apply the mix to the outside of your jam jar. Then add pieces of translucent or tissue paper and brush some more PVA glue over.



Once you have covered your whole jam jar, leave it to dry.

Instead of using colourful tissue paper, you could also cover your jam jar in leaves. I would recommend to use freshly collected leaves as fully dried leaves will be too crisp, won't mold to the shape of your jam jar and will break very easily.



First, dilute some PVA glue with some water and apply the mix to the outside of your jam jar. Then, add the leaf and brush some more glue over it.



Depending on what kind of leaves you are using, you might find that they do not stick very well. If this is the case, put some white (or yellow) tissue paper over the leaf and add a little more glue.

Once you have covered your whole jam jar in this way, leave it to dry.



When dry, attach a piece of string or wire tightly under the thread of the jam jar and test carefully that your jam jar can't fall out.



Using jam jars to make lanterns will make your lantern fairly heavy. If it is for a small child, you might find it better to use a clear yoghurt tub or the lower half of a plastic bottle as a much lighter base.

# Paperplate Lanterns

This is a simple way of making a lantern that is also easily accessible to younger children. You will need two paper plates for each lantern, some translucent paper or tissue paper, some paints (watercolour or acrylic paints work well), some glue, scissors, and some wire or string.



First, cut the inside out of your two paper plates. Decorate the outside in a colour of your choice using your watercolours or acrylic paints.



Then, stick some translucent paper on the inside of the paper plates to cover the circle you had cut out.

Now, you can start to decorate the outside of your lantern. For this rainbow fish lantern, cut out little scales of translucent paper and stick them onto the outside of the paperplates. Then, draw on some eyes and a face.



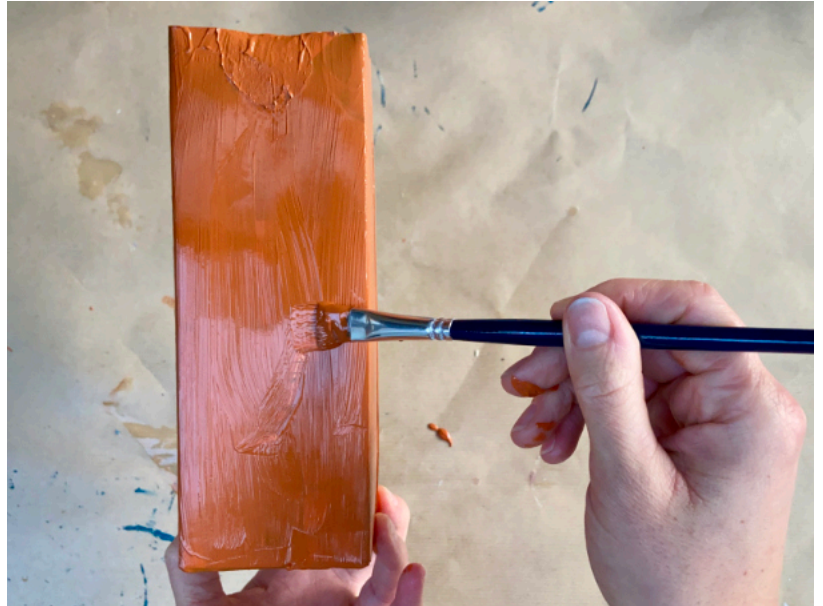
Next, glue the two paperplates together. I used PVA glue for this, then clamped the two plates together and let them dry overnight.



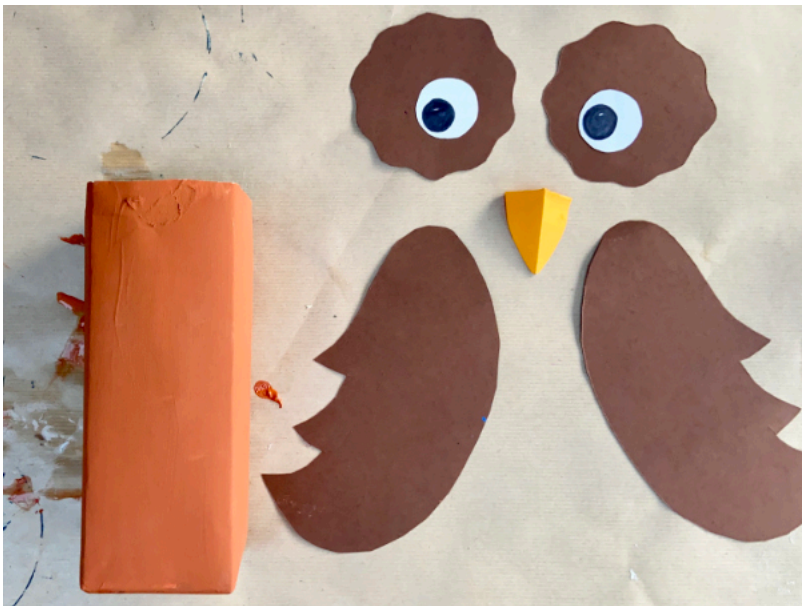
Finally, add any additional decorations or parts to your lantern and cut an opening into the top to allow you to put in an electric tealight.

# Upcycled Lanterns

This is just one of countless ideas with which you can turn virtually anything you find in your recycling bin into a lantern. For this owl, you will need a milk or juice carton, some acrylic or other opaque paint, a paint brush, some brown and yellow cardboard, a pointy tool, some scissors and some wire or string.



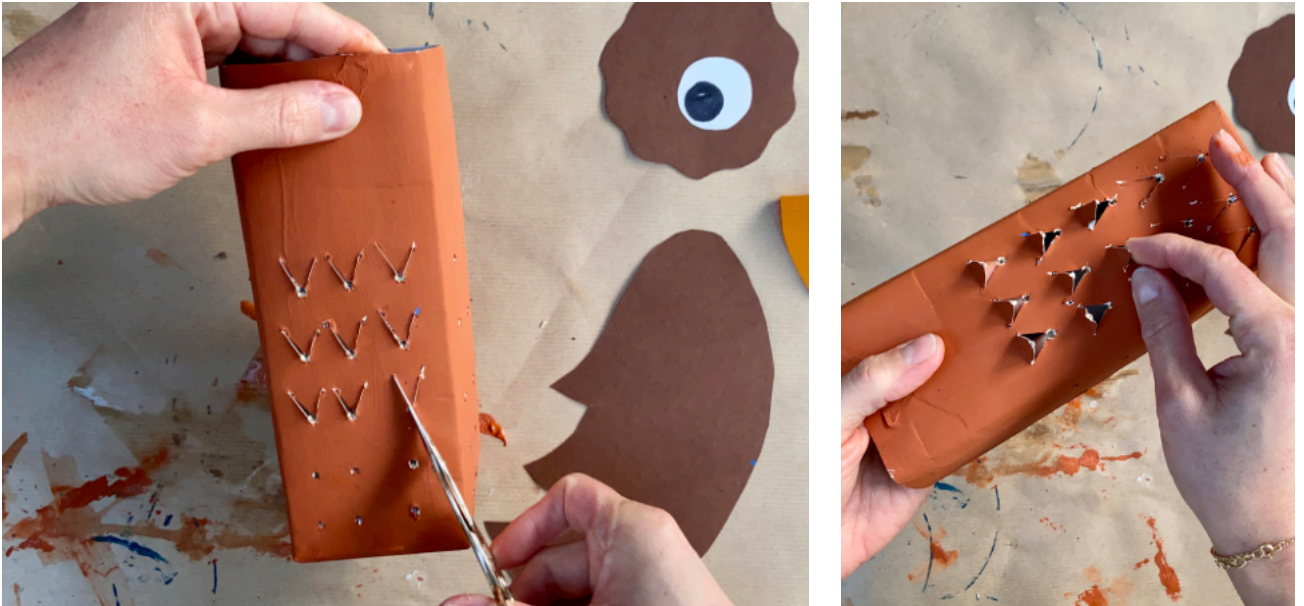
First, cut the top off your milk or juice carton, wash it out and dry it thoroughly. Then, paint the outside in a colour of your choice and leave to dry. I found using acrylic paints or any other opaque paint to work well as it covers any writing or pictures on the carton.



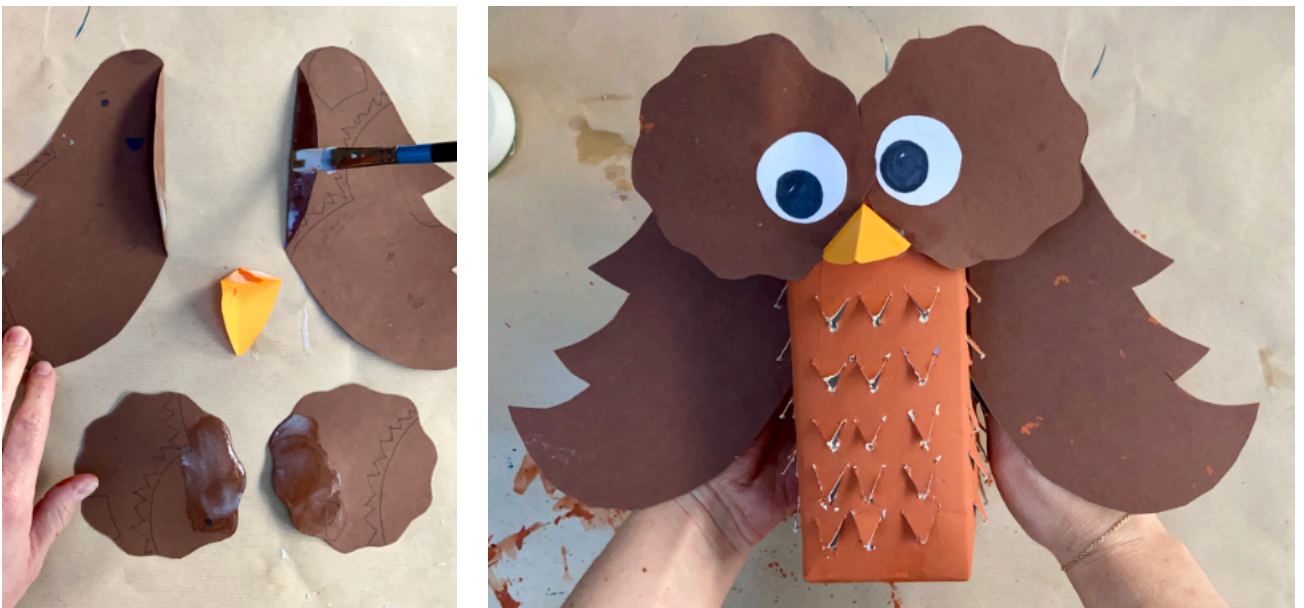
While the paint dries, you can cut out any additional pieces you might like to add to your lantern later, such as wings, eyes and a beak. Using a pointy tool, make small holes in the lower two thirds on all four sides of your lantern.



Using a pair of small scissors and starting at the holes you have just made, cut triangular shapes into your lantern. Then, push these out from the inside to create little openings.



Now, make a fold on the wings and apply glue on the wings, eyes and beak to allow you to stick them onto the carton.



To finish off your lantern, make two small holes at the top, attach some wire or string and put in some LED tealights.

# Balloon Lanterns

A balloon makes for an excellent base to make a lantern using simple papier mâché method. You will need a balloon, a bowl that is slightly smaller than your balloon, some tissue paper, PVA glue, a brush, some wire or string and any other paper you might like for decorating.



Blow up the balloon to the size you'd like your lantern to be and rest it on the bowl. If you like, you can attach the balloon to the bowl with some tape to have a more stable base to work on.



Dilute your PVA glue with some water and brush the mix onto the balloon. Tear the tissue paper into pieces (these can be larger pieces than what you'd use for the jam jar lantern) and layer up the tissue paper, covering each layer with more glue.

Create several even layers all around your balloon to ensure your lantern is sturdy and make sure the lower edge is not too thin as this will later be the top of your lantern.



If you like, you can decorate your lantern. Here, I cut out geese, stars and a moon from black paper for a silhouette effect. Using more PVA glue, apply your silhouettes to your lantern. Remember to do this upside down as the bottom of the balloon will be the top of your lantern.



Once your lantern is dry, pop or cut the balloon and remove it. Tidy up the rim and if needed, reinforce it with some tape or paper. Finally, attach some wire or string and add some LED lights.

# Cheesebox Lanterns

Using a cheesebox, you can easily make a traditional shape lantern. For this, you will need a wooden or paper cheesebox, two A4 sheets of translucent (or even just normal) paper, some more paper or paints to decorate, a glue stick and some wire or string.



If you like, you can start off by painting your cheesebox in a colour of your choice. Alternatively, you can just leave it as it is and it will still look great.



Stick the two A4 sheets of paper together on their short sides using a glue stick to create one long piece of paper.

Then, decorate the paper in whichever way you like. I chose to cut out stars in a metallic paper, but you could cut out any other shape or even more intricate silhouettes. Alternatively, you could paint or stamp on the paper to decorate it.

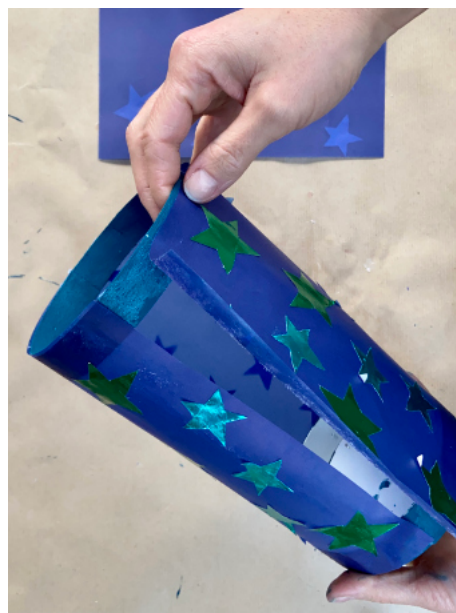


Take the inside circle out of the lid of your cheesebox. Then, start with the base of the cheesebox and apply glue all around.



Begin wrapping the paper around the base of your cheesebox and cut off any excess paper. Make sure you allow for a little bit of an overlap.

Cover the outside of the lid ring of your cheesebox with glue, add it to the top of your lantern and stick the translucent paper shut by overlapping it a little bit.



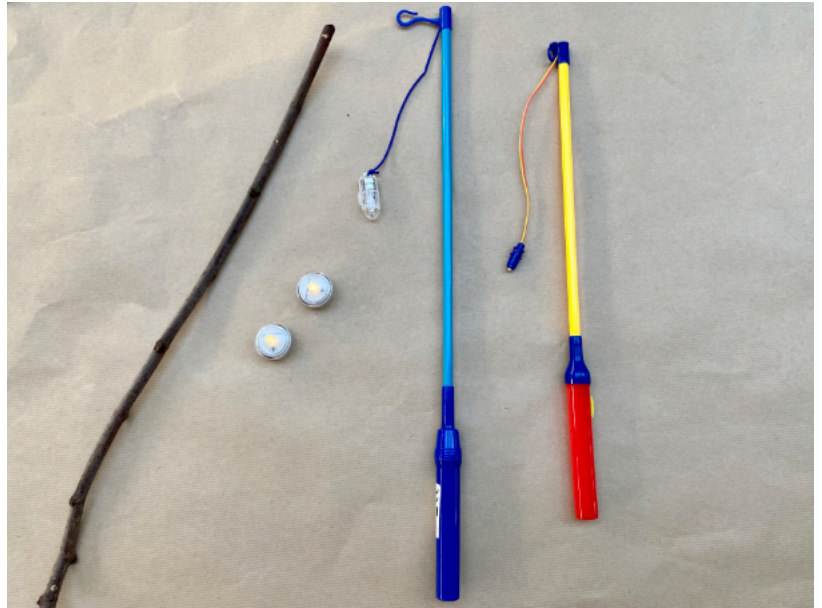
Finally, using a pointy tool, make two small holes on opposite sides at the top of your lantern and attach some wire or string to allow you to hang up your lantern..



Now insert some LED tealights. Depending on the size of your lantern and the thickness of the paper, you might like to use several LED tealights to make sure your lantern shines brightly.

# Lighting your Lantern

You have many options to light up your lantern. You could simply hang your lantern on a sturdy stick and put some LED tealights into your lantern. It is a good idea to test this out in the dark and see if your LED tealight is bright enough. If not, you might need to use a few more. Some battery powered fairy lights might also look great in your lantern as they are likely to be a little brighter and distribute the light nicely. Alternatively, you could use a bicycle light or even a torch.



For safety reasons, please do not use real candles in your lanterns.



In Germany, many families buy lantern sticks, which are battery powered lantern holders with an integrated LED light. Often, these are a little brighter than just LED tealights and might be of use to you if you regularly attend lantern walks. These come in different lengths, depending on the age of the child who will carry the lantern. We hope you have fun making your lanterns and we can't wait to see them when you bring them to the garden on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November.



illustration by Francesca Luisi francescaluisi@hotmail.co.uk

If you'd like to support Nightingale Community Garden, you can now become a Friend of the garden.

Visit the garden website [www.nightingalegarden.co.uk](http://www.nightingalegarden.co.uk) to sign up.

You can also donate to the garden by paypal or bank transfer:

Nightingale Gardeners

Lloyds Bank

Sort code: 30 65 65

Account number: 631 76568