
Quick and Easy Bird Costume with Courtney Cerruti

Chapter 1 - Quick and Easy Bird Costume

Make bird costume

- Hi, I'm Courtney from Creativebug and I actually really love to make costumes but the things that always trip me up when I start to think about what I might like to make for Halloween is the sewing. I'm not the best sewer. So I'm gonna show you a really easy costume that comes together with absolutely no sewing. We're gonna make a bird costume using a canvas cape that we're gonna do a really pretty painted treatment on. We'll add some feathers using felt. Again, no sewing, just cutting. And we'll put it all together with hot glue. It's the sweetest, little bird costume. You can make it in a ton of colors and it's something that you can use all year round for dress up or just for Halloween. For this project, we're gonna make the cape that's gonna become our bird wings out of canvas, and you can buy this in a yard and a half, precut, and then we're actually just gonna be using a half of that. If you're using some other kind of heavyweight fabric at home, just make sure that you have about three quarters of a yard. You'll need two yards of ribbon. One's gonna be for the mask and one's gonna be for the cape, so those can be the same ribbon or different. A variety of felt sheets for your feathers. I'm gonna do this particular bird in these pretty pinks and gold, so I have two sheets of each color. We're gonna be using paint so that we can create this really pretty painterly effect on the cape and not have to cut hundreds of felt feathers. And you want them to be in a palette that matches the felt feathers that you're gonna do. So I've got, again, golds and pinks. Water, paper towels, and a variety of brushes. You'll also need a template for making your mask, a pair of sharp scissors and snips, hot glue, and a couple of pins to have on hand is always a good idea. We're gonna start by cutting our cape. Unfold your canvas. You wanna have a double layer because we're gonna be cutting this to create the full bird wing cape. And you can really make this any size. Think about the person that's gonna be wearing the cape in something that's big enough for them or small enough, depending on what kind of person you're putting 'em on, little person, big person. I'm just gonna loosely draw an opening here for the neck. Remember, this is just half and this is gonna go around the shoulders, this part. And then just from corner to corner, I'm gonna draw an arc. This will be the bottom of the wings. And you can just cut along those pencil marks, or you can use chalk. This is really very forgiving. It does not have to be precise. We're gonna unfold this so that we can paint the cape. It might be a good idea to work on a tarp or some scrap paper 'cause we wanna paint all the way to the edge. You may also wanna put on an apron, just what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna paint in a gradation from my lightest color at the top, closest to the neck, and then down to my darkest color. I'm gonna do magenta here at the bottom just using a regular brush, just like an inexpensive coarse bristle brush. I'm just gonna paint at the bottom. I like the kind of rough marks it makes but what I really like to do is add a little bit of water as I'm going because you get this nice, watercolor effect that happens, along with the dry brushing. Just gonna go around the edge, working along in the same shape as the hem, stroking from the center out. We're keeping this really loose and rough. You do not have to know how to paint. This is just really mark making, just super fun. It's fine to leave a little bit of white space as well. I like the variety of light and dark 'cause it feels more feathery. I might bring a little bit of that magenta up, a little higher. Without washing my brush, I'm just gonna move into the lighter pink. I love hot pink, so I'm definitely gonna use a lot of that on this. Again, the same thing, you can do a dry brush and then go back with a little bit of water to get a softer stroke. We're just painting one half because it's easier to manage. You're

gonna do the same thing to the other side as well. And then we'll move on to the yellow color. I'm using like an ocher, which I love. I love ocher with hot pink. The last color is gonna be that paler yellow, more true yellow. You can go back in with a little bit of pink up here if you want. We get a pretty coral color. And then you're just gonna repeat this on the other side. Go ahead and let this dry for about 15 minutes. Just set it aside, and in the meantime, we can cut our feathers, so that when our cape is dry, we can start gluing everything together. We're gonna cut our felt sheets into strips and then we'll cut feathers from these. So this first one, I'll maybe cut into quarters. Again, this can be very rough. It doesn't have to be perfect. We're just gonna fold these in half, this way, so we can cut two feathers at once. Start with a basic leaf shape so we have two layers. And then just using our scissors, we'll cut little, tiny feathers coming off the shape. You can do smaller feathers by just folding this in thirds. Again, just very roughly. This is where your sharp scissors are handy. That gives you three, little feathers. You can make a longer feather. If you take a felt sheet and fold it in half the hotdog way, just cut that in the center and then fold it again so that you just have a quarter. Pull it over on itself and then you can make one, big feather this way. Again, just cutting up the sides for that texture. Go ahead and cut all of your feathers at this point in a range of colors. I like to have the bigger feathers at the bottom, so those would be my magenta, with the smaller feathers at the top, in more of the orange and yellow colors. You can cut 20 feathers, you can cut 40 feathers, it just depends on how much your felt will yield and how big you want your feathers to be. That's why we did the painted look so that you don't have to cut hundreds and hundreds of feathers, but a little bit is nice for some texture. So cut a few dozen and then see how it looks on the cape before you place it. You can always cut more. It's better though to prepare more now, so that way, you can just go ahead and glue and you don't have to stop and cut midway through. I have about 30 or so feathers cut in a variety of shapes and colors. And next, I'm gonna cut my mask. I've just pinned my template onto a piece of pink felt. You can make this in any color. I'm just gonna cut through both layers, the paper and the felt. For the eyes, you can remove the pins, and just fold in half. We're gonna roughly cut the shape and then go back and refine it. You can put a pin back in the center just to hold everything. Then use your sharp scissors to just fix that eye opening. It's better to make the openings too big rather than too small. So if you have to err on the side of the line, make sure it's on the outside. We can assemble our mask just by using hot glue and some of our smaller feathers. Depending on where you place the feathers, you're gonna get different expressions. If you do something really vertical, like little eyebrows, this looks more like an owl. You can also do something a little softer, just on the edges, this is where your small feather is really good for, and go from there. I like that arrangement, so I'll just go ahead and glue these in place. Start with the bottom layer, and then our second feather, and then last, our little orange feather here. And you're gonna do the same thing to the other side. Once you've added all the feathers that you like, you can place the string on to tie your mask. Just take your length of ribbon and cut it in half. Flip your mask over and we'll glue our ribbons just on the side here. I like to add the ribbon, and then add another little bit of glue and put a felt scrap just to cleanly secure and hide that ribbon. Do the same thing on the other side. Let's give that a minute to set up. And there you have your really colorful, little bird mask. Next, we'll go to our cape and actually add those feathers now that the cape is dry. This doesn't have to be perfect. It's really sort of free-form. Again, I'm just gonna start with the darker colors but I do like to have little groupings of feathers that has more than one color in it. I might just loosely place these until I figure out what I want. I'm just gonna use a few orange ones for just a slight subtle variation in color there. I don't wanna forget, this is gonna be the front of my cape. Do a few more dark ones coming off the edge. Just maybe do one little nod to that yellow color, a little

bit further down. Maybe another yellow in there, just so we have some good movement. Once you like the placement, you can go ahead and glue them in place and you don't need to glue down the whole feather. Just glue the tops. That way, the bottoms can still flutter and move as you wear the costume. The last thing we need to do for our cape is just add a little closure. Let's go back to the inside. I've already cut my length of ribbon in half and tied a knot at the top and at the end. We're just gonna glue these right at the opening so that you can close the cape with a simple tie. We'll add a little bit of felt too just because I think it's a nice, little touch. When you put it altogether, you have this beautiful and bright, very painterly cape that looks just like bird wings. You can make this in any color. They're really fun to paint and really quick to put together with just the felt feathers. I made another one in teals, purples, that's perfect for a companion bird. This one has a more owl look because the feathers on a the mask are a little bit sharper and a little more vertical. This bird costume is good for all ages. It's quick to make. You can just throw it on and fly out the door, and best of all, it's customizable just by switching up your colors.