

Do-It-Yourself Giant Bubble Maker

By Peter James

You can make floating bubbles as big as a Volkswagen with this do-it-yourself bubble maker that's easy to make out of about \$3 worth of hardware store parts.

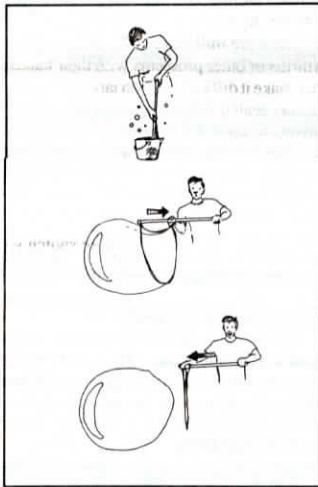
- Here's a list of the parts you need:
- One 2-ft. long, 3/4-in. dia. pvc pipe (3 ft. long for older kids or adults).
 - Two 3/4-in. pvc pipe caps.
 - One 1-in. pvc coupler.
 - 60 to 100 in. of water-absorbent ribbon (depending on length of pvc pipe). Woven rickrack, available from fabric stores, works the best but you can also use a band of material from an old T-shirt. Just cut around the shirt's belly to get a single ribbon-type length.

• A ring-shaped weight to help open and close fabric loop. Key chain rings or light-weight washers work fine.

First, cap one end of the pipe with one of the caps, gluing it in place. Then, slip the fabric loop through the pvc coupler and slide the coupler over the uncapped end of the pipe.

Next, temporarily tuck a few inches of one end of the fabric ribbon into the pipe's uncapped end and measure 1 1/2 to 2 ft. down the pipe and tie the fabric to the coupler at that point. Then slip the ring weights onto the fabric and tuck an inch or two of the end of the ribbon into the end of the pipe and put the remaining pvc cap over it. You may have to sand down the end of the pipe to get the cap on. Don't glue this cap in place because you may want to adjust the length of the ribbon loop later.

To make the bubble solution, add about 1/2 cup of Dawn or Lemon Joy dishwashing liquid, along with a capful of glycerine (available at drugstores), to a gallon of clean water. You can adjust the mix as needed to make the bubble stronger or lighter depending on conditions. Bubble making works best on overcast days since in the sun the bubbles will heat up and burst. On a sunny day it's best if you work in the shade.



Dip the entire length of the fabric loop in the bucket of soap solution. Let it set for a few moments to become saturated. Slowly lift the fabric out of the solution, keeping the coupler ring all the way forward so the ribbon loop is together at the end of the wand. Let excess solution drip off into the bucket and then lift the wand clear of the ground and start sliding the coupler ring toward you, up the pipe. As the loop opens, a bubble will begin to form. Gently move the wand horizontally in an arc, or walk slowly and the bubble will form. Once the bubble is as big as you want it, slowly close the loop by sliding the joiner ring back down the pipe, cutting the bubble free.

When conditions are right, there's almost no limit to the size of bubbles you can create. Some people say they've made bubbles up to 20 yards long using the bubblemaker.

Reprinted with permission from BACKHOME Magazine, P.O. Box 370, Mountain Home, N.C. 28758.



Barry Burling of New Zealand built this 3-story octagonal house that makes complete turn every 4 min. in either direction.

"REVOLUTIONARY", FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND HOME

360° Rotating House Turns To Follow Sun

You've never seen anything like this one-of-a-kind house from New Zealand that rotates a full 360 degrees, letting you keep full sun in any room of the house.

It was built by Barry Burling of Eketahuna, who got the idea from his experience working with rotary milking parlors, which were developed in New Zealand. He figured that if a revolving floor could carry 40 hefty cows along with milking equipment and stations, he ought to be able to build a platform that would support a house.

Three years later, after working with an architect and spending countless hours planning, he ended up with a 3-story octagonal house made out of 3-in. thick insulated panels commonly used on refrigeration units. Burling says he chose the unusual building material because timber framing was heavier and more costly and the panels eliminated the need for additional spending on insulation.

Burling says the rotating power unit is not

complex or power hungry. A low speed electric motor drives a hydraulic system, taking the whole house through a complete turn every 4 min. in either direction.

"It lets us take advantage of the beautiful lake scenery around us no matter what room we're in. We can take a tour of the countryside from the comfort of a living room chair," says Burling.

The revolving house has become routine for the Burling family but other guests say they get dizzy when they come to visit. The house has a central circular stairway that encircles an elevator that runs from the bottom of house to the top. All utilities run up this central, stationary part of the house.

The Burlings have grown used to the sight of people gaping and laughing at the house from the roadside. They just wave and often invite them in for a spin.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Barry Burling, 50 Newman Road, Eketahuna, New Zealand (ph 6505 375-8029).

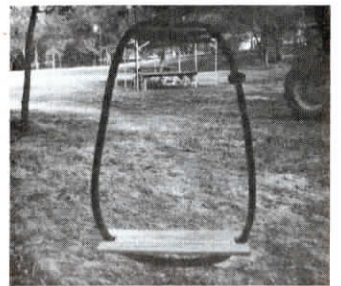
Combine Drive Belt "Bounce Swing"

Carl Foster, Wylie, Tex., scored big with his grandchildren when he invented this "bounce swing" made out of an old drive belt from a Massey combine.

"It's not as dangerous or as difficult to use as a tire swing and yet it still has that same spring-like action," says Foster.

He suspended the belt from a single length of 3/8-in. steel cable that's about 20 ft. long. The cable wraps around a 12-in. length of 4 by 4 wood (with beveled ends) that's positioned under the top edge of the belt. The seat is made out of a 12 by 24-in. piece of 3/4-in. plywood with notched ends.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Carl



Foster, 2320 Elm Dr., Wylie, Tex. 75098 (ph 214 442-5543).