

# Ultimate Guide to Pumpkin Carving with Power Tools

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# Six Creative Ideas Using Power Tools

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At Mr. Handyman<sup>®</sup>, safety comes first and the same goes for using power tools at home. Wear your safety goggles, follow the instructions in the owner's manual for the tool, and make sure that power tools are only used by an adult.

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Here and step-by-step instructions on how to do the techniques in our Pumpkin Carving with Power Tools video.

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## **1. Cutting off a lid with a jigsaw.**

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To cut off the top, simply plunge the blade into the pumpkin at about a 45 degree angle. Work your way around the pumpkin until the lid is off. This technique is pretty simple and you will find that it is a lot faster than using a kitchen knife.

## **2. Gutting a pumpkin with a drill and gutter.**

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1. Purchase a pumpkin gutter.
2. Insert gutter into your drill and tighten.
3. We found that it works best if you move the spinning head in a clockwise motion.
4. Large pumpkins may clog the head. Simply remove gutter from drill,

clean out the pumpkin flesh and start again. Even if you have to clean the head once or twice, this method is faster than cleaning with a spoon.

5. If you use a drill to make holes in your pumpkin, the gutter can also be used to clean loose bits caused by the drilling. Your pumpkin will have a clean finished look with perfect, unclogged holes.

### 3. Create circular patterns using a drill and spade bit.

1. In the video, we made two pumpkins using spade bits.
2. The first pumpkin was made using a vertical series of holes around the pumpkin.
3. Take a ruler or tape measure and mark a dot every two inches around your pumpkin at the widest part.
4. Next, turn your ruler or measuring tape 90 degrees and mark a dot every inch on both sides for each of the dots that run around the circumference. The number of dots will depend on your pumpkin.
5. Once all the holes are marked, insert a 1/2" spade bit into your drill. Drill a 1/2" hole in all of the dots around the widest part of your pumpkin.
6. Next, remove the 1/2" spade bit and insert a 3/8" spade bit. With the 3/8" bit, you will drill holes directly above and below each 1/2" hole.
7. You will continue to decrease the bit size incrementally for each hole you step away from the center, so that the largest holes run around the widest part of your pumpkin and the smallest holes are at the top and bottom of your pumpkin.

### 4 . Making Circular Eyes with a Drill and Coring Bit

Coring bits are a great way to make perfectly circular eyes. Simply insert the coring bit

into your drill, make marks on the pumpkin so that the eyes are spaced evenly.

You can also use coring bits in combination with spade bits to make intriguing circular patterns.

### 5. Using Linoleum Cutters for Detail Work and Tracing

To do fine detail work and to carve intricate designs, linoleum cutters are the perfect tool. Purchase linoleum cutters if you don't already have them in your toolbox. The best bet for making an intricate design is to print out a pattern and then use a thumbtack or other small needle to mark the pattern onto the pumpkin. Go back and use either the blade tool, or the finest v-tip to cut out the outline of your pattern. Once the outline is marked, you can use the larger tips to remove sections of pumpkin skin.

### 6. Using a Woodworking Chisel to Remove Sections of Skin

Large woodworking chisels are great for removing the top layer of skin or for removing larger areas of a design.

1. Outline your design with a linoleum cutter, knife, or other tool that will remove a small section of pumpkin skin around the outside edge of your design.
2. Place the tip of the woodworking chisel underneath the skin and push away from the outside edge of your design.



## Pumpkin Decorating with Hardware for Toddlers

Kids can be actively involved in pumpkin decorating even when they are still too young to carve with sharp knives and saws.

### Time

10-20 Minutes

### Materials

- Bolts, Screws, Washers or other Hardware
- Your imagination

### Ideas

Noses - Big Bolts, Metal Pipe Straps

Eyes - Washers, Bottle Caps

Ears - Plastic Lids, Brackets

Mouth - Screws or Nails

Hair - Zip Ties, Wire

### Instructions

1. Pre-drill holes for kids to insert hardware.
2. There is no "right" way to do this activity - use your imagination!
3. Use of power tools should always be done by an adult.

# Pumpkin Carving Tips

## From the Experts

We at Mr. Handyman®, are experts at using power tools on residential and commercial repairs, maintenance and improvement projects. This experience helped us tame the pumpkin carving chore to save time and effort. Here are a few Mr. Handyman's pumpkin projects you can try.

The basics of pumpkin carving with power tools begins with a safety message: only adults should use power tools and safety goggles are recommended. Most pumpkins need the lid and guts removed. A jigsaw, cordless drill and pumpkin gutter shave time off these essential tasks. These tips can make you the "host with the most" and make your party perfect for adults and kids!

### 1 Pumpkin Centerpiece:

1. Using a sawzall, cut off the top third of the pumpkin. It helps if one person cuts straight into the pumpkin top and a second person rotates the pumpkin.
2. Clean out the inside of the pumpkin using the pumpkin gutter (or by hand.)
3. Soak your pumpkin for two hours in a solution of one tablespoon of bleach to one gallon of water to slow down the decomposition of the pumpkin.
4. Spray the pumpkin with polyurethane and drop your floral arrangement into the center of the pumpkin.

### 2 Alien (Googly Eyed) Pumpkin:

1. Cut a hole in the bottom of your white pumpkin (a jigsaw works great!)
2. Clean the inside with a pumpkin gutter and cordless drill.
3. Use the cordless drill with a coring bit to cut out a perfectly round circle eye (or two!)

4. Insert a small plastic cup into eyes and add googly craft eye.
5. Trace a funky mouth shape and cut out with a drywall knife or jigsaw (use slowly!).
6. Add gourds to eyes, or drill holes for ears and add gourds as accessories!

### 3 Brace Face Pumpkin:

1. Cut a hole in the bottom of the pumpkin using a jigsaw.
2. Clean the inside of the pumpkin with a pumpkin gutter.
3. Draw the eyes using a pencil and cut them out using a cordless drill and coring bit.
4. Using a drywall saw or cordless drill with a spade bit.
5. Carve the mouth with a chisel and drywall saw and use a linoleum cutter to define the teeth.
6. Add "braces" by fastening small I-brackets or shelf brackets and a piece of wire.



# Continued...



## Black Cats:

1. You will need two small pumpkins with stems removed for heads, one large gourd and one medium pumpkin. Two mini pumpkins for feet and one gourd for a tail.
2. Cut holes using a cordless drill and spade bit in the small pumpkins for heads. Empty insides using pumpkin gutter and cordless drill.
3. Trace almond-shaped eyes with chalk and carefully cut using a drywall saw.
4. Leave round pumpkin and gourd stems in tact and place small pumpkin heads on top.
5. Spray paint all items jet black with a shiny finish.
6. Add the craft felt triangle ears and place the feet and tail next to the pumpkin bodies.



## Teal Pumpkin:

1. Cut a hole in the bottom of your pumpkin (a jigsaw works great!)
2. Clean the inside with a pumpkin gutter and cordless drill.
3. Use pencil to trace design or pin mark a template.
4. Use a drywall saw to carve your jack-o-lantern & add your light inside!
5. Consider printing and displaying the flyer from the Teal Pumpkin Project which notifies trick-or-treaters that your home offers safe, non-candy items for allergy sufferers.



## Small Pumpkin Candleholders:

1. Gather a few small pumpkins.
2. Hold each pumpkin down firmly and push the drill bit into the top of the pumpkin and push the drill trigger.
3. Paint outside of pumpkin with sparkly gold paint and polyurethane.
4. Use a hot glue gun to add decorative jewels.
5. Add votive candles.

## Extra Ideas!

### Chalkboard/Countdown Pumpkin

1. Choose a large pumpkin and spray paint it thoroughly with chalkboard paint.
2. Use a chalkboard marker to make your design or update your Halloween countdown!

### Boo Pumpkin

1. Cut a hole in the bottom of your pumpkin (a jigsaw works great!)
2. Clean inside with a pumpkin gutter and cordless drill.
3. Use pencil to draw B and drywall saw to cut out shapes.
4. Trace your little one's hand prints on the pumpkin and cut them out using drywall saw.

# Chalkboard Pumpkin

In the past few years' people all over the country have found new, inventive uses for chalkboard paint. If you have a small child that is not ready to carve pumpkins with sharp knives and saws, covering a pumpkin with chalkboard paint is a great alternative that gives kids all the creative control. Creating a chalkboard pumpkin is relatively quick and easy. Once the paint is applied you can safely turn the decorating over to the kids. The only limiting factor in decorating these pumpkins is your imagination.

## Materials

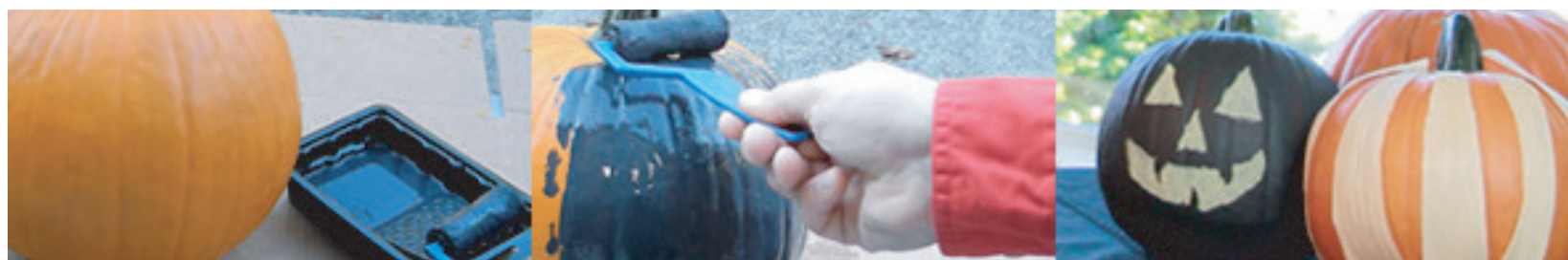
- One Pumpkin
- One Small Can of Chalkboard Paint (\$10-12 at hardware store)
- One Small, inexpensive roller and tray kit (\$2 at hardware store)
- Colored Chalk
- Instructions on painting a pumpkin with chalkboard paint.

## Step-by-Step Instructions

There are two keys to painting a pumpkin with chalkboard paint. First you want to make sure your pumpkin is clean, wash it off first and let it dry thoroughly. Second, the pumpkin must be room temperature; condensation underneath the paint will cause the paint to slough off.

1. Keep the pumpkin inside for 24 hours before painting
2. Apply a chalkboard paint to the pumpkin using a small roller
3. We used a small paint brush to get the last hard to reach spots around the top of the stem.
4. Wait 24 hours for the paint to dry before putting chalk on the pumpkin.

When you carve a pumpkin it is pretty difficult to undo a mistake, luckily when drawing on a pumpkin covered in chalkboard paint, you only need a chalkboard eraser to make things better.



# Mini Pumpkin Hanging Bats



These hanging hooligans drop down on guests at eye level.

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## **Time.**

30 minutes, plus spray paint drying time.

## **Materials**

- Mini pumpkins
- Black spray paint
- Cardboard to create 2 wings per bat
- 2 roofing nails, screws, or other items for eyes per bat
- Eye screw for each bat to hang from
- Fishing line or another string for hanging







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# Scary Face 1 Template







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# Scary Face 2 Template



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# Scary Face 3 Template







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## 2 Flying Bats Template



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# Lamp Post Template







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# Full Moon Template



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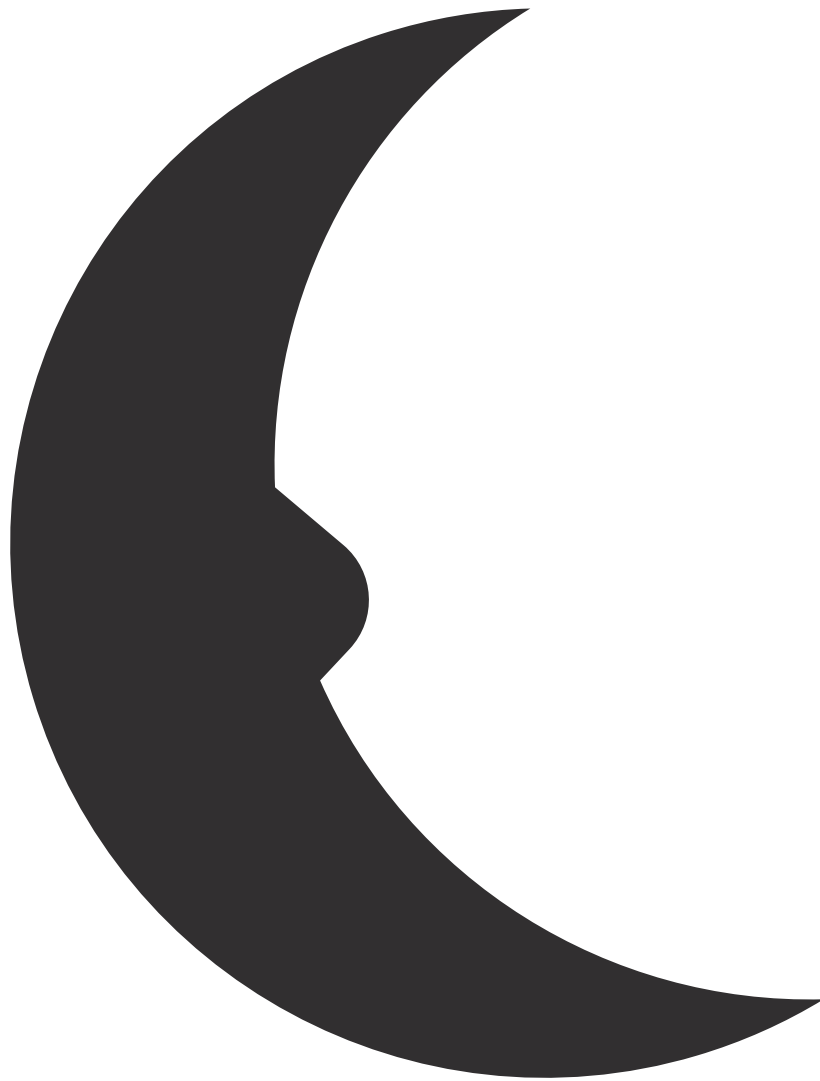


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# Witch Template







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# Crescent Moon Template



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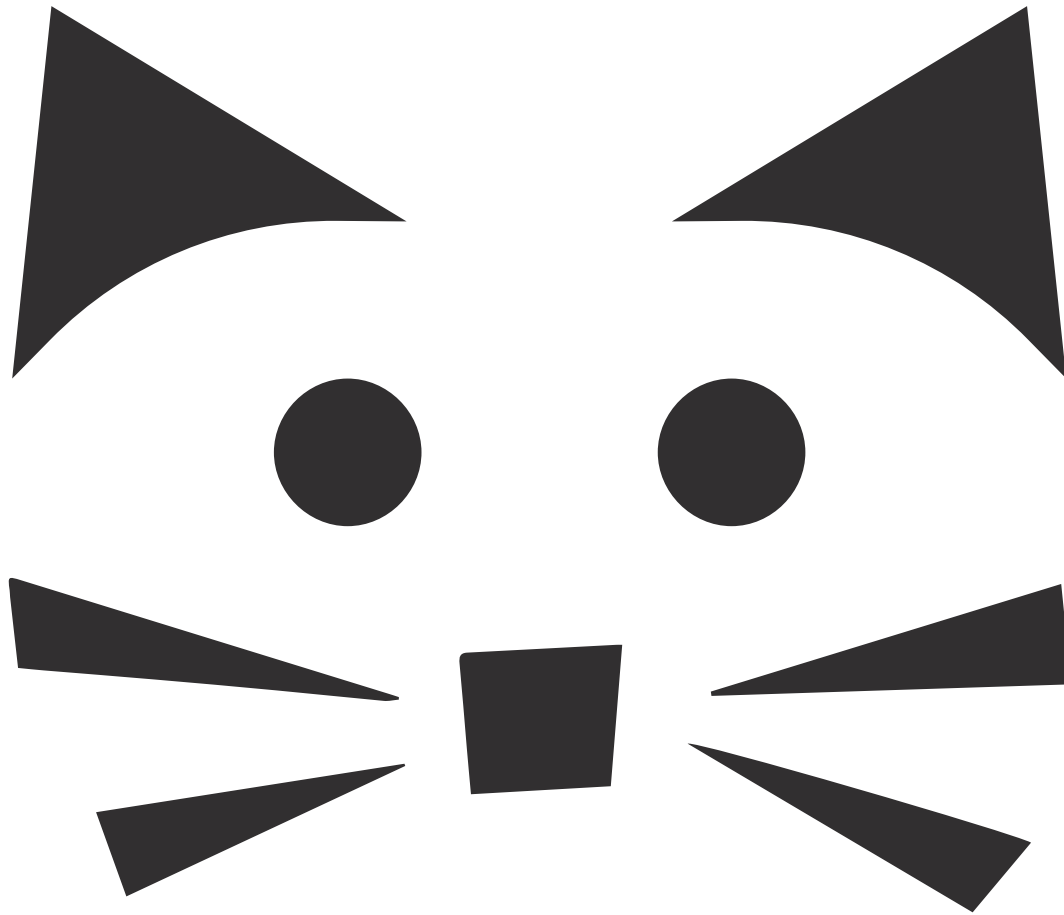


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# Happy Pumpkin Template







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# Jack the Cat Template







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# Scarecrow Template







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# Skeleton Template



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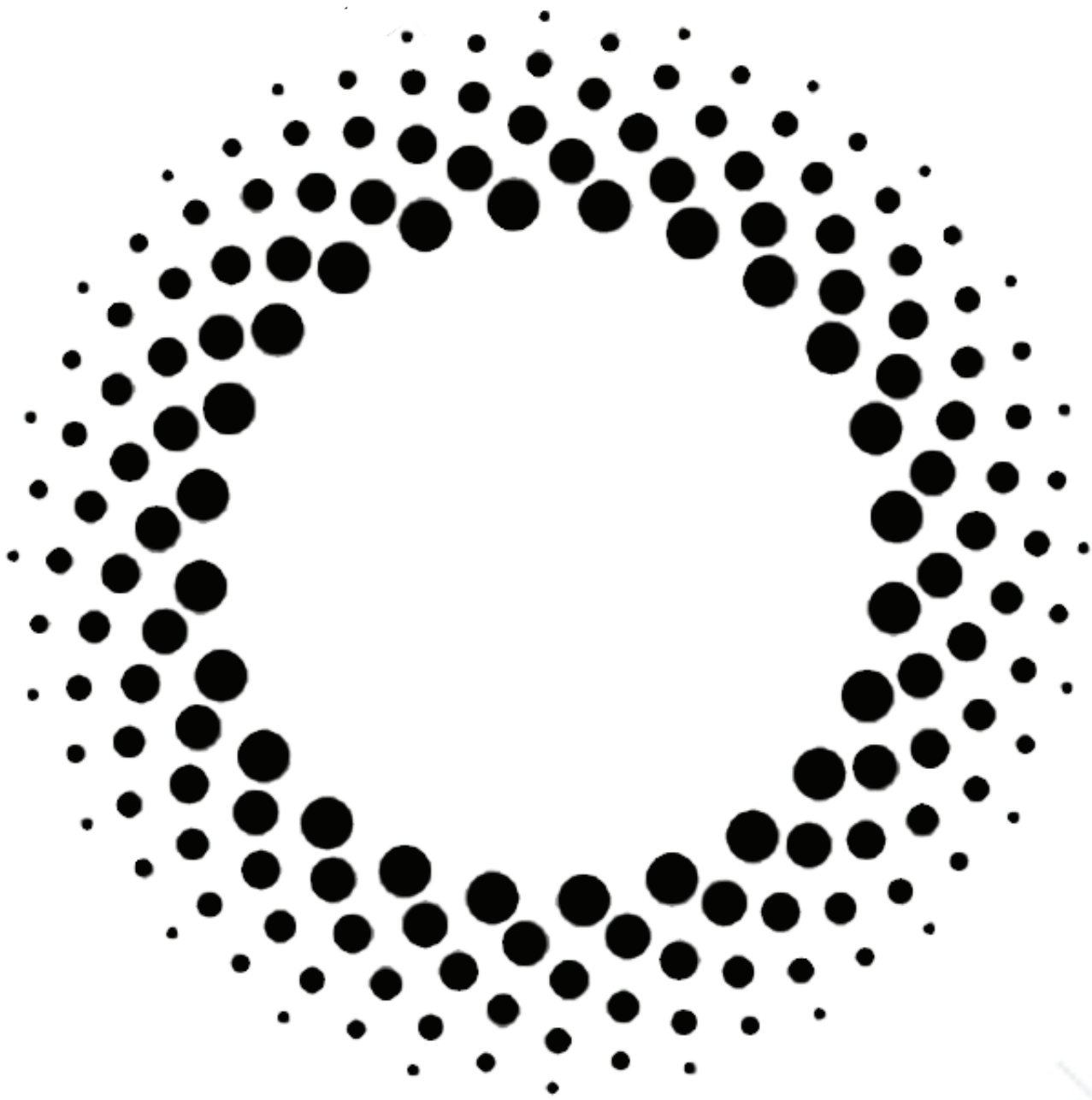


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# Ghost Template







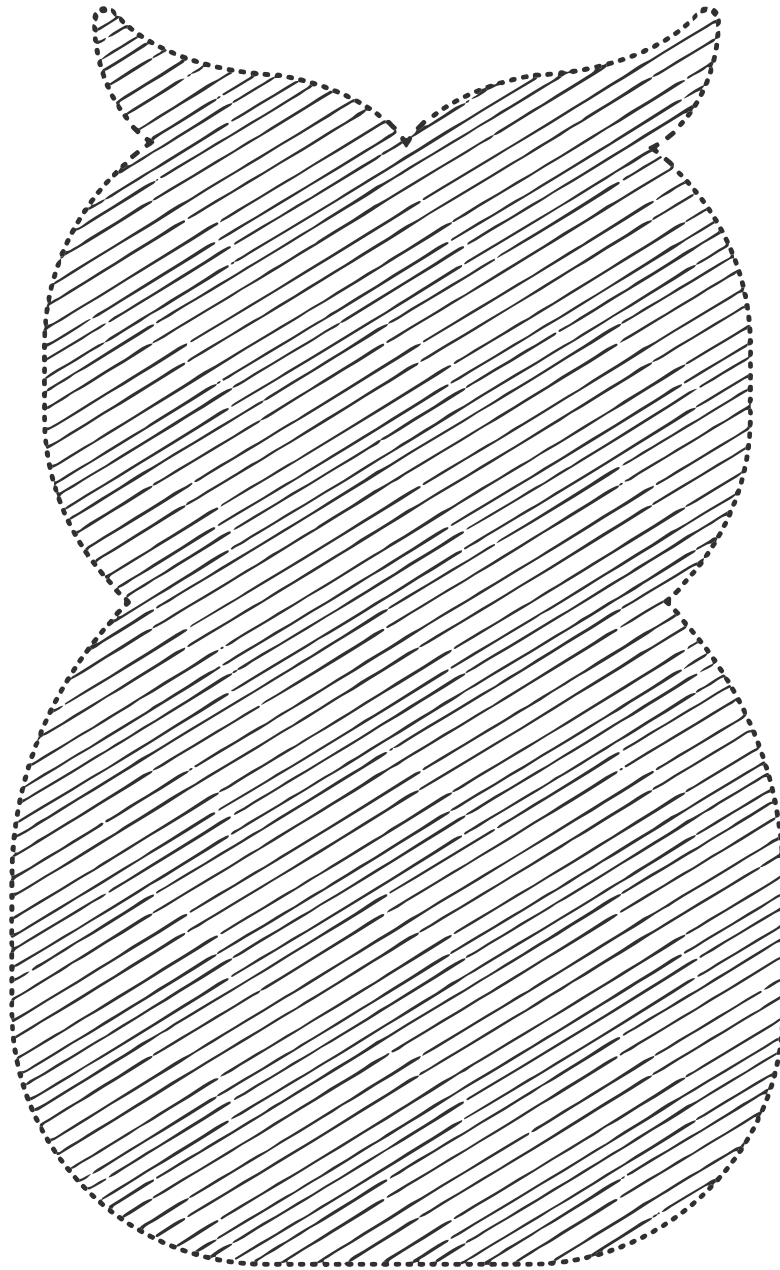
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# Drillmaster Template



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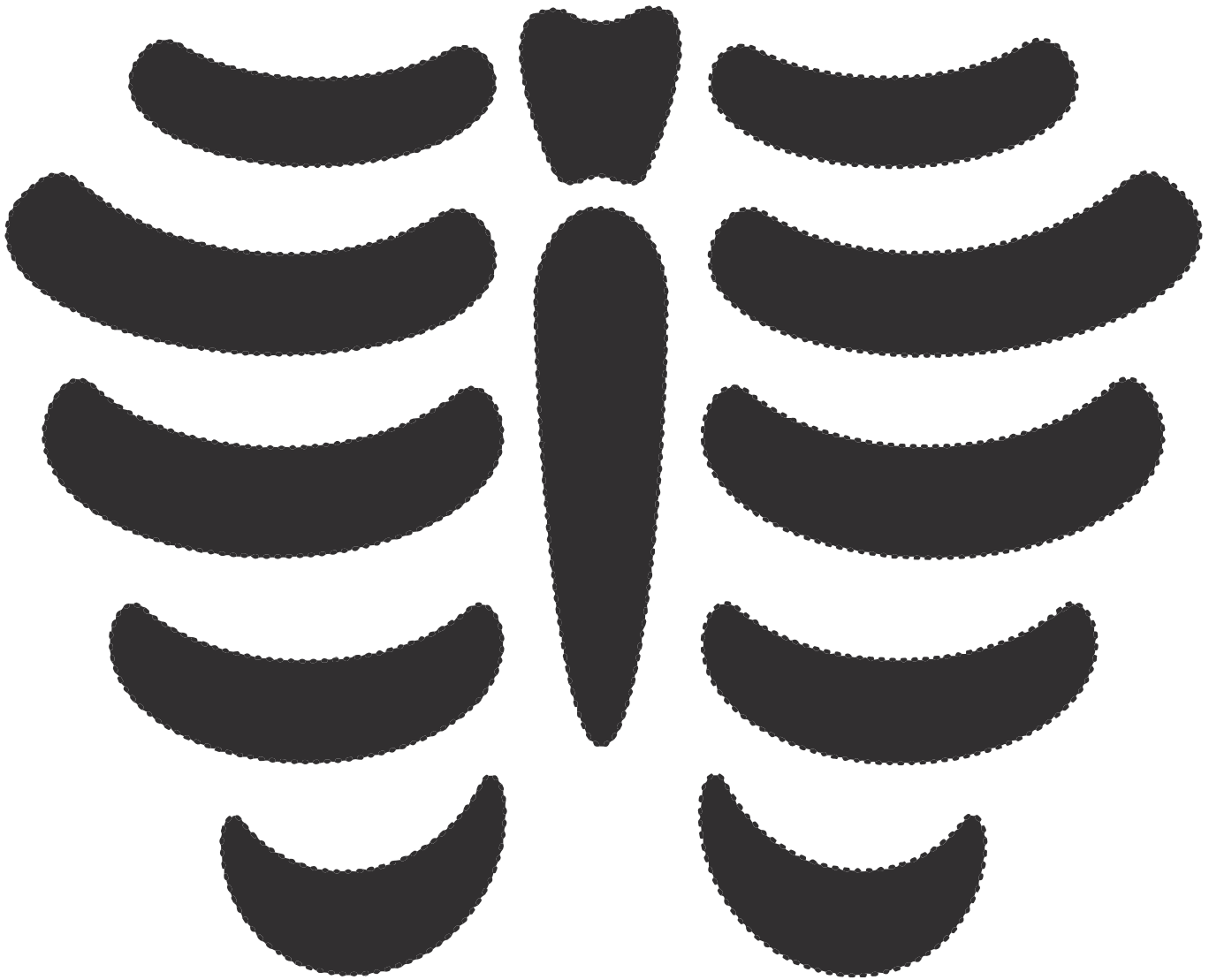
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# “Hoot” Owl Template







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# Skeleton Ribcage Template









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# 3 Flying Bats Template



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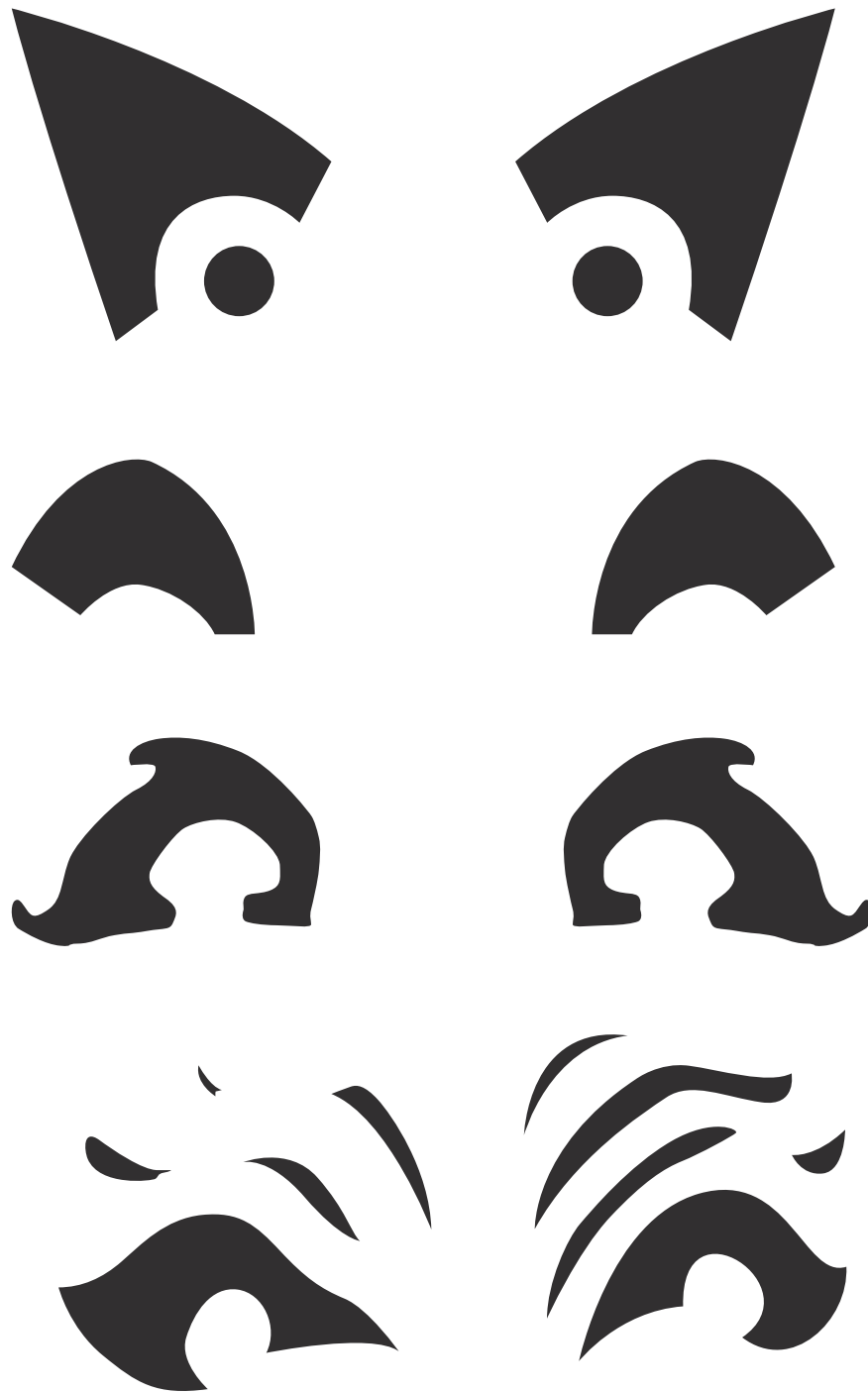
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# Wolf Moon Template



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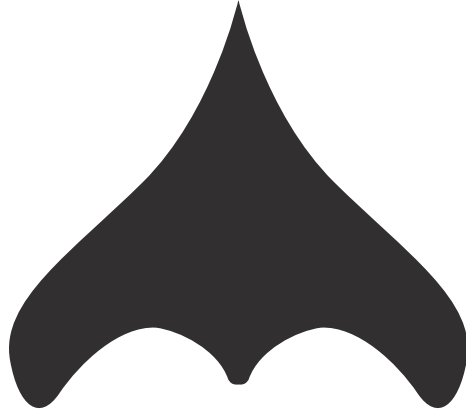


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# Eye Templates







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# Nose templates









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# Mouth Templates





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