

## How to make a whale shark sculpture

*This can also be adapted for other sculptures.*



*Whale shark sculpture ADEX 2013*



### Materials:

Frame – it is vital to have a strong structure. For it to support itself flexible springy materials are needed. We used sticks from IKEA and wire for strengthening and reinforcing. Joins are attached with duct tape and thin wire.

Covering – fabric, acrylic paint, stapler, double sided tape, needles and thread.

### Instructions:

#### Step 1

Construct the frame. (This will take a few hours – half a day depending on numbers helping)

This is a good group activity – have volunteers make a series of hoops of varying diameters from bendy sticks.

Line up the hoops and weave more long sticks to form the length of the body.

Reinforce with vertical sticks for support.

Construct fins with more sticks/wire.

At this stage the structure should be quite light and easy to move, but best to build in location, if at a public event this attracts lots of attention as people want to see what is being created.



### Step 2

Cover with fabric, we used staples, double sided tape and some sewing at edges such as the mouth to make it secure and neat.

### Step 3

Decorate – this is a great way to get the public involved.

Have a picture of a whale shark showing the beautiful spotty pattern and invite people to add spots using a make up pad and acrylic paint.

As a finishing touch a celebrity or well known figure can be invited to paint the eyes.

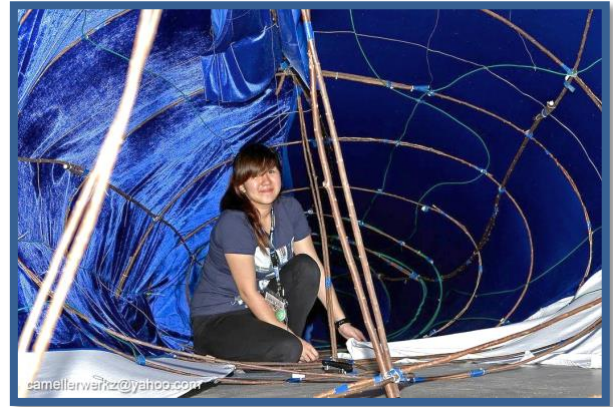
Providing a display of interesting facts on whale sharks and their conservation status is a good way to make this educational and raise awareness.

### Engaging the public:

People will love to have their photo taken with the whale shark, encourage posting to social media with a dedicated hashtag.

### Naming competition.

We had a book for suggestions for names for the whale shark with the prize of a Shark Savers T shirt – this is how our sculpture at ADEX 2013 became known as Smurfy!



by Fiona Childs

Read more about whale sharks and Smurfy [here](#).

*Clement Lee applies the finishing touches.*