

Fiber Sculptures

The Tjanpi Desert Weavers are Aboriginal, or native, artists from the outback of central Australia who create amazing handmade animal sculptures. They make them by wrapping desert grass (called "**tjanpi**") with yarn and raffia. Art collectors love the colorful creatures the artists create, from rabbits to birds to people.

Some of the Tjanpi Desert Weavers with their creations.

Nyurpaya Kaika Burton, Yaritji Young, Paniny Mick (obscured), Ilawanti Ungkutjuru Ken, and Naomi Kantjuri with Paarpakani (Take Flight), 2011. Image by Jo Foster

ATLAS AUSTRALIA: DO

Make a Fiber Sculpture Dog

You'll need:

- ☐ newspaper or scrap paper
- ☐ masking tape
- ☐ colored yarn, twine or string
- ☐ a few pipe cleaners
- ☐ white glue
- ☐ scissors
- ☐ decorative extras like buttons, sequins, or pompoms

In the language of the artists of the Tjanpi Desert Weavers, dogs are called **papa**.



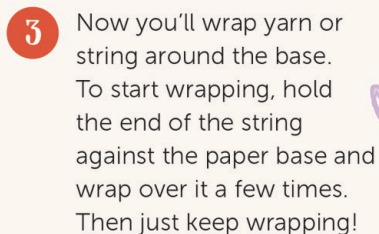
Tape head and leg shapes to a long body shape.

To create a base for your sculpture, crumple pieces of paper and stick them together with masking tape.



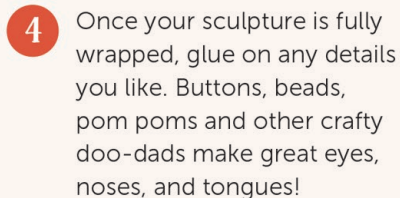
Keep adding tape until your base feels secure and is shaped the way you want.

Tape or twist pipe cleaners onto the paper to add smaller features like ears and a tail.



Cover the paper base and pipe cleaners as you go.

Feel free to switch colors whenever you're ready for a change. When you get to the end of a section, trim the yarn and tuck the loose end into the already wrapped yarn.



Woof!