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DIY Project: Make Your Own Magnetic Wooden Rocket

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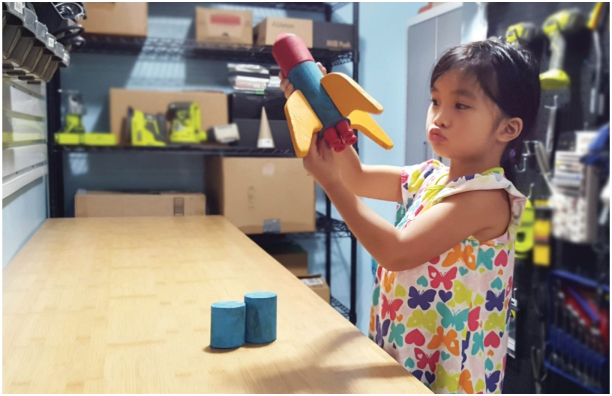
By Gladiator Contributor Nam P.: dad, fix-it guy, DIYer



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When the kids want a magnetic wooden puzzle in the shape of a rocket ship, you give them a magnetic wooden puzzle in the shape of a rocket ship — and paint. Lots of paint. At the end, you’ll have a 3-D rocket puzzle held together by magnets and screws, which the kids can take apart and put together as they please.

Follow these steps to make a rocket ship worthy of the pickiest 5-year-old astronaut in your orbit. You’ll need the following materials and tools:

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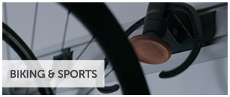

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- 1 sq. ft. ½″ wooden board
- 2 ft. long, 2″ thick dowel
- 3 or 4 miniature wooden cups or vases
- ¼″ magnets (12) and ½″ magnets (6)
- 18 small, flat-head metal screws
- J-B Weld or epoxy glue
- paper and pencil
- screwdriver or drill with ¼″ drill bit and ½″ drill bit
- clamps
- jigsaw
- miter saw

Prepare the Rocket Fins

1. Trace the shape of a rocket fin onto a piece of white paper and cut out the shape. Trace four of these onto the wooden board and align the base of each fin with the straight edge of the board.
2. Clamp the wooden board to your workbench.
3. With your jigsaw, cut out each rocket fin. Sand and smooth out the edges of the fin to remove sharp splinters.

Cut the Rocket Body

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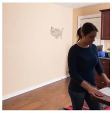

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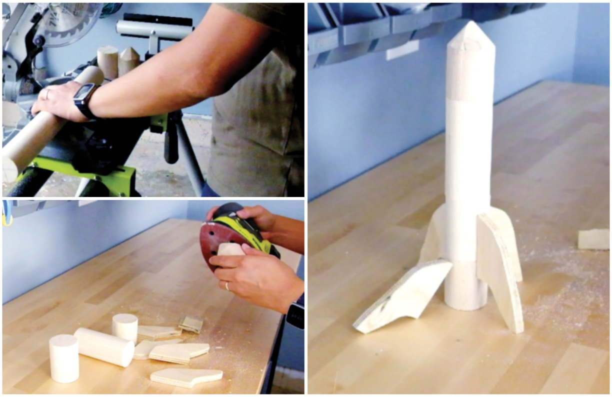
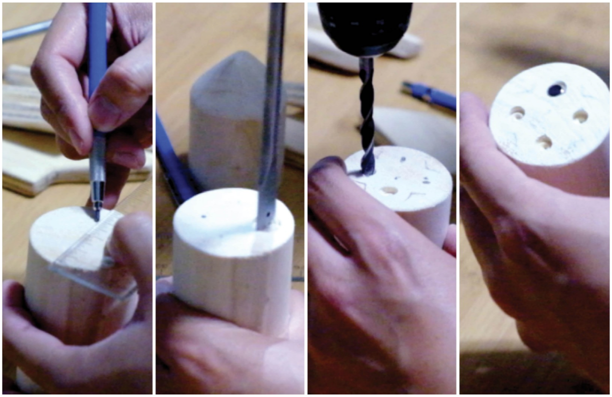
1. Cut the dowel down to the desired length for the rocket body.
2. Set your miter saw at a very small angle and continuously cut one side of the dowel as you rotate it, creating a pointed, domed shape.
3. Cut the rocket body into four separate parts. Make the bottom part the longest for weight and stability.
4. Sand the edges of each piece. You can see the rocket begin to take shape.



Add Screws and Magnets

ROCKET BODY BASE PIECE

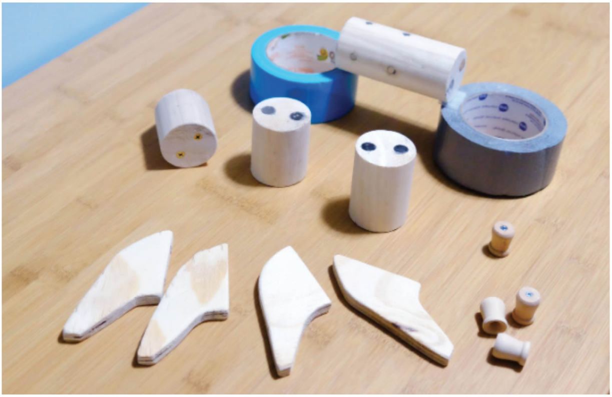
1. On one side of the base, make a dot at the ¾″ mark and at the 2¼″ mark. Using a ½″ wood drill bit, drill deep enough to let the ½″ magnets sit flush with the wood.
2. On the other side, drill ¼″ holes for four small magnets.



1. Drill two ¼″ holes 1–2″ apart vertically in 90-degree intervals around the outer body, for a total of eight holes (no wider than the rocket fins' straight-edge length), where you will attach the fins.
2. Fill in each hole with glue and place the corresponding ¼″ and ½″ magnets inside. **Tip:** Scratch the magnets to help them bond with the glue and better grip the wood.

ROCKET BODY PIECES

1. On one side of each piece, mark the same base diameter measurements with a dot at the ¾″ mark and at the 2¼″ mark.
2. Drill a countersunk pilot hole at each mark so that the large, flat-head screws sit flush with the wood.
3. Now, on the opposite side of each piece, drill holes and glue ½″ magnets like you did for the base.
4. Repeat until you get to the cone of the rocket — at which point you will only need to drill holes at its base for the screws.



ROCKET THRUSTERS AND FINS

1. Drill a small hole for a small screw on the flat side of each small wooden cup that will align with the magnets at the bottom of the rocket base.
2. Drill two small holes for small screws on the straight edge of each fin that will align with the magnets on the sides of the rocket base.

Houston, We Have a Puzzle

And that's all there is to it. Set each piece aside to dry overnight and assemble in the morning, lining up the thrusters and fins to the rocket body. Let the kids decorate the 3-D puzzle with non-toxic paint for a fun family activity.

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