

Love Birds Mobile

Because it is made from paper, thread, and balsa wood, this mobile is very lightweight, allowing a lot of movement even indoors. It is easy to make: all you'll need to do is cut, thread, and hang. If you plan on altering the pattern at all, you'll need some patience and extra supplies as this project's balance depends on not only weight but also weight distribution.

Materials:

- Cardstock in whatever colors you plan to use for your project. I used three shades of green, a slate gray, and a wine-magenta-ish color. I think this project would also look excellent in all white with just a few hints of bright red for the underwings and heart.
- Template (print at 100%)
- Scissors or an exacto knife with a cutting mat
- Small nail file, if desired, to round out any rough cuts
- Double-sided tape
- Pin or needle to make small holes in the paper. You might also want a needle to help with threading.
- All-purpose sewing thread in whatever colors you choose.
- Clear-drying glue (to secure thread knots)
- Small hook or some sturdy but bendable silver wire
- Wooden dowel (I used a square one but a round one would work fine. You could also use part of a coat hanger or even a branch from a real tree.)
- Small handsaw (to cut the dowel to size and to make notches for the thread, if desired.)



Instructions:

1. Print template and gather supplies.
2. If you plan on making more than one of these mobiles, you might want to make plastic templates (plastic for this purpose is available at craft stores). Otherwise, cut out your patterns and then trace each onto your cardstock (remember to make multiples as noted on each pattern shape). Note thread lengths listed on the template now if you plan on cutting the template into pieces. You'll need these in step six.
3. Cut the shapes out of the cardstock using scissors or a hobby knife. File if desired to round out any rough edges.
4. Using a pin or needle, punch small holes in the branches, heart, and bird bodies as marked on the template.
5. Use double-sided tape to attach the wings to the birds. Do the same to attach the flowers to the ends of the branches (putting flower A on branch A, flower B on branch B). Be sure you decorate both sides of the birds and the branches because the pieces will be moving around in the breeze. **NOTE: any changes you make to the placement or arrangement of the flowers and wings may result in throwing the mobile off balance. This is fine but be**

sure you've got the time and supplies to experiment with getting the balance just right if you want to fiddle around with things. See additional notes below.

6. Now it's time to string the mobile. (If you are altering this pattern in any way, it is critical that you begin threading at the bottom – see additional notes below.) For thread lengths, see template. Tie double knots at each end of the string and be sure they won't pull through the holes.
7. To complete the mobile, you'll need to attach your three main pieces (one bird w/ branch attached, another bird w/ branch attached, and the heart) to your dowel. Using your handsaw, cut the dowel to the desired length (I cut mine to about 7.5 inches) and (if desired) make notches for the threads so that they won't shift on the dowel. You'll want one notch at dead center (for the heart) and one at each end, spaced evenly from the center notch and leaving enough space for the birds to swing freely without hitting one another. I recommend laying the entire mobile out on a flat surface to find the desired distances. (I placed my outer notches each at about 2.75 inches from center.) Attach each of your three main pieces to the dowel at the notches and knot securely. **NOTE: if you choose not to make notches, you'll want to add a little extra clear-drying glue to each knot once you've completed the mobile and tested it for proper balance.**
8. Finally, to hang the mobile, you'll need to add a thread hanger. I made mine by tying one long string to the two ends of the dowel (in the same notches as the birds) and then attaching another string with a hook on it to the middle of that string. This will help keep the mobile balanced.
9. Hang the mobile somewhere convenient and test the balance – the entire thing should hang nice and even – the dowel and the birds should be even and so should their branches. If anything is off, make corrections by adjusting thread lengths, working your way up from the bottom. This part of the process is a bit tedious but worth it. Once the mobile is balanced, add a drop of glue to all knots to secure them. Then...
10. Hang and enjoy.

Additional Notes For Making Any Changes To This Template:

If you are moving or subtracting elements, or if you'd like to try adding more hearts, birds, branches, flowers, etc., you'll need to figure out the proper hole placements and thread lengths. Planning in advance is important because finding the right balance for your mobile **REQUIRES** that you begin threading the mobile from the bottom. To determine hole placements if you have changed this template, start with your bottom piece. Find its center of gravity by balancing it on your finger or on a pencil. (This can be difficult with odd-shaped pieces, but do your best. It may take a few tries so you'll need extra supplies on hand to re-make pieces after you've determined hole placement.) Poke a hole at the center of gravity about 1/8" from the top edge of the piece. Attach this bottom piece to the next piece up and repeat the process, this time finding the center of gravity of the top piece by balancing only that piece on your finger (while the other pieces hang from it). For example, after you have attached the first piece to the second piece, find the center of gravity of the second piece by balancing only the second piece on your finger with the first piece hanging. Repeat until you reach your topmost piece.

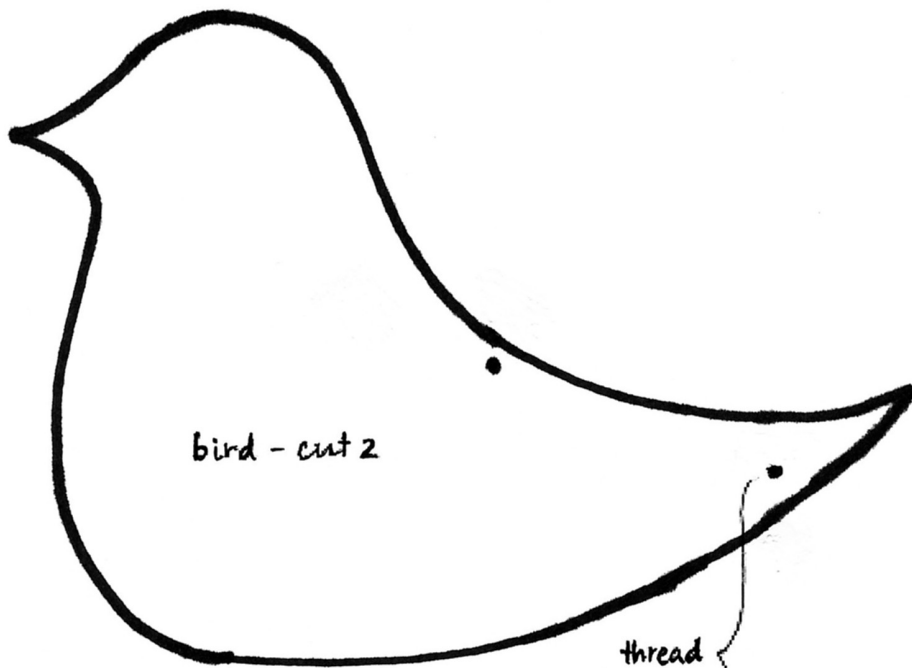
If you have questions or comments about regarding this template (and especially if anything is confusing), please contact me at julie@possibleworld.net and I will do my best to help. ENJOY!

thread length, dowel to heart: 3.75"

heart - cut 1



thread length, dowel to bird: 6.25"



bird - cut 2

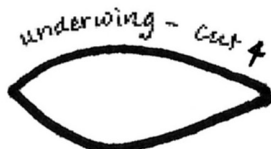


flower A - cut 4



flower B - cut 4

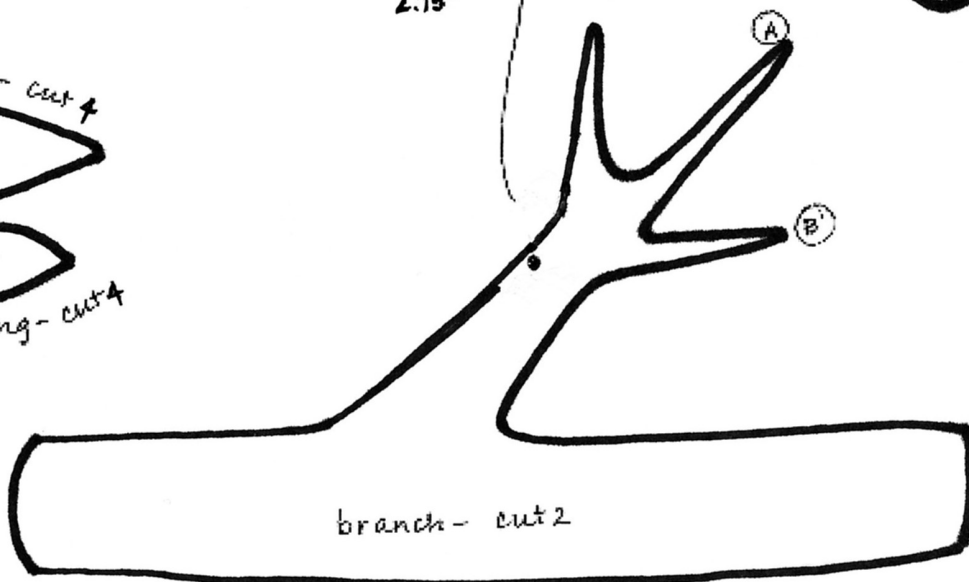
thread length = 2.75"



underwing - cut 4



overwing - cut 4



branch - cut 2