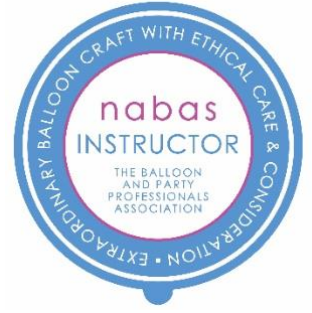


Mother's Day Display

By Fiona Eagle



This design has a good impact and is relatively quick. Use embellishments to compliment the colours of the round foil balloon used.

Materials:

- 3 x grey 11" latex balloons
- 3 x white 11" latex balloons
- 2 x silver reflex/chrome 11" balloons
- 1 x round Mother's Day foil balloon
- 2 x white 5" latex balloons
- 3 x 260s in white, grey & silver chrome
- 5 x 160s in robin's egg blue, yellow & wildberry
- 3 x 260s or scraps in white for tying
- scissors
- hand pump or electric inflator
- sand or water weight



Techniques:

- Duplet
- Cluster
- Flower
- Plait

Method - How to make the base:

1. Inflate 2 x 11" grey to 7" and tie into a duplet.
2. Repeat using 1 x 11" white and 1 x 11" silver.
3. Twist the two duplets together to make a cluster.
4. Tie in a weight.
5. Inflate 2 duplets using 1 x 11" Grey, 2 x 11" White and 1x 11" silver to 5 1/2".
6. Twist into a cluster.
7. Tie 5 1/2" cluster onto the 7" cluster.
8. Repeat steps 5 to 6 using the same colours in 5" sized to 4".
9. Tie the 4" cluster on top of the other clusters.
10. Inflate the foil and attach to top of base using a 260 ribbon.

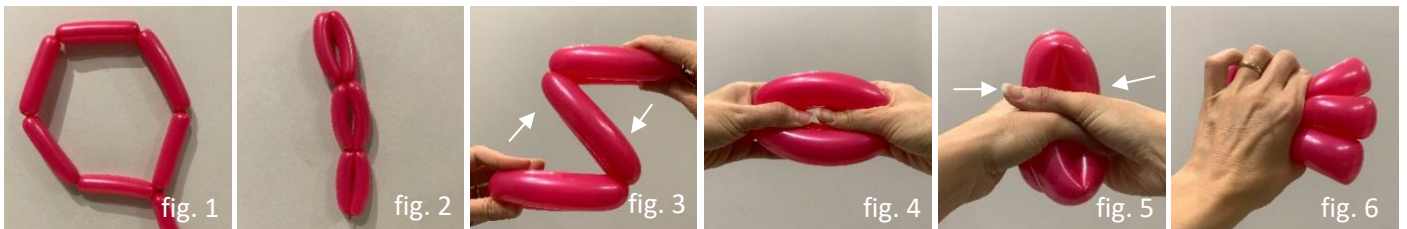
How to make the plait:

1. Pre stretch all the 260's by holding the closed end and stretching down to the neck, similar to if you were making a ribbon.
2. Inflate the chrome 260 almost to the end and tie a knot.
3. Inflate the other 2 almost to the end, and tie together.
4. Make a bubble in the closed end of the chrome balloon and twist into the join of the other 2. Use one of the beads to make a figure of 8 and then tie to the other bead to make it all secure.
5. Plait the balloons together, as evenly and as straight as possible, there are several methods. My preference is to hold the bubble in the heels of my hands with the length of the balloon upwards. Take a balloon from one side and put in between the other 2, repeat on the other side, then alternate until you use up all the balloons.
6. At the end make 2 bubbles in the balloons with closed ends and secure them together. If the remaining balloon is the same length use a figure of 8 to tie the bead in. If it is longer (this is very likely if you use a chrome in the mix) then make a twist at the same length of the join, cut a small hole near the knot, and allow it to deflate.
7. Stretch this excess in a figure of 8 and tie off to secure.
8. Attach the centre of a 260 ribbon to the connection point at the base of the foil leaving 2 shorter ribbons.
9. Gently stretch one of these and attach to one end of the plait.
10. Curve the plait over the foil and attach the ribbon at the other side.
11. The 260 should hold the plait by pressure around the foil round, without the need for glue dots etc.
12. You are now ready to add your finishing touches... 6 petal flowers in this example.



How to make the flowers (Sausage Method):

1. Inflate a 160 leaving about 4 fingers and tie off.
2. Starting at the knotted end, make a bubble 5" approx.



3. Keeping hold of the first bubble, make 5 more by measuring against the first, then tie together (fig. 1). Cut off the excess, but not too close.
4. Twist together (fig. 2), and fold together in a zig zag shape (fig. 3). You can now see why it's fondly referred to as "the sausage method"!
5. Next cup your hands around the balloon with your thumbs facing each other and your fingers underneath (fig. 4).
6. Push your hands strongly together and put one hand around whole centre. (figs. 5-6)

7. With the other hand, grasp around all the way around and twist 2 or 3 times to secure the connection point (fig. 7).



8. You now need to adjust the petals so the flower sits flat. Open out each join in turn and ease back together (figs. 8-9).
9. You are now ready to make the centre. Use an off cut of a 160 or 260, stretch just a little of the closed end of the balloon, and inflate. Let the air out to the desired size of the ball and tie off leaving enough balloon to tie it in with (fig. 10).
10. Place the ball in the centre and hold the knot with your thumb and stretch away (fig. 11).
11. Pull this through the centre and make a figure of 8 and tie off and cut off the excess (fig. 12).
12. Repeat these steps and make 4 more flowers.

This is a fast method for making very even sized flowers, it takes a bit of practice, but is really worth the time.

Attaching the flowers:

1. For the base: Use a white 260 ribbon, attach to the centre of a flower at each end. Use other 260 ribbon or scrap attach to another flower.
2. Place the first flower, where you would like it and wrap the slightly stretched ribbon around the centre of the base at the lowest level in a figure of 8 and place the 2nd flower where you would like it to sit.
3. For 3rd flower stretch and tie in in the middle layer of the base.
4. For the top: Use a white 260 ribbon and tie on one flower as before. Thread the ribbon through in the desired location through the plait, add the final flower with a figure of 8 in the centre and tie off and trim off the excess balloon.