

DESCRIPTION

Get ready to brighten up your Chanukah celebration with some homemade Menorah candles!

MATERIALS

- paraffin wax
- double boiler (metal coffee can set on top of a wire screen in a large pot of boiling water)
- wooden spoon
- bowl filled with cold water
- wick
- utility knife
- candy thermometer
- blue crayons

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by cutting up 1/2 pound of wax into one inch thick pieces so it will melt quicker.
2. Next heat the water using a medium temperature, bring to a gentle boil. Place the wax in the double boiler or if you are using a coffee can place the can into a pot of water. The pot should be filled half full with water. Your boiler should be at least a foot tall. The taller the can, the longer you can make your wicks and the taller your candles will be. * Don't use high heat, it may cause the wax to catch on fire.
3. Stir the wax until it is completely melted and it reaches a temperature of 160 F or 71 Celsius. (Test the temperature by placing the thermometer in the center of the melted liquid). Turn the heat down. Keep water warm enough to keep the wax melted.
4. Now its time to add your color. Add the crayons to the melted wax. Add a little at a time until you have reached the desired shade. Make note that the wax changes colors to a shade lighter when it cools.
5. Make sure the wax stays melted. Check that the temperature of the wax is still 160F/71 C.
6. Begin with cutting the wick to the desired length of candles plus a little extra to hold. Example: If you want 2 ten inch candles cut about 23 inches of wick. You will be making two at the same time. Double over the wick over your finger. Here's where the dipping starts. Dip the wick in the wax for a few seconds then lift back out. Allow the wax to cool between dippings about a minute or so.
7. Continue the dipping and cooling process. After a few layers, you can speed up the cooling process by dipping the candles in cool water after each wax dip.
8. Repeat the process until the candles have reached the proper thickness. If lumps occur, roll warm candles on a smooth surface.
9. Using a sharp knife trim the bottoms to remove excess wax and to create a straight edge bottom for you candles.
10. Hang your candles to dry. Once they are dried you can cut the wick.
11. Safety tips for candle making: Never leave children alone with melting or melted wax.
12. Never leave hot wax alone.

Did you know there's a free web video for this activity with step-by-step instructions?
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CRAFTS

CHANUKAH: HOMEMADE CANDLES

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13. Never heat wax over 275° F, wax flashes from liquid to flame at 375° F.
14. Never let wax come in contact with flames. If you develop a wax fire, treat it as you would a grease fire. Do not throw water on it. Use a fire extinguisher (type ABC) or if it is contained in a pan, cover with a lid, extinguish any heat source and leave the lid in place until the area has cooled.
15. Use a temperature gauge and always know what the temperature is at all times.
16. Always use the water bath method of melting wax, never place your wax container directly on the heat source. Also, use a wire rack to keep the wax container from resting on the bottom of the water pan. Keep a close watch on the water level, it will evaporate quickly and must be replenished frequently. When done this way and properly supervised, you will eliminate any flash potential.
17. Don't pour wax down the drain, it will block them.

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