Bhurtokian W.O.A. Shield Creation Tutorial

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Introduction

Welcome to my first tutorial!

This will cover creating a "snow disk shield" the Bhurtokian way, as well as a few fun features that I like to add to the shields I carry. More specifically this tutorial covers shield creation from the ground up stopping at the point of needing a shield cover. Shield covers will most likely be saved for another tutorial.

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Materials & Supplies

Required

Snow Disk

1 roll of Duct Tape

A Drill

Camping Pad (Blue Foam)

6 Machine Screws Length: 1 1/2"

Diameter: 3/8th"

6 Washers 3/8th" inner diameter 1

1/4th" outer diameter

15 in. long leather strap

Metal fence door handle

4 sq. ft. of pegboard

1 roll of double sided carpet tape

(Indoor / Outdoor)

10 ft. of water hose

10 ft. of pipe insulation (The thick

kind)

5 ft of cloth or nylon rope

Grip Tape

6" x 3" x 1/2" piece of

wood (optional)

Baby Powder (Optional)

Lexol Leather Conditioner

Leather Stain (Color of your choice)

Cloth Rag

For

the Goodies

20 Machine Screws Length: 1/2"

Diameter: 10-24

20 Washers 3.8th" inner diameter

1/2" outer diameter

4ft. of 2 in. wide industrial strength

vel-cro

1 bicycle water bottle

2 Throwing Daggers

3 sq. ft. cargo or laundry sack netting

Forward

This tutorial shows you how to make a blue foam covered shield. You may prefer couch foam instead. This is perfectly fine, and is generally much faster to mess with than the blue foam version. I love my couch foam shield to death and have used it for years. The only

major downside I've noticed with it's use is that when it gets wet it's like lugging around a 20 pound bucket of water strapped to your arm because it soaks up all the water that it touches. At some point in the tutorial I will try to briefly digress into how to use couch

foam as an alternative, just know that this tutorial is not centered on that type of construction.

Tutorial Note:

I named this tutorial Bhurtokian W.O.A.

Shield Creation for a reason. Bhurtokians pay very close attention to all details with all of their equipment. It's this attention to detail that sets our equipment a cut above the rest in quality,

durability, overall life time, and plain spanky-ness. Plus it just makes you more proud of your finished products. So, that being said, you'll probably find many little details covered very specifically in all my tutorials, sometimes to excessive levels. At least now you'll

know why. There, now that that's out of the way... Lets begin! I've taken over 150 photos that I'm going to attempt to use to better explain what I'm saying. So try to refer to them for any extra help you may need.

Getting Started

Alright, begin by taking your snow disk and cutting it to the size you feel is right for you.

A medium shield should cover your shield arm shoulder as well as provide adequate coverage of your rear end. Don't get over zealous and try to use a shield that's too large for your body build. It WILL be detrimental to your fighting and survival ability. Bigger is NOT always better! It should be large enough to cover the above two locations while at the same time allowing you to swing your sword in a horizontal arc under your shield without forcing you to kick out the bottom edge of the shield more than a few inches.

Your Shield Meets the Home Gardening Department

After you have your snow disc sized correctly, the first step is to get out that garden hose. Cut the threaded metal end off, then cut enough 6 inch strips to go around the edge of your snow disk.

Cut the Garden Hose

Next, take each 6 inch strip of garden hose and slice it open length wise. I would suggest that you put the slice along the "inside" edge so that the hose's natural curve fits better with the curved edge of the snow disk. This prevents the hose from bunching up.

ALSO NOTE



Ignore the handles in the following photos. We haven't gotten to that yet. They're only here to give some perspective as to the size of the shield in the photos.

Slit the Hose

Next take each 6 inch piece of water hose and fit it over the edge of your snow disk, duct taping it down as you go.

Attach the Hose

Continue doing this until the entire outer edge of your snow disk is covered by the pieces of hose. Massive amounts of tape is not required for this. Just use enough to hold it down and to cover the cracks in between each 6 inch piece of hose.

And Now for the Plumbing Department

Next pull out that pipe insulation.

Begin placing the pipe insulation around the edge of your shield over the water hose. In case you're wondering the water hose is there to serve two purposes. First and most importantly, it's there to keep the sharp plastic edge of the snow disc from cutting through the pipe insulation over time. This prevents the eventual occurrence of someone destroying their swords padding or snapping their sword core over the hard exposed edge of your shield (It has happened). Secondary to that, it gives the pipe insulation a much tighter fit. This makes the whole contraption last longer.

Do not pull the plastic backing off the sticky edges of the pipe insulation yet.

Just wind it on there.

Here's another detail for you. Most sticks of pipe insulation sold are not going to be long enough to go around the entire shield. You'll need to use two. There will be two small cracks in the foam where each stick comes together after you add the second piece. Yes, you'll be covering these cracks with a strip of duct tape, however, when you put your handle on, remember where these two cracks are and remember to place your handle on the shield rotated in such a way as to keep those two cracks on the bottom edge of the shield. That's the edge that gets hit the least, so we dont have to worry about swords landing where those cracks are and getting damaged. To fill the gap, start by placing the end of second stick of pipe insulation up against where the first ended and wind in on around to the other end of the first stick.





Cut the end of the second stick off to where it becomes flush with the first stick's end.



The thing that makes pipe insulation perfect for padding the edges of shields is the fact that it comes with its own built in sticky! Pull the plastic strip off the edges of the pipe insulation and squeeze the edges of the foam down onto the snow disk. If find it best to pull the strip off a little at a time as I squeeze it down.



Enter the Duct Tape!

Next place a strip of duct tape over each of the two cracks where each of the sticks of pipe insulation come together as shown in the pictures below. Then place another strip on top of the first to give that spot a little extra

strength.

Now place strips of duct tape about every 6 inches all around the outer edge of the shield to help hold the pipe insulation down.

A Handle on Life

Attr m si h A

Alright, it's time to get a handle on things! Start by standing in front of a mirror with your

shield, or get your friend who knows how to fight to look at you, or both.

Assuming your right handed, hold the shield with your right hand and position your left arm on the back of the shield as if you really had it strapped to your arm. Hold it up against your body in the

position that you're going to want it to be in combat. You're left arm should be in a comfortable position up against the shield. Put your metal fence gate handle in your left hand and have your friend mark it's bolt holes on the snow disk with a marker. Next have your friend mark a small line showing where the top and bottom of your forearm is in the location you will want

your strap to go.

If you're by yourself you can do the marking with your shield on the floor, it's just harder to make sure you get your handle and strap in the right place that way. Now, drill the 4 holes that you marked for the fence gate handle, as well as 1 hole about an inch above your top forearm mark and another one about an inch below your bottom forearm mark. Yes, the following pictures show 4 holes for the strap, ignore that. You only need those 2. When drilling your snow disk go at a decent speed. If the drill speed is too slow it may pull the plastic up like a screw and end up splitting the plastic.



Get Pegged

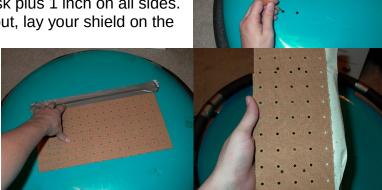
Next get out that peg board and cut out a piece to go under your handle. It needs to be large enough to have about 2 inches sticking out on all sides of the handle as shown below. This is to prevent the screws and washers that hold the handle on from tearing through the plastic. Once you've got your peg board cut out, flip your shield over to where your looking at the inside. The inside being the part that other people don't see when you're fighting. Lay the piece of peg board down on the snow disk and center it over the holes for your handle. Use a strip of duct tape to



hold it in place, then flip the shield over and use a pencil or marker to mark the holes for the handle on the piece of peg board.

Next you'll cut another piece of peg board out, this one is for the outside of your shield. It needs to be big enough to cover all 6 of the holes you've drilled in your snow disk plus 1 inch on all sides. Once you've gotten the new piece cut out, lay your shield on the

floor with it's outside facing up this time. Center the piece of peg board over the 6 holes and use a strip of duct tape to hold it in place. Flip the shield over and mark all 6 holes on the peg board with a pencil or marker.



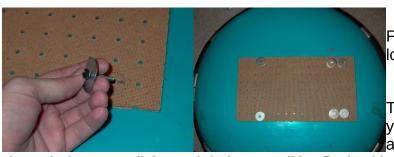
Now drill all of your marked holes in both pieces of peg board.

Now whip out the bolts and washers. Keep in mind that the sizes I gave in the materials list should be considered approximate. The pictures shown in the tutorial should give you a decent idea of the sizes of hardware that you will need so that when you get to the store you'll be able to eye-ball it. =)





Center the big piece of peg board on the outside of the shield. Line it up with the drilled holes. Place one washer on each bolt and one bolt through each of the 6 holes as shown below.



Flip the shield over so that you're looking at the inside.

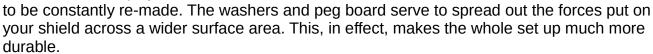
Take the small piece of peg board that you cut out and drilled for the handle and line it up with the bolts sticking

through the snow disk. Push it down until it's flush with the snow disk and the 4 bolts are

sticking up through the holes you drilled in this piece of peg board.

Peg Board Explanation

At this point let me explain what all this peg board mess is for. The peg board is used to prevent the stress from the handle and strap from cracking the snow disk's plastic over time. I've seen many shields where no peg board or even washers were used and had



Also, while I'm explaining the peg board, the reason behind using one big piece of peg board on the outside of the shield rather than simply using 2 smaller pieces over the handle and strap bolts is this. Up here in Bhurtok we take pictures and video of our members fighting quite often for the purposes of study. Recently we've noticed that many times during a shield block our shields are actually bending from the wrist pressure as we pull hard to get the block off. So with this recent generation of shields we're now putting one larger piece of peg board across the outside of the shield to reinforce its rigidity.

Getting a Grip

Moving on! Take 6 more of the washers and place them down on the bolts for the handle and arm strap.

Take your metal handle and fit it down onto the bolts. You may have to work with it to get all four bolts to go into their holes on the handle depending on how accurately you drilled all your holes.

Camping Pad (Blue Foam) Makes an Entrance

Get out your roll of camp pad, commonly known to HFS'ers as Blue Foam. Camp Pad (Blue Foam) Now, measure and cut a strip of blue foam that will run from under your handle to back a little bit past where your elbow will rest, as shown in the following pictures. This makes your shield a little bit more comfortable when you're out on those long trail walking quests HFS'ers are so fond of.



Bow Before the Power of the Carpet Tape

Time for one of Bhurtok's favorite tools, the Double Sided Indoor Outdoor Carpet Tape! This stuff always gets me excited in ways that only duct tape used to do. What's so special about this kind of tape you ask? Indoor / Outdoor Carpet Tape is the closest thing to water proof tape there is. Carpet tape is also an extremely sticky substance. It will not come off of foam with out ripping it to pieces so be very careful when placing it. Another "feature" of carpet tape is that it's made out of cloth so it bends around



surfaces and corners where a normal tape would wrinkle or rip. Fiberglass carpet tape should be used because it's stronger, but any type of carpet tape will work.

Lay your strip of blue foam out and cover one side of it in carpet tape leaving the backing on the back side of the tape for now.



Now peel off that backing revealing the beautiful 2nd sticky side of the tape. Line up the blue foam strip where it should go and press it down firmly all over. That piece of blue foam will never move again!

All Spanky & Comfortable

Now we're gonna make our handle all spanky and comfortable. Remove the metal handle from the shield and cover it in carpet tape, removing the backing as you go along. Be careful not to touch the sticky part very much because the oils and dirt on your skin will make it un-sticky very fast and your handle wont last as long.



Now get out your rope. Plastic rope (used here) works just as well as cloth or nylon rope, so

take your pick. Starting at one end of the handle tightly rap the rope around the handle keeping each wind as close to the last one as possible. Do this until the entire handle surface is covered in rope. The carpet tape is used here to keep the rope from slipping while you're gripping it so squeeze the rope down real good so that the glorious carpet tape gets a good strong hold on it. Cut any extra rope off when you're done.



Next, get out your favorite brand of Grip Tape and tightly cover the rope on the handle with it.

Make sure you go around a couple times on each end to keep it from falling off when it gets wet. Now go grab some baby powder! Cover the grip tape on the handle with it and then dust it off real good. This gets rid of that annoying sticky black stuff that gets everywhere with freshly applied grip tape.



Testing Your Handle



Alright... Slide your hand in that puppy and see how it fits.

It should fit snugly but shouldn't put any real pressure on your

hand. Make sure that you take into account anything you wear on your hands in combat, such as gloves. This one for me is a bit too tight. We need to create a spacer to raise the handle

off of the snow disk a bit. There's two things we can use for this. Here I am going to use two blocks of wood that have been cut to the size of the bases of the handle. But if you dont wanna mess with wood then you can cut out 2 or 4 pieces of peg board of the same size and stack those under the handle. You will of course need to drill holes for the bolts in these pieces as well. To add a spacer remove the handle and the washers for the handles bolts, you wont need them anymore. Next try sliding your spacers down on the bolts. If the foam is in the way slightly that just means that you cut your blue foam well. Just take a knife and cut notches in the blue foam to make room for your spacers.





Alright, put your handle back on top of the spacers. Grab your nuts.... And a screw driver, and tighten your handle on.

Now take a moment to be proud of your excellent work!

Strap It Down

Alright, time for the strap. You can really use any material you want for the strap. I've seen people use seat belt material, elastic, thick cloth, string, and even duct tape. But for me, nothing does the job quite like leather. As a tradition many Bhurtokian Paiges / Squires / Knights use a piece of their knights belt leather for their strap, but it's really

all up to you. So get out that leather!

Punch or drill a hole in one end of the belt leather about 3/4 to 1 inch away from the edge in the center as shown below.



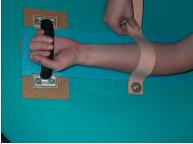
Place the hole you've drilled in your

leather strap on the top arm strap bolt that should be sticking up through your snow disk. Go ahead and put a washer and a nut on it. Hand tighten the nut. This

will help to get your length correct.

Next with your shield laying on the floor inside facing up, put your arm in the handle and under the strap. With your other hand take the leather strap

and hold it down to the bottom strap bolt. The strap should fit your arm snugly, but shouldnt put any pressure on your arm. Pull the strap tighter if it'stoo loose, or give it some slack if your hand starts turning blue. Make sure you take in to account anything that



you wear on your fore arm in combat, such as thick sleeves or bracers. Once you've got it the way you like it, give yourself about 1/2 inch more slack to make up for the length of the bolt and hold it in place as you pull your arm out. Now using both hands, press down firmly on the leather resting on top of the bottom bolt to mark where the second hole needs to go.

Remove the strap from your shield and drill or punch the second marked hole. Next cut your strap off of the long piece of belt leather. Remember to leave at least 3/4 of an inch past your second hole. In fact to be safe, if you'd like, you can leave about 4 inches past your second hole. This will give you room to make adjustments later if you need to.

Give it the Treatment

Next we're going to treat and stain the leather strap. Technically, this is not required. But untreated leather will become stiff and will crack over time. Get out your Lexol Leather Conditioner.

Now there are two commonly used ways to apply the Lexol to the leather. The best way is to pour the Lexol into a small bowl and then soak the strap for about 30 seconds. This really gives the leather a heavy dose of conditioner, which is a good thing! The second method is to get a rag, pour a bit of Lexol on it and rub it into the strap all over. Apply the Lexol to the Leather Either way, wait about 5 minutes after you've applied the Lexol then work the leather. Working the leather is done by bending and rolling the



leather over and over to soften it. Once you've worked the leather out real good, leave it somewhere to dry.

A Stain is Worth a Thousand Words

Once the leather has dried, it's time to stain it. This step is completely optional. Get out your leather stain of a color of your choosing. I'm going to use black this time. Leather Stain Using a new rag, or a sponge, or the little brush that comes inside the bottle, apply a couple coats of the leather stain to the strap and let it dry. Be careful with the stain. This stuff does NOT come out of anything.... EVER.

Completing the Strap

Once the leather has dried we put the strap back on the shield for the last time. Place the strap on both of the strap bolts, followed by the washers and nuts. Tighten the bolts down as best you can. Rather hand tighten them as best you can. You never want to use a drill for tightening anything on your shield as it may crack the snow disk!

Protect the Foam!

Now flip your shield over so that the outside is facing up. Cover all of the bolts with a strip of duct tape to protect the foam.







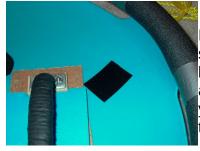


Daggers of Throwing +1 (Vel-Cro Love)

Alright, time for some fun stuff! Before we move on to adding the blue foam to the outside of the shield I'm going to show you how to add some really fun and handy features to the shield. These features are completely optional of course. First off we're going to attach some throwing daggers to the back of the shield for use in those groups that allow classes with medium shields to carry a couple of them. Get out that Industrial Strength Vel-Cro!



First of all when you're making your throwing daggers you'll need to add some Vel-Cro to them. Make sure you add the soft fuzzy part of the Vel-Cro to the throwing daggers, so that they're still safe to hit people with. A Throwing Dagger with Vel-Cro Next take about a 3 inch piece of the spiky side of the Vel-Cro, remove the plastic backing to expose the adhesive, and stick it to the inside of your shield. Make sure you think about the position of the dagger before you put your Vel-Cro onto the shield. It needs to be readily accessible to your throwing arm while at the same time not in a position where it will interfere with the movements of your shield.



I was a able to fit two daggers on this shield. But that's really enough because there aren't any classes anywhere to my knowledge that allow you a medium shield as well as more than 2 thrown weapons.



Before we continue, just a quick suggestion... This type of feature carries over very well to other items you may need to carry with you. For instance I plan on adding Vel-Cro to my healers spell balls, so that some of them may be stored on the back of my shield as well. The point is, your imagination is the limit. Dont be afraid to expirament and have fun with da' Vel-cro!

Bag Of Holding (The Net Sack)

Alright, the next nifty little feature we're going to add is a net to hold on to stuff for us. Once again this is entirely optional but very handy. You'll need some smaller bolts washers and nuts for this one as well as some cargo or laundry sack netting.







Alright first let me show you a photo of the finished product so that you know what we're going for here. We're not trying to create a sack to hold a whole bunch of stuff. We're trying to create a small pocket to keep a few things in our shield in a very out of the way manner.

Use that last photo to give you an idea of what you should be doing when following the next few steps. Start by using a marker

to mark the holes for the bolts that will hold the bottom of the netting on. Every shield is a little different so you'll have to get creative when adding this type of feature. For instance the snow disk being used in these photos is different from most in that is has gaps all around the edges. Normally you would mark your holes for the bolts near where the pipe insulation meets

the plastic, but in this case I just have to follow the bottom edge.



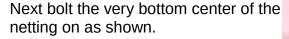


Alright, now drill your marked holes.

Alright get out your netting... For this shield's pouch I'm going to use an old laundry bag made out of a mesh material. You can use anything you can find here but I would suggest the use of a material that is stretchy. Cargo netting is a good type of material to use as long as the holes

in the net aren't too large. Start by cutting a piece of netting about 6 inches wide and long enough to cover the bottom area of your shield. You should be able to follow along with what I did from the photos below.

Once you have a piece of netting of approximately the right size, start by attaching the top corners with bolts. Do this by placing a washer on a bolt then poking the bolt through the netting **at least three times** as shown below. Finally push the bolt through your drilled hole and screw the nut on. Dont tighten the nuts down just yet.



Next, beginning at one side start bolting the netting down.

Trimming the extra off as you go makes it easier to work with.







The last thing our pocket needs is a way for it to be closed. For this we'll use our miraculous industrial strength Vel-Cro. Cut it into short 1/2 inch wide strips and using the built in adhesive apply it to the netting and the snow disk. Unfortunately the sticky backing on the side of the Vel-Cro you have stuck to the netting will not be enough to hold it. You will need to grab a needle and thread and whip stitch the netting to the Vel-Cro. This isnt a sewing class, so if you don't know what a whip stitch is, just take your needle and



thread and keep running it back and forth through the netting and Vel-Cro until you're pretty sure that it's not going anywhere.

When you're finished it should look like the following photo.

Thy Cup Run'eth On Empty

Alright, I've got one more nifty feature to add before we move on to complete the shield. Don't you just hate it when you're out on those long trail walks and all you have to drink is hot water some water bearer has been lugging around in the hot sun for the past 3 hours? Bleh! Lets add our own water bottle to our shield! For this you'll need to go out and purchase a bicycle

water bottle like the one shown below.

Cover one side of the water bottle in the fuzzy side of some Vel-Cro. Then find a good position on your shield for it. Keep in mind that a bottle of water is not going to be light, so you will most definitely want to keep it below your handle, and if you hold your shield in your left hand you'll want the bottle on the right side so it doesnt interfere too much with your movements. Once you've found a good position apply the opposite side of the Vel-Cro to your snow disk. And that's all there is to it!





Couch Foam Digression

Now would be a good time to go over creating a couch foam shield for those that are interested. First of all stop here in the tutorial. Using couch foam is much more simple. Get your couch foam, cut it into a circle of the same size as your shield, and use your shield cover to hold it on. That really is all there is to it. Alright! Time to finish the shield already... But before we do I want to digress on the weight the throwing daggers water bottle and net pocket add to the shield. I wont try to argue that it doesn't make a difference, it does. But when you need these things, they'll be there, and when you're just heading out to the field for some quick ditching you can simply jerk all this stuff off and have a shield as light as anyone elses. Also, some shields wont be large enough for you to fit all of this stuff on. It's your shield...

Customize in the ways that will make you the most effective on the field. These past three ideas are just examples and ideas for you to use to come up with other new stuff! And if you come up with something new, share the knowledge! Let us all know on the forums!

Lets Finish This

Moving on! It's time to add the blue foam to the outside of the shield... Unroll your blue foam and lay it out on top of the shield. Measure and cut a piece off that will be long enough to cover the shield. Chances are that the blue foam will not be wide enough to cover your snow disk with only one strip or piece, dont worry about that for now, we'll get to it in a minute.

Next get out that Double Sided Indoor Outdoor Carpet Tape of Stickiness +4 and cover the outside of your shield with it as shown below. Do not put any carpet tape on the peg board in the center, I'll show you why later.

Peel off the backing to expose the 2nd sticky side of the tape.



Careful Slapping

Now carefully slap that blue foam piece on to your shield. You only get one try at this, so get it right the first time. That carpet tape doesn't enjoy letting go, and if you try pulling it off it will take as much of the blue foam with it as it can... Carpet Tape is full of spite, never forget that.

If the strip of blue foam wasn't enough to cover the entire surface, cut another piece and stick it to the exposed area. Next, using a knife or a pair of scissors, trim the blue foam down to a circle. Finally, press the blue foam down firmly all over. This lets the carpet tape know that it's ok to form a lifetime relationship with your blue foam.



Warm up the Duct Tape and start by putting a strip over the crack between the two piece of blue foam it took to cover the snow disk.



Reinforce the Blue Foam

Duct Tape the Crack

Next we need to reinforce the blue foam that is covering the bolts that hold the net sack er'... Mesh Bag on... The ends of those bolts might as well be daggers to that blue foam, so put a couple layers of duct tape on the blue foam where the two meet.

You might ask why when attaching the netting for the pouch we didn't just put the bolts through the other direction... The answer is simply because of how difficult it is to get the bag on correctly



when you're putting the bolts through that way. If you can do it, then go for it... But I warned you.

Finish the Edge

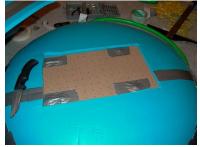
We're almost done now. The next step is to duct tape the edge of the shield. Just look at the pictures closely and you should be able to tell how I did it.



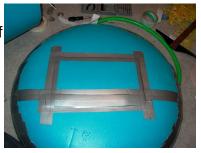
The Amazing Access Hatch

And just when you thought I was finished there's one more thing that I like to do before I call it complete. The universal rule of the universe is Shit Happens! At some point during the life of

this shield (Which if you made it properly should be at least a good 5 years) something may break. And let's say that something is a part of the handle. Your leather strap breaks or your dog chews up your handle... We need an access hatch so that we can easily get to those bolts on the outside of our shield without having to get into an extreme prejudice negotiation with all that carpet tape we put under the blue foam! Feel around for the edges of that piece of peg-board and use a knife to cut around it. Pull out and save the piece of blue foam.



Take a moment to marvel at the high-tech creation you have made, then stick that blue foam back in it's place and put a strip of duct tape along the cracks. Close Your "Access Hatch" You see, duct tape's emotional bond with blue foam is more like a good friend where as carpet tape holds it emotionally hostage. Should you need to get back in there to work with your shields guts you'll be able to peel off the duct tape around those cracks, open your hatch, make your modifications, close the hatch and cover those cracks back up with fresh duct tape.



Completed Bhurtokian W.O.A. Shield

Alright! That's it! You're Done! Here's a couple photos of the finished "Bhurtokian W.O.A. Shield"modeled by Bhurtok's very own Gabriel MacDonald."Bhurtokian Work Of Art Shield"

Conclusion

Well that's it for my first tutorial. I hope it has been helpful... Any comments, suggestions, praise, etc is welcomed in the forums!

Thank You's

Thanks to Gabriel and Firiel for their help in getting the pictures taken. And thanks to everyone who supports the HFS In Chaos Project!