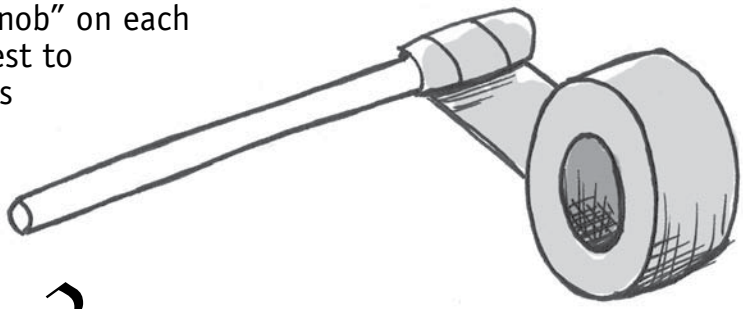
# Make Your Own Juggling Sticks

Juggling sticks have been around for thousands of years, but no one is quite sure how they made their way to Europe. Some people believe that they may have come to Europe from China (where they were called Devil sticks) along the Silk Road with Marco Polo. The Silk Road was an ancient trade route between China and the Mediterranean Sea. Marco Polo was a merchant and adventurer from Venice, Italy, who traveled the Silk Road in the thirteenth century. He wrote a famous book about his travels.

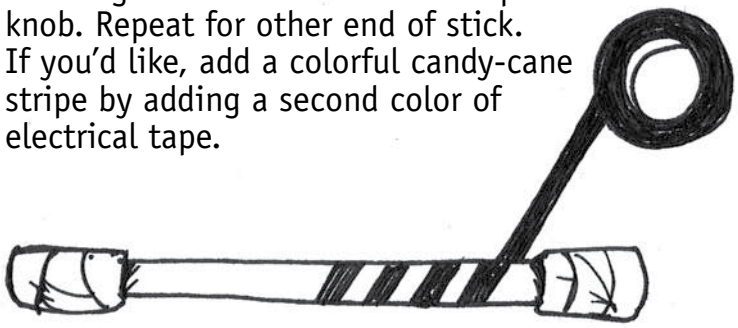
1 Wrap duct tape around each end of the longest dowel numerous times to create a thick "knob" on each end. This is your juggler. Do your best to keep the duct tape equal thicknesses at each end, so that the weight of the stick will be balanced. Check this by balancing the center of the stick on your finger.



## DID YOU KNOW?

During the Middle Ages, doctors sometimes prescribed a dose of the court jester to sick patients. They truly believed that laughter is the best medicine!

2 Starting at the middle of the juggler, wrap electrical tape all the way to the end completely covering the stick and the duct tape knob. Repeat for other end of stick. If you'd like, add a colorful candy-cane stripe by adding a second color of electrical tape.





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## Supplies

duct tape

one ⅝-inch wooden dowel, 24-inches long

colored electrical tape (use more than one color for a really bright look)

two ⅜-inch wooden dowels, 18-inches long

scissors

3 pieces of felt, 4-inches by 10-inches in colors that match the electrical tape

tacky glue

3 With scissors, cut the felt pieces into a fringe by snipping 2-inch cuts into one of the long edges of each piece. Stack the felt pieces and cut them in half to make six 4-inch-by-5-inch pieces. You'll use a stack of three for each end of your juggler. Wrap the uncut long edges around the duct tape knob, gluing in place as you go so that the fringe hangs over the edge of the dowel.

4 To make the hand sticks, cover both 18-inch dowels with electrical tape.

5 To use the sticks, kneel on the floor and stand the juggler upright in front of you. Use the hand sticks to lean the juggler back and forth, making sure that one end stays on the ground. Let the weight of the juggler land on each hand stick, then use the stick to push the juggler back in the opposite direction.

Use flowing motions to try lifting the juggler off the ground a bit with each toss. It takes lots of practice, but once you have this mastered you can try all sorts of tricks with your juggling sticks. If you have access to the Internet, you can search to find movies of some really talented jugglers.