



Pollen forecast – making supersized pollen grains

Have you ever taken a really close-up look at pollen? These tiny grains are pesky in hay fever season.

The Met Office provide pollen forecasts for 5 days ahead across the UK by using some of our weather data and expertise from organisations such as the National Pollen and Aerobiological Unit. Our forecast can be found [here](#).

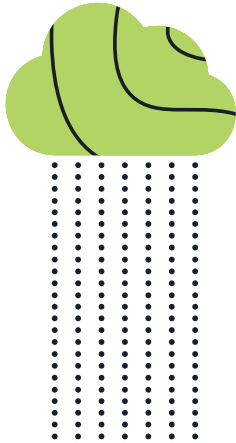
But look at them under a microscope and you will see they come in all sorts of wonderful shapes and sizes.

Why not have a go at making a giant recycled packing paper pollen grain? They're great fun to create and - as a bonus - far too big to get up your nose!



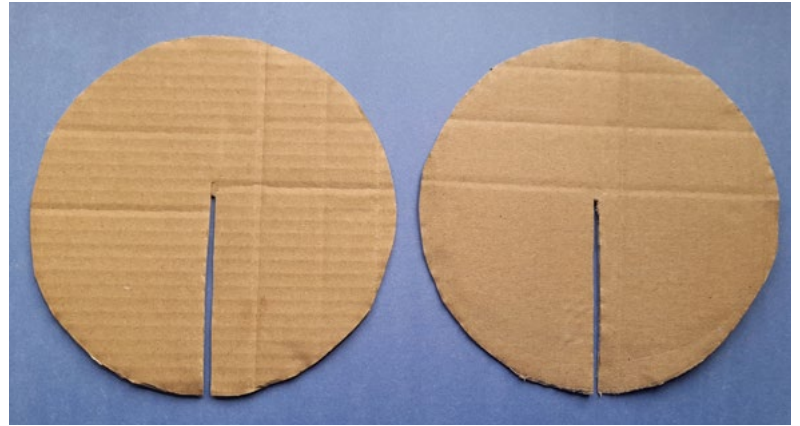
Materials required

- Cardboard
- Packing paper
- Newspaper
- A cereal box
- PVA glue or wallpapered paste
- Masking tape
- Paint
- Scissors
- A pencil



Activity Steps

- 01** Decide how big you would like your pollen to be and draw two circles onto corrugated card. Ours are 25cm in diameter.
- 02** Draw a line across the centre of each circle. Cut half way along the line with scissors to make a slot.



- 03** Slot the two circles together and secure with tape.



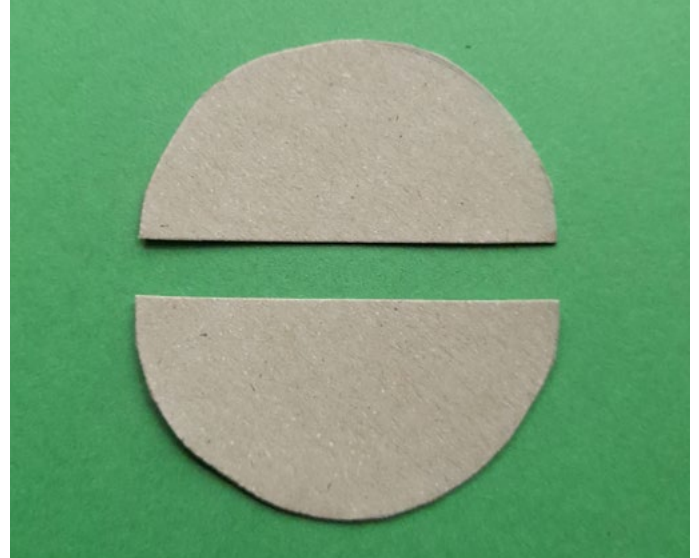
- 04** Crumple up some packing paper and use it to pad out your shape. Stick it in place with masking tape until your pollen grain takes shape.



- 05** Tear some strips of newspaper or brown paper. Paint them with wallpaper paste or thinned PVA glue (just add a little water). Cover your shape with strips until you have a fairly smooth surface. Leave to dry.



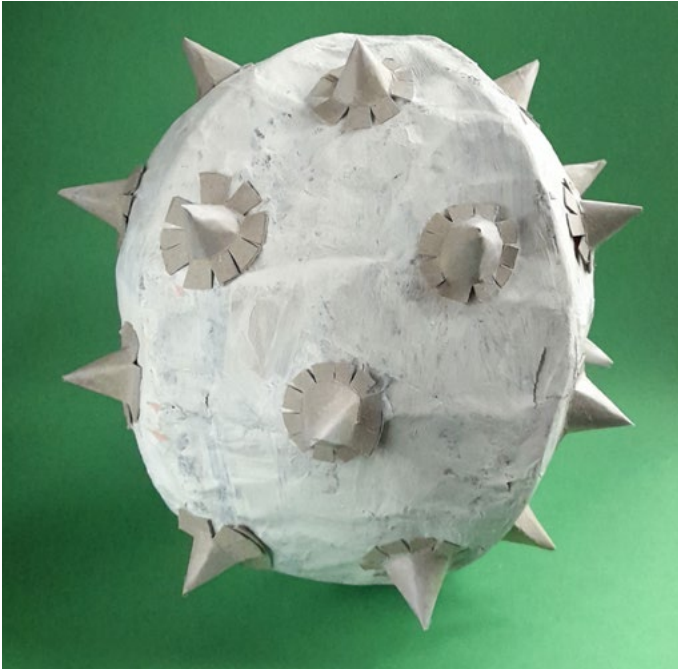
- 06** To make the spikes, draw small circles (approximately 6cm across) onto some thin card (a cereal box works well) and cut them out. Cut each circle in half.



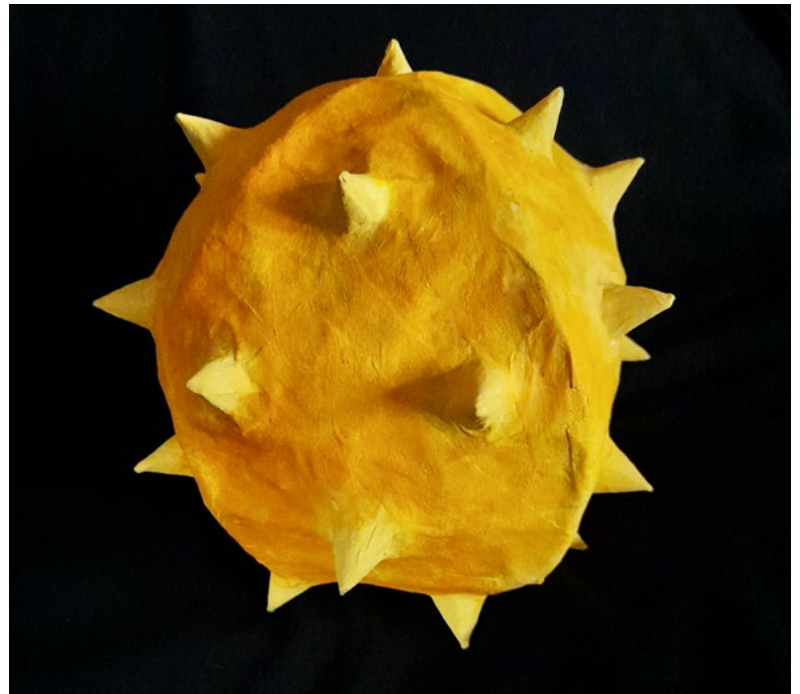
- 07** Make small cuts along the curve of each semicircle. Roll the semicircle up to make a cone and secure with tape.

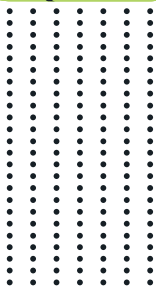


08 Glue the spikes in place and add another layer of paper mache all over the surface. Leave to dry thoroughly.



09 Choose a colour for your pollen grain and paint it all over.





10 When you're finished, why not make some other pollen shapes? There is lots of inspiration online.



If you'd like to learn more about pollen, go to our ["10 things you should know about pollen"](#) page to find out more.