

LION-MANE TIRE SWING

The oldest piece of junk can be the coolest thing in the world. Take old tires, for instance. Some people see them as an eyesore. But what do you see? That's right . . . many kid-hours of fun. Old tires make excellent tire swings. What you'll need for this project is a big tree with a thick horizontal branch (almost as thick as the trunk) that's about 10 feet or more off the ground and relatively horizontal. You don't have any old tires in your backyard? No worries. Head down to the nearest auto repair shop with your children in tow. They'll have plenty of tires for you to choose from. Look for a low-profile tire (that means the hole in the middle is bigger and the tire itself is wider), which makes for better swinging. Just ask your kids to hang on to the lion's mane (the rope handles) while they're going koo-koo-ape bonkers.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL:

Easy



TIME INVOLVED:

An afternoon

MATERIALS:

- High-performance, low-profile tire
- 40 feet heavy-duty $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch nylon rope
- 3 feet $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-thick chain
- 3 feet clear plastic 2-inch tubing

FASTENERS:

- 2-inch eyebolt with two nuts (1)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch galvanized washers (2)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch galvanized washers (2)
- $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch quick link (1)
- Double-eye swivel (1)

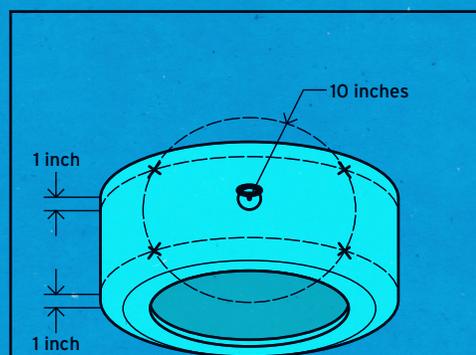
TOOLS:

- Drill with $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch bit and 1-inch auger bit
- Wire-cutting pliers
- Cigarette or grill lighter
- Duct tape
- Ladder long enough to reach your chosen branch

NOTE: For details on tying the knots referred to in this project, refer to the Knots section on page 162.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 Drill a 1/4-inch hole in the middle of the top and bottom of the tire. The top hole is for the eyebolt. The bottom hole is so you don't create your own mosquito hatchery: no water in the bottom of the tire means no mosquitoes (from your tire swing, anyway).
- 2 Slide a 1/4-inch washer, then a 1/2-inch washer, onto the 2-inch eyebolt and insert it into one of the holes. This will be the top of the swing. See image a.
- 3 Turn the tire upside down. Find the end of the eyebolt and put a 1/2-inch washer, then a 1/4-inch washer on the end of it. Screw on a nut and tighten it all the way down. Now add the other nut and tighten that one down on the first one, locking them together forever.
- 4 Turn the tire right-side up. With a 1-inch drill bit, drill four holes 1 inch or so from the edge of the tire and 10 inches from the eyebolt, forming a rectangle. See **Drilling Holes in the Tire**. This will allow someone to sit on top of the tire without the rope holds getting in their way.
- 5 If you see any frayed or stray wires sticking out from the body of the tire, clip them off with the pliers. Make sure there aren't any sharp edges left over.
- 6 From the rope, cut four 2-foot pieces. Heat the ends with the lighter and wrap them with duct tape to keep them from fraying.
- 7 Tie a stopper knot in one end of each piece of rope and insert the unknotted ends into the 1-inch holes. Once they're through the holes, tie stopper knots in the other ends. See image b.
- 8 Put the chain inside the plastic tubing. This will protect the tree from being chafed by the chain.
- 9 Place your ladder (make sure the feet are on solid, level ground), climb up with your chain, lay it over your chosen branch, and connect the two ends with the 3/8-inch quick link. Before you close it, insert one end of the double-eye swivel. Okay, now tighten up the quick link. See image c.
- 10 Did you heat and tape off the end of the rope already? Good. Then tie it to the other end of the double-eye swivel with a bowline, taking an extra turn through the eye of the swivel when you make the loop.
- 11 Pass the other end of the rope through the eyebolt on the tire, adjust the height to your preference, and tie it off with another bowline, taking an extra loop through the eyebolt. Trim any excess rope.
- 12 Watch your kids pile on and swing themselves silly!



Drilling Holes in the Tire



a



b



c