

HOW TO BUILD BALLOON ARCHES

Arches are a fun and popular balloon decoration with endless potential for creativity. From shopping malls to hotel ballrooms, arches add excitement and provide lavish displays of color. There are many variations. The following is just a sampling of the simple ways arches can be constructed:

SINGLE ARCH

Single Arches are made up of single latex balloons tied directly to a monofilament line. The balloons can be packed closely together or evenly spaced. The arch can be dressed up with a variety of accents such as ribbon, tulle, poly-silk leaves, flowers, or feathers. An air-filled latex balloon can be tied directly below the helium-filled balloon, creating the High-Low Arch, a variation of the single arch.

RAINBOW ARCH

Rainbow arches include several single arches of varying length that can be placed together, creating a rainbow of colors.

SWIRL ARCH

Swirl arches are composed of either a three cluster or a four cluster latex group joined by paper clips or plastic balloon clips and attached directly to the monofilament line.

FOIL ARCH

Foil arches can be created using helium-filled foil balloons. The balloons can be attached to the monofilament line, using a pipe twisted around the stem.

SWAG ARCH

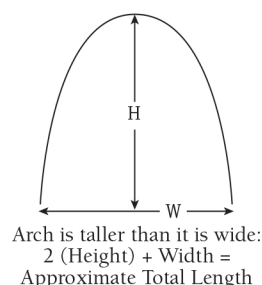
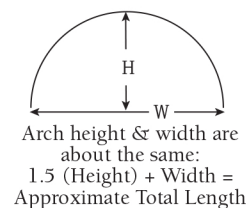
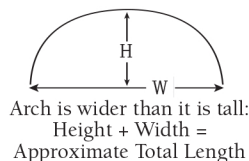
A Swag arch is an air-filled arch that can be suspended from the ceiling or other support. It can be a single or swirl arch.

BEFORE YOU AGREE TO DO A DECORATING JOB

Decorating with balloons can be an exciting supplement to an existing business or an opportunity for a new business. The days of balloon clusters as “decorations” are being surpassed by arches, sculptures, drops, and releases. Typically, decorating is conducted at the actual site. Every decorating job will differ and should be considered separately. Decorating is labor intensive and costly; thus, the following should be considered:

1. Make sure you have the required skill and supplies. A basic rule is “keep it simple.” Try more complicated decorations on your own before you attempt a professional job. Also, order any needed supplies ahead of time. Remember, your supplier is subject to stock availability too.
2. Decide whether the decoration is a short- or long-term exhibit. Air-filled arches will remain for several days; helium-filled arches are more short-term.
3. A professional standard is very important in the balloon industry. Never promise something you cannot deliver or do a shabby job. Advise the customer of your skill level and the expense involved from the onset.

FORMULAS USED TO CREATE BALLOON ARCHES

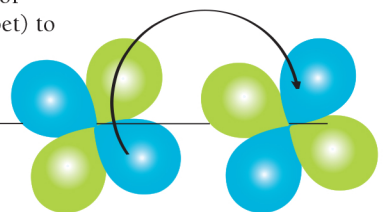
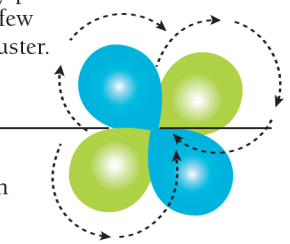
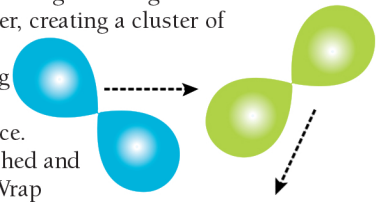
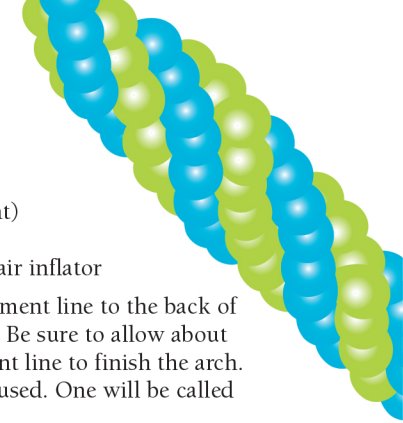


BUILDING AN ARCH

Supplies:

- Latex balloons—11", 14", or 16"
- Monofilament line (at least 50# weight)
- Electric sizing machine or templates
- Helium cylinder + inflator or electric air inflator

1. Attach the loose end of the monofilament line to the back of a chair or a similar stationary object. Be sure to allow about four or five extra feet of monofilament line to finish the arch.
2. Typically, two colors of balloons are used. One will be called the contrasting color or the swirl.
3. Inflate the balloons uniformly using either an electric sizing machine or other suitable templates.
4. Tie two inflated balloons of the same color together.
5. Tie two inflated balloons of the contrasting color together.
6. Twist the two sets of balloons together, creating a cluster of four.
7. Secure clusters on the line by looping the monofilament line around the cluster several times to hold it in place. Be sure to keep the line tightly stretched and clusters solidly packed on the line. Wrap monofilament line around two or three balloons in the cluster to secure. Add another cluster and repeat.
8. Make sure each cluster is exactly the same color pattern. The swirl is accomplished by moving the contrasting color one quarter turn clockwise as it is packed on the line. It is important that the clusters are tightly packed together on the line. There will be a few inches between the center of each cluster.
9. Continue to build arch until desired length is reached.
10. Wrap monofilament line four or five times around balloon clusters at the end of line in a looping motion in order to keep the balloon clusters solidly packed on the line.
11. Use a brick, sand-filled weight, or drapery hook (anchored to carpet) to hold each end of the arch in place.



Note: If a balloon pops . . . simply attach a balloon replacement to the line with a paper clip. Hook it directly to the line or to another balloon in the same cluster. Slip opened paper clip through uninflated portion of the balloon just below the knot.

Another option . . .

A three balloon cluster may also be used to make an arch. Instead of tying four balloons together, first tie two together, then tie a third balloon directly to the pair to form a cluster of three. Remember that pattern color placement must be consistent to achieve a swirl. Follow steps 7–11 to complete the arch.



Approximate # of balloons per foot in an arch (based on a spiral arch):

- 5 inch = 12 per foot
- 9 inch = 8 per foot
- 11 inch = 6 per foot
- 14 inch = 4 per foot
- 16 inch = 4 per foot