

Lets Go Fly a Kite

VENICE GULF COAST LIVING MAGAZINE

Tap into your inner child and feel the wonder, anticipation, and excitement of making and flying your very own kite. Whether it is a new, invigorating experience for you or you are reliving a favorite childhood memory, summer awaits with its sunshine, blue skies, and breezy days, providing the perfect opportunity to get outside and enjoy watching your tethered aircraft soar to the highest of heights.



Before embarking on your flying adventure, determine whether you want to buy or build your kite. While many other options are available for purchase, it can be an added thrill to see one you have made lifting upward in the air. Although kites come in many different shapes and sizes, some of the most common forms are the diamond shape, the delta (triangle), the dragon, the sled and the box. All of these tend to fly well in light to medium winds that range from 6 to 15 mph, while the box style can be flown in winds reaching up to 25 mph. Beginners and those building kites with children should opt for the diamond-shape style as it is easy to make and requires little assembly time (instructions follow).

After you have constructed or bought your kite, bring it to an open field or the beach where you can take advantage of unobstructed winds and obstacle-free surroundings. The easiest way to get your kite airborne is to enlist the help of a friend. Grasp the spool of twine and pass the kite to your friend. Ask your companion to hold onto the frame, face you, and walk backward, downwind about 50 feet as you keep the line straight. Once you are ready to launch the aircraft, give the signal to your friend, then gently pull the string and guide the kite higher into the wind, slowly tugging at the line as it glides upwards into the breeze. When you want to bring it in for a landing, have your friend tightly hold the handle, then grab the line, pull it in, and walk the kite down. Now that you've rekindled your childhood spirit, why not have fun and make the most of the ideal climate we enjoy year-round by regularly setting your kite to flight?

Making a Diamond-Shaped Kite

MATERIALS:

- Large white garbage bag (or plastic tablecloth)
- Yardstick • Marker • Scissors
- Two 3/16 x 26" lightweight wood dowels
 - Cloth tape
- Wax paper (optional) • Toothpicks
 - Kite twine (light-load)
 - Ribbon

DIRECTIONS:

Drawing Your Sail

Spread out the garbage bag or tablecloth on a flat surface (if you are using a garbage bag, point the open end toward your body) and draw a 26-inch vertical line. From the top of the line, measure 6 inches down and mark it with a dot using your marker. Placing your yardstick in the center of the 6-inch mark (at 13"), draw 26 inches across. Next, using your yardstick, draw a line from each point, creating the shape of the diamond. Cut out the sail and discard the excess material.

Attaching the Dowels

Before you attach the dowels, prepare the tape by cutting 7 pieces, each 2 inches long, and placing them on wax paper, which makes the tape easier to handle. Tightly adhere a piece of tape under one of the corners of the sail, leaving an inch of sticky tape exposed.

Lay the horizontal dowel, known as the spar, on the kite by placing it in the center of the point. Carefully fold the exposed piece of tape over to cover the dowel, securing it to the plastic. Repeat on the other side. Next, place the vertical dowel, called the spine, underneath the spar, lining it up and applying tape in the same way. Tie string around the point where the dowels intersect, as this reinforces the structure of your kite.

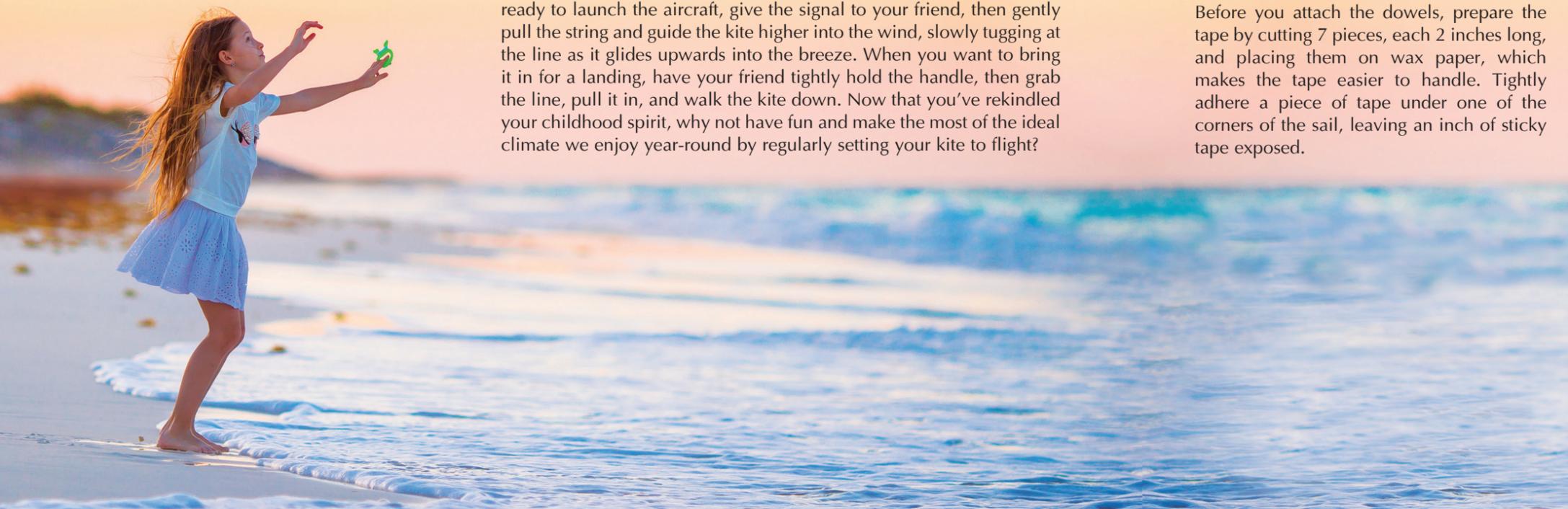
Creating a Bowline

Now that the frame of your kite is secure, you will need to create a bowline to achieve optimum flying results. The first step is to make two mounting pads. Take a piece of tape and place it down on your workstation in a vertical position, sticky-side up. Lay the center of a toothpick horizontally across the tape about half an inch from the top. Fold the top of the tape over the toothpick and press down tightly. Repeat this process to make the second pad.

Next, take an additional toothpick and insert it into the base of each of the two prepared pieces directly under the taped toothpick to create a hole. Once that is complete, break or cut off the ends of the toothpicks that are sticking out. Attach the mounting pads underneath each end of the spar, or the horizontal dowel, leaving the half-inch taped area exposed. Cut a 36-inch piece of string from your kite twine and thread it into one of the holes in the mounting pad, tying a knot to secure it. Insert the other end of the string into the opposite mounting pad but before tying it, pull it tight to create a bow. Allow for a 3-inch space between the bowline and the frame, as this gap results in the correct angle for flying. Once you have achieved the proper distance, tie the other end with a knot and cut off any excess string.

Adding the Tail

This piece is an essential part of your kite because it enhances its stability and keeps the nose pointing up toward the wind. To craft a tail, cut a narrow strip of ribbon that is about 4 feet, 1/2 inches long and 1-1/2 inches wide, and then tape it to the bottom of the spar.



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Trends for Summer 2024

WRITTEN BY AND PHOTOS PROVIDED BY DIANE SCHAEFER, OWNER OF DECORATING DEN INTERIORS—VENICE

VENICE GULF COAST LIVING MAGAZINE



Here are ways to update your interiors for summer:

1. Bring the Outdoors Inside—Nothing says summer like lush greens and florals blooming!
2. Get Artsy—Paint an accent wall in your room with one of the primary colors like red, yellow, or royal blue which are in trend. Search for bold prints or canvas art if you're not ready for a painting project.
3. Metallics Shine—Metallics glam it up like bronze, copper, brass, gold, and rose gold! Think candleholders, picture frames, lampshades, decorative bowls, and plant pots—let it all shine!
4. Classic Blue—The 2024 Pantone Color of the Year is Classic Blue. This color choice is for the summer which is no surprise—colors like royal blue and navy blue have been gaining popularity.
5. Boho Chic—Choose décor made from fibers or wood like woven baskets. If you're looking for a uniquely patterned, colorful area rug, let the boho-chic style inspire you to make a statement with your choice.
6. Reupholster Outdoor Cushions—Update your outdoor furniture with colorful, bold fabrics and pillows.

The top summer interior design trends in 2024 mirror what's in style year-round, but it's good practice to shake things up a bit in your home every so often, especially during Florida's warmer months!



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FUN IN THE SUN

Making the Bridle

Next, you will assemble the bridle. Cut a 6-foot-long piece of string. Lay your kite frame-side down and, using a toothpick, poke a hole on each side of the spine halfway between the top of the sail and the place where the dowels connect. Thread the string through one hole, turn the kite over, wrap the string over the spine, and thread it through the opposite hole to the other side. Secure by tying three simple overhand knots, which are created by forming a loop, passing the end through, and tightening the string. Take the other part of the string, or the bridle, to the opposite end of the kite. Measure 5 inches from the bottom, poke two holes as you did at the top, repeat the threading process, tie with three knots, and snip off the excess string.

Creating the Bridle Loop

Cut an 8-inch piece of string, fold it in half, and make a simple overhand knot. Now, place the bridle line over the top of the open loop, reach in, grab the tail of the loop, and pull it through.

Attaching the Fly-line

The final step is to attach the fly-line to the bridle loop. Take the end of your kite twine, keeping it attached to the spool, and make another loop like the bridle loop. Next, create a lark's head knot by inserting your index finger and thumb inside the loop, bringing the other end of the string over the top and pinching it, then pulling the loop over, creating another loop. Finally, insert the bridle loop inside the hole you just formed and draw it closed. Now you are ready to take your kite out and let it fly!

To watch a tutorial on how this kite is made, visit the following websites:

Kites.wonderhowto.com/how-to/make-diamond-shaped-kite-with-your-kids-216873/

Kites.wonderhowto.com/how-to/make-bridle-and-fly-line-for-your-kite-216869/

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