# Chichilaki



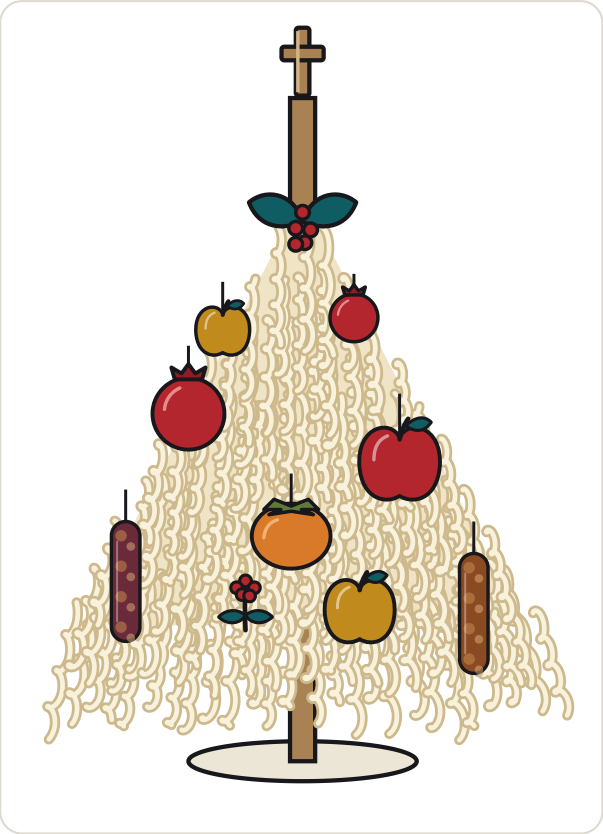
A Georgian New Year tree made of paper

## A little history

In western Georgia, in Guria and Samegrelo, families make a chichilaki for Christmas and the New Year. A dried hazelnut or walnut stick is shaved with a knife into long, pale curls that stay attached to the stick – until it looks like a little snowy tree. Many people say it is the beard of St. Basil, who brings gifts to children; others see in it the tree of life that joins earth and sky.

A small cross sits on top. The curls are hung with berries, apples, pomegranates, dried fruit, sweets and churchkhela (walnuts on a string, dipped in thick grape juice) – for a sweet and plentiful year. Some families keep their chichilaki until Epiphany in January and then say goodbye to it together with the old year's worries.

Real chichilaki are made of wood. Here we make a paper one: the curls are paper strips, curled around a pencil. It is gentle on the trees – and a little easier on small fingers.



## You will need

- Printed sheets on white or cream paper, 80–120 g/m²
- Scissors
- Glue stick and a little white glue
- A pencil for curling
- Thread or thin yarn
- Coloured pencils (optional)

About 1–1½ hours · age 6+ · younger children can curl and decorate while a grown-up cuts.

Print at 100 % ("Actual size", not "Fit to page") – the bar on each template page must measure exactly 5 cm. Print page 4 twice.

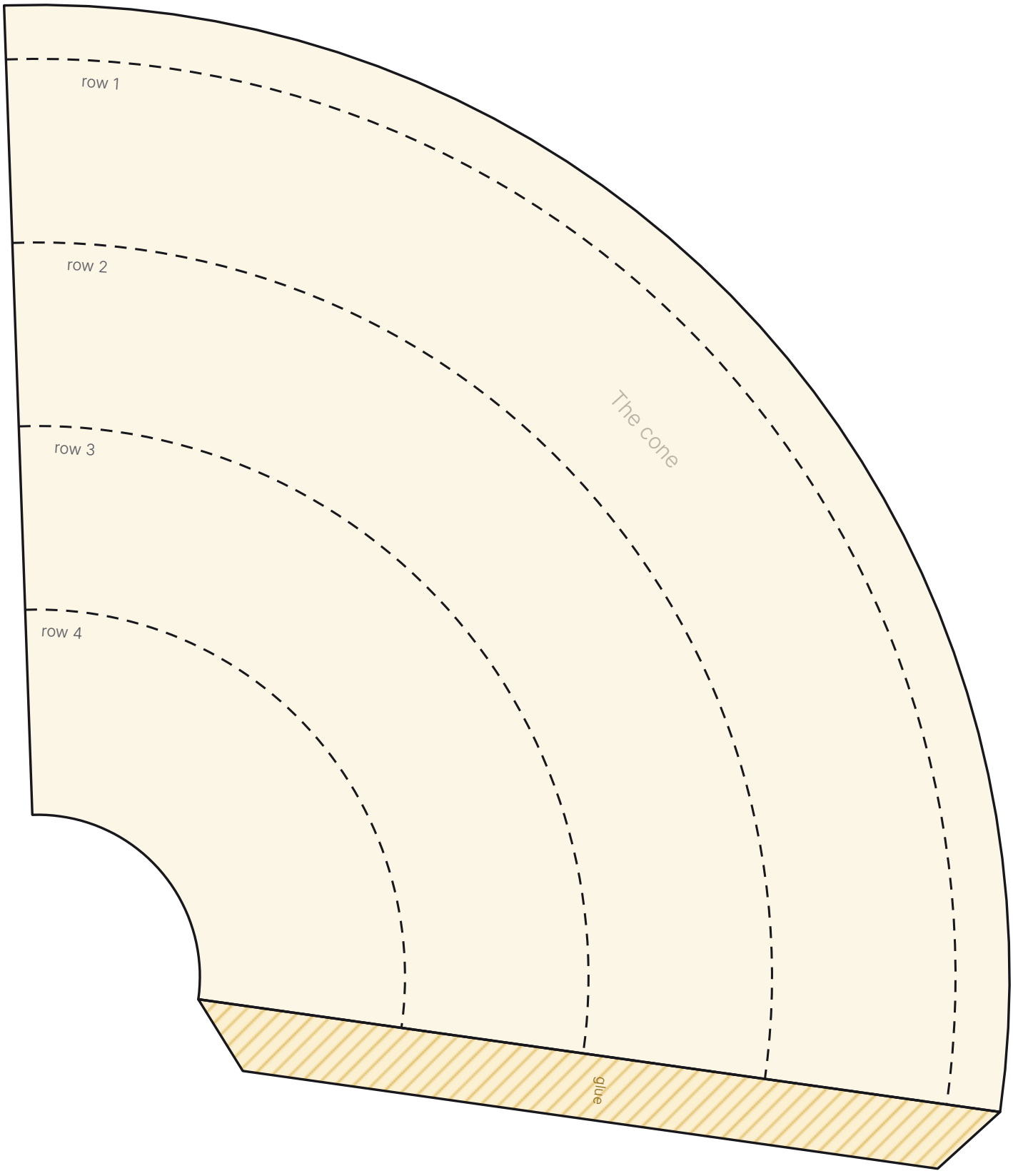
Pages: 2 cone · 3 stem, base, cross, decorations · 4 the beard · 5–6 step by step

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# The cone



Cut along the solid line. The dashed arcs are the rows where the curls are glued – row 1 is at the bottom. Fold the glue tab along its dashed line – you'll need it later.




this bar = 5 cm

cut

fold

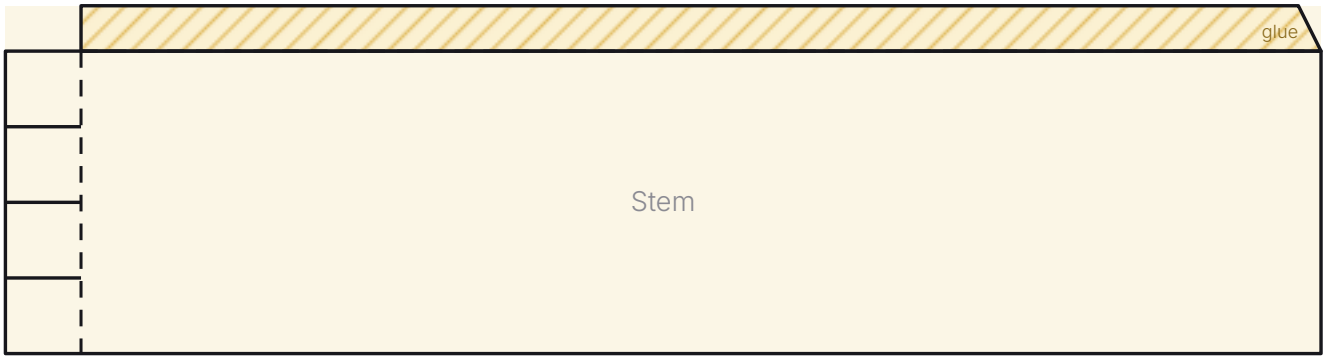
glue

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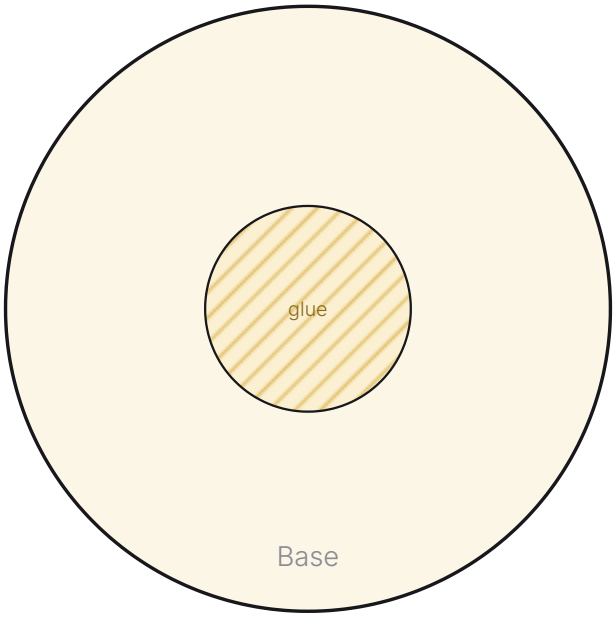
# Stem, base, cross and things to hang

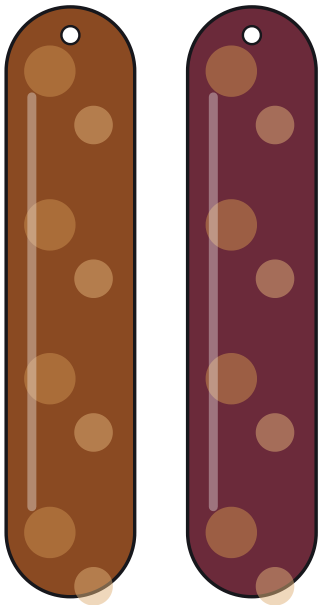


First cut out all the parts along the solid lines. Pomegranates, apples, persimmons, berries and ivy – the treasures of a Georgian winter table.

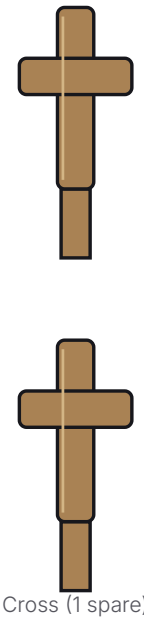



bend out



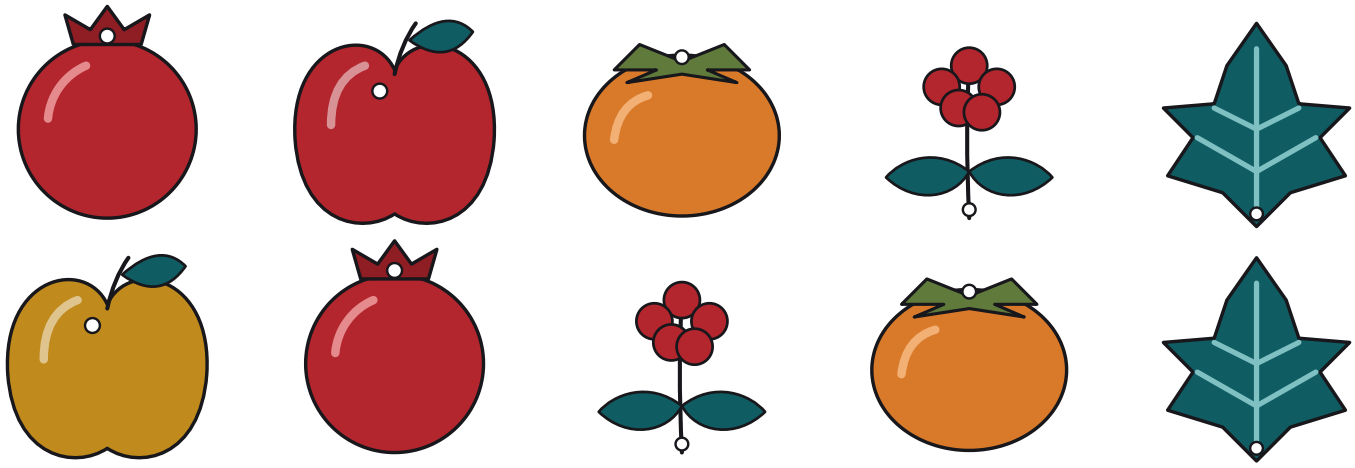



Churchkhela



Cross (1 spare)

To hang on the beard



this bar = 5 cm

cut

fold

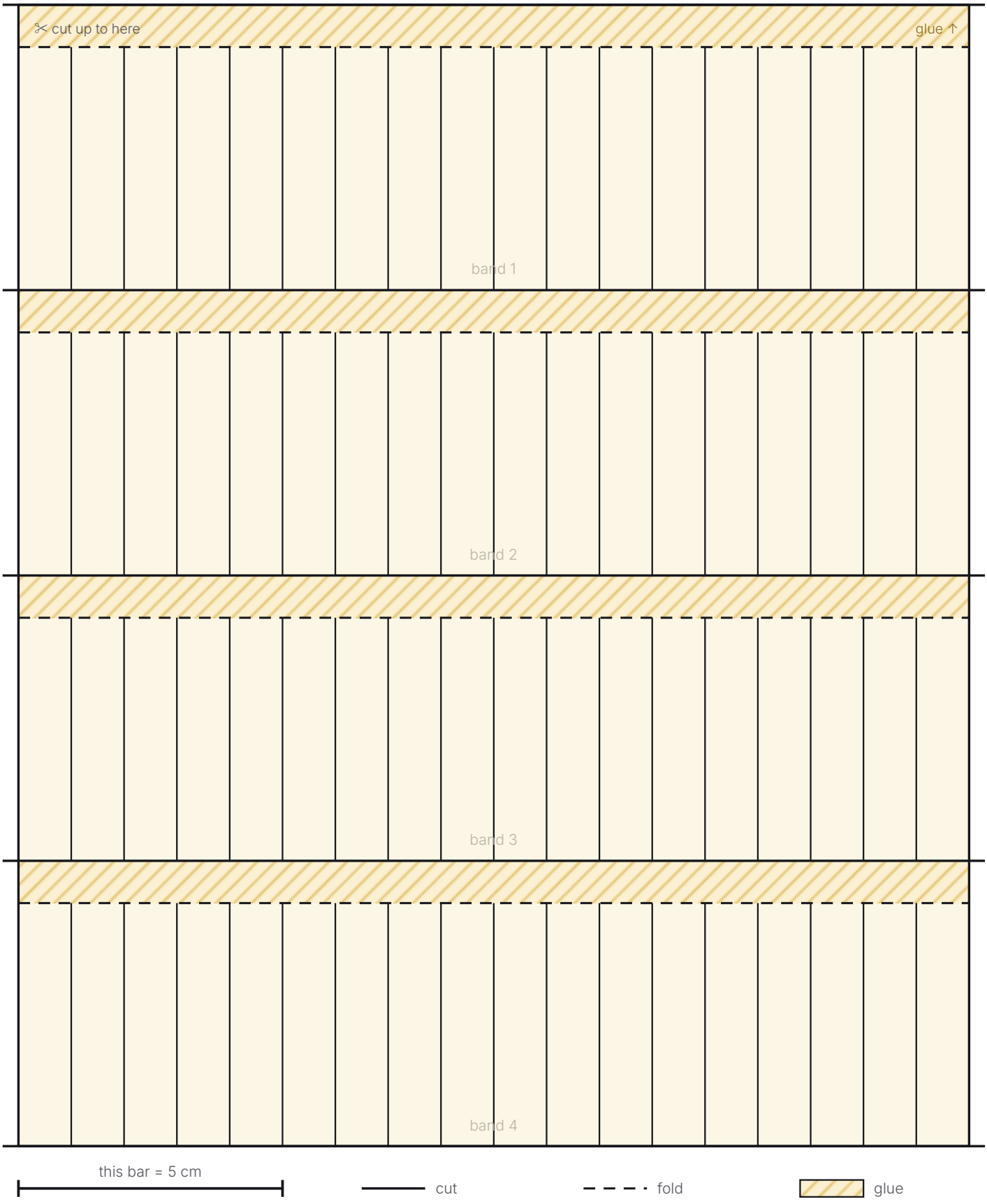
glue

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# The beard



Print this sheet twice. Cut out the bands along the solid lines, then cut every thin line from the bottom up to the dashed line. One cut = one curl!

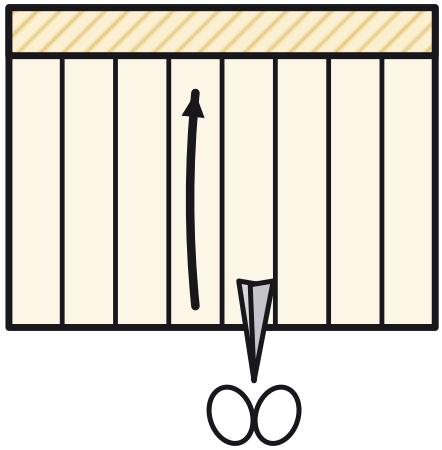



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# Make it, part 1: the parts



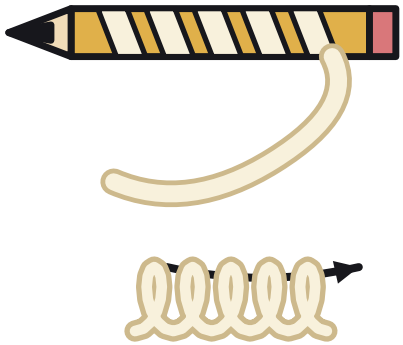
1



## Cut the beard

Cut each band into thin strips: from the bottom edge up to the dashed line, and stop there. Ask a grown-up to help – there are many strips.

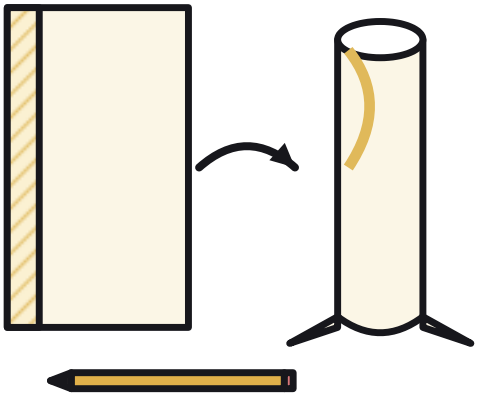
2



## Curl it

Wrap a strip tightly around a pencil, like a ribbon, count to five and slide it off. Springy curls! Curl them all – this is the fun part.

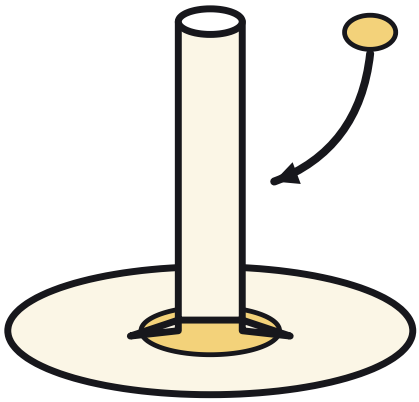
3



## Roll the stem

Roll the stem strip around a pencil into a thin tube and glue the tab along the edge. Bend the four little flaps at the bottom outwards.

4



## Make it stand

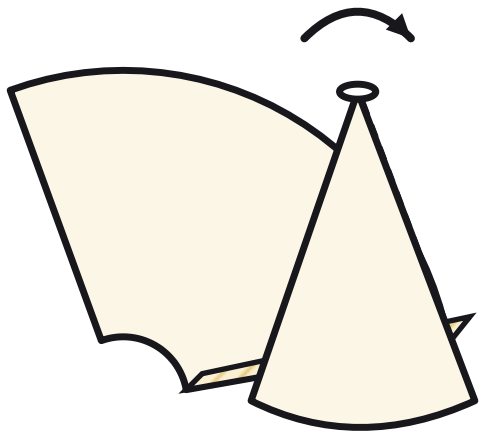
Spread glue on the middle of the round base and press the four flaps onto it. Let it dry – now the stem stands by itself.

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# Make it, part 2: putting it together



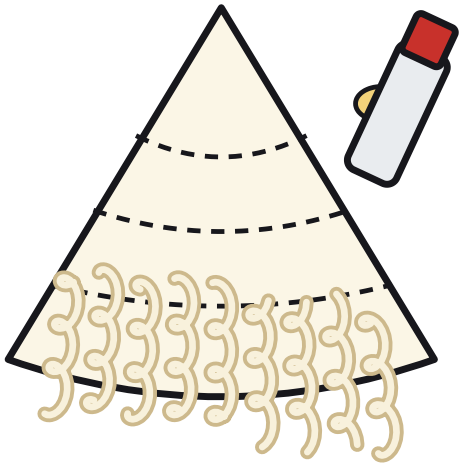
5



## Roll the cone

Roll the fan-shaped piece into a cone, with the little hole at the top. Glue the tab on the inside and hold it for a moment.

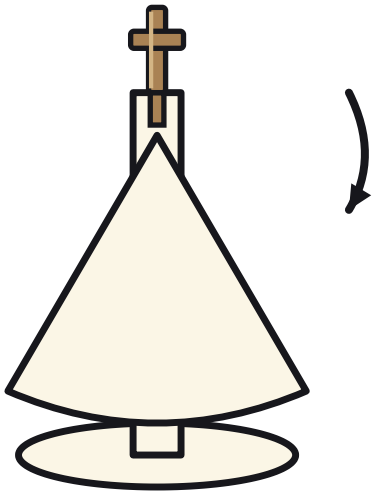
6



## Glue the curls

Start with row 1 at the bottom: glue the uncut edge of a band (the edge with the glue ↑ mark) along the dashed arc, curls hanging down. Then row 2 above it, and so on – like roof tiles. Trim the bands to fit.

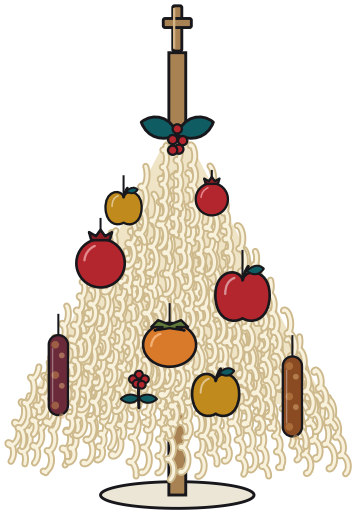
7



## Put it together

Slide the cone over the stem – the stem's top peeks out of the hole. Add a drop of glue there. Then push the little peg of the cross into the top of the stem.

8



## Decorate

Poke a hole in each decoration, tie it to the curls with thread – or simply glue it on. Pomegranates and apples for a plentiful year, churchkhela for sweetness, berries for colour.

Your chichilaki is ready! Happy New Year – გილოცავთ ახალ წელს!

Tip: curl some strips tighter and some looser – real chichilaki are never exactly the same.

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