



# It's Christmas!

*Homemade Decorations and Gift Ideas for the Whole Family!*



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## Introduction

*“Christmas comes but once a year and when it comes, it brings good cheer”.* And what better than to make your own decorations and gifts! Children as well as adults can get involved in creating new homemade Christmas decorations and gifts and the decorations could probably end up as family heirlooms, not to mention the fun involved for everyone in the days leading up to Christmas.

This book aims to provide you with the ideas to create your own Christmas decorations and gifts as part of the happy celebrations of the holiday season.

## Homemade Christmas Decorations

Making your own Christmas decorations can be fun, not just for you but for the kids too!



With all the stresses involved in shopping, dinner planning, parties and school plays, making your own decorations can relieve that stress and help you save money. It also allows you



and everyone involved to be creative and you may even start a new family tradition that will be enjoyed for years to come.

### ***Advent Calendars***

Make your own advent calendar using felt as pockets and fill each pocket with candy. You will find templates if you do a search on the internet or you can purchase a kit at your local craft store or from [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).

### ***Ornaments***

One of the things you can do is take some plain colored glass balls and use some spray glue to sprinkle on some glitter, jewels, buttons, or sequins. These supplies are readily available at craft supply stores. While you're there you should pick up some ribbon, stickers, felt, yarn, and fabric scraps as well so that you have plenty of different options for decorating with.

Material such as felt, fabric scraps or ribbons could be used to cut out special shapes such as hearts or stars and then glued onto the glass balls. You can





also cut out some Christmas pictures from magazines or old Christmas cards and use them to make some beautiful papier mache ornaments.

Get the kids involved in making things - you can find ornament-decorating kits at crafts stores that allow you to cut out shapes, and then paint or color them. You can also make decorations with ordinary construction paper, some glue and glitter, crayons or paints! You should have everyone put their name on whatever they create, as it will make for wonderful memories in years to come.



There are other things you may find lying around the house that you can use as well. These could be things like old small toys that you can tie ribbon to and hang on the tree, or you may have some old jewelry, marbles, or maybe some colorful rocks.

A large number of families have small Christmas signs or pictures throughout their home during the festive season. These signs and pictures often state a Christmas message or have a picture of Santa. Your children could easily make their own paintings





or drawings, often with the supplies that can already be found inside your home. Your child's picture would likely look great on your refrigerator or you could even frame the picture and hang it up somewhere else inside your home. This type of Christmas decoration craft project is ideal for children of any age.

Food can be used to make ornaments such as popcorn string, which is always a big hit! Gingerbread is also a traditional Christmas item in the form of Gingerbread Men or a Gingerbread House. Kids will love to help decorate these with different types of candy, sprinkles and icing. When making Gingerbread Men, be sure to make a hole at the top before you bake them so that you can run some ribbon through to hang onto the Christmas tree.



Another fun Christmas decoration that your children could do is make a centerpiece for your dinning room table to be used during Christmas dinner. You can do this by purchasing artificial flowers, a large bowl or vase, as well as other decorative items.



If you have access to pine cones, you could spray them with silver or gold paint and display them on your tree or use in a basket or table centerpiece.



Another great idea for pine cones is to dip them into cinnamon scent and place them in a glass bowl with some cinnamon sticks tied with ribbon and use as pot pourri. Decorate the bowl with festive ribbon to create a pretty

Christmas decoration.

You may also like to visit [Enchanted Learning](#) to get some more ideas and free instructions on how to make various Christmas decorations with the kids!

## Christmas Wreaths

Christmas wreaths are an old Christmas tradition that are used to decorate the outside of the house, typically on the front door, to give Christmas time visitors a festive greeting.





To make a Christmas wreath you will need a wreath ring, florist wire which you can get from your local florist and some evergreens such as ivy, conifer, mistletoe and holly. If you can obtain holly with the berries, this will add color to the wreath. Again, you can purchase holly and mistletoe from your local florist if you do not have this growing in your garden.

Dried seedpods such as poppies, teasels and pinecones can be spray painted silver or gold and used to add interest to the wreath.

Attach pieces of foliage to the wreath ring with the wire, wrapping the wire around the lower end of the foliage and then twisting the wire around the wreath ring.



As you do this, the foliage will slide around a little but the more you put on the ring, the more stable it will become. Keeping your work flat on a tabletop to prevent movement is a good idea. The more you add, the better it looks.



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Save the best until last, placing holly and/or mistletoe with the berries on the top layer of the wreath where they can be seen.



To add pine cones, wrap some wire around the bottom layer of the cone and twist the two wire stems firmly together. Push both ends of the wire into the wreath and twist them together at the back to secure them.

For a finishing touch, you could spray gold, silver or snow spray on the finished wreath and add a festive ribbon or bow.



## Decorating Your Lawn for Christmas

When many of us think of outdoor Christmas decorations, yard signs and inflatable Christmas characters often come to mind. While many homeowners do choose to decorate their homes with these items, there are other ways you can decorate your yard for the holiday season by making your own decorations.

If you have a number of potted plants or flowers out in your yard, there is a good chance that they are in a traditional flower pot. You could paint the planters you already have or buy new planters specifically for painting. Using patio or other outdoor paint in festive colors,



either paint the rim or the whole pot and add decorative swirls or dots of white paint to look like snow. Be creative and you will be surprised at what you can come up with! Christmas planters are an easy way to decorate the outside of your home for the holidays.

Another way that you can effectively decorate your yard for Christmas is by making Christmas stepping stones. Christmas stepping stones look great in any yard or along any





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walkway. If you search on the Internet for Christmas stepping stones, you will find that most come with a Christmas or holiday design. It is not uncommon to find Christmas stepping stones that are decorated with snowflakes or Christmas trees.

Making your own stepping stones is a little tricky but a lot of fun and can also be given as a gift to family members or friends.

You will need a mold such as a cake pan or a plastic planter saucer and cement. Mix the cement using a mix of five parts cement to one part water to make the concrete. The mixture should have the consistency of a wet batter.



Pour the cement mix into the mold until about half full or two inches thick. To release any air bubbles, tap the sides of the mold and then smooth the cement on top.

Leave the cement to sit for about 40 minutes before you add any decorations. These can include leaves, seeds and beads from which you can make a mosaic. After decorating,



allow the mold to sit for about three days without being disturbed. You can seal the finished stepping stone with a clear acrylic sealer.

You could even use patio paint to paint the stepping stones instead of using embellishments, once they are set.

Get the family together and toss around some decorating ideas and you may be surprised and delighted with what you come up with!

## **Homemade Gift Ideas**

Christmas can make buying gifts for the people in your family and circle of friends very difficult. Many people feel a certain kind of pressure to buy just exactly the right type of perfect Christmas gift that they may actually become too caught up in the commercial side of Christmas. However, this is not to say that buying the right kind of Christmas gift isn't important, because it really is. As there are so many things on the market that would make for a "perfect" Christmas gift, it can be very hard to choose.



## **Gift Baskets**

Gift baskets are probably one of the most favorite gifts to give simply because they are not only fun to make, but they're also fun to receive. Just the thought of receiving a bunch of different small things, or a lot of one single thing, is enough to make anyone happy.

If you have trouble deciding what to put in the gift basket, here are some ideas:

### ***Breads***

All sorts of people love a variety of breads and there are many types of holiday breads that you can fill your gift basket with such as pumpkin or spice. You could fill the rest of the basket to the brim with other types of gifts.

### ***Stocking Stuffers***

This is where small stocking stuffer gifts come in. Even though you may have the majority of the gift basket filled with breads to eat and enjoy, you may be left







with a pretty empty void for the spaces in between. Stocking stuffers, such as lottery tickets, playing cards, pens, pencils, and other stationary gifts are perfect to put in your gift basket alongside the breads that have already been made.

Of course, there are many other choices that one has when creating their own gift basket and they're certainly not limited to stocking stuffers and breads. However, these suggestions definitely are some of the better ones for your Christmas gift basket, but on the other hand you may also have other ideas for your friend or family member that you're buying for. If that's the case then one is always free to purchase a whole variety of other small gifts and put those in their gift baskets instead, but just remember that stocking stuffers and loaves of bread will usually always be well received as holiday gift baskets!



### *Candy Gift Baskets*

There are all sorts of ideas for creating your own gift basket to give away to someone, but one idea that is actually frequently used by many people throughout the world is a candy gift



basket. Unless you're buying a gift for someone that's intentionally on a diet or just doesn't like candy for some reason, candy is usually always well-received!

Perhaps one of the most important things to do when filling a gift basket is to make sure there is plenty of stuff on the bottom of the gift basket to enjoy. Many gift baskets simply have a soft padding, such as shredded paper or even tissue paper lying in the bottom, but for a candy gift basket one suggestion to use would be to fill the bottom with M&Ms. It doesn't matter whether they're taken out of the wrapper or not, but if they are, then chances are that they are going to be used simply for decoration. This M&M chocolate bottom can be used to hold the rest of the candy in the gift basket.

The next thing that you'll want to get to is the heart and body of the actual gift basket that you're making. There are plenty of options here, but the best thing to do would be to take a trip to the candy store and spend just a set amount of money on candy altogether. Little candy bars can be thrown in, candy mints,





gummy worm and other gummy candies, as well as a whole bunch of other options. The best thing to remember, though, is to fill the gift basket to the brim if you're going to make it right!

After you're done filling the bottom of the gift basket, as well as the main part that the recipient will see then it is time to add a few other large pieces of candy so that they'll lay neatly on top. Choices for this can either be king size candy bars, big packs or variety packs of candy, licorice sticks and just about anything that will fit neatly on the top of the basket.



### *Decorating your Gift Basket*

For starters, wrapping cellophane paper around the outside of the basket and everything that is contained inside is the best way of sealing your gift basket.

Considering the fact that cellophane paper is just about the only way that gift baskets are ever wrapped, you will probably be hard pressed to find anything else. Of course you can always use another type of shrink wrap paper underneath the cellophane plastic outer wrapping, but this is only usually done if the gift basket is filled with fruits or other awkward gifts.





The outside wrapping of the gift basket is just the start as there are so many other things that one can do in order to make the outside look pretty and creative. For example, curling ribbons and taping them on the outside of the cellophane paper or other outer wrapping will add a creative and beautiful decoration and there are plenty of seasonal ribbons which you can choose from.

The top of the gift basket will more than likely need to be tied somehow and this is where some other use of the ribbon can be used. One suggestion is that you simply tie a small bow around the top of the cellophane or other wrapping paper of the basket, but another interesting thing to do would be to make the ribbon a very long one which you could wrap multiple times around the base. For the finishing touch, add your own homemade gift tag.

## **Recipe Gifts**

Make a small box from papier mache and decorate with old Christmas cards that you have cut to size. If you don't know how to do this, you can get free instructions at [Quazen.com](http://Quazen.com).



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Find a recipe, for example, cookies, and measure out and place all of the dry ingredients into a zip-lock bag or into separate bags. Then write on a small card the wet ingredients that need to be added and the instructions for mixing and baking.

Just the box itself is a lovely gift to make as it can be used for other things by the recipient afterwards, such as storing jewelry or nick-knacks and makes this gift very personal.

## Cookie Tray

Many of those who make holiday gifts from their own kitchen truly enjoy providing others with a selection of their own family recipes, adding a special personal touch to the gift. Expanding one's culinary horizons and producing taste treats that will surprise and delight recipients can produce a truly unforgettable holiday gift.



So, with what can you fill your holiday gift trays? There are, of course, the old favorites such as frosted and decorated simple sugar cookies, gingerbread men and fudge. The recipient will greet any of these traditional holiday confections with a smile.



By finding recipes for interesting holiday confections and cookies, one can create a truly spectacular holiday gift basket or cookie tray that will long be remembered. You can mix and match recipes to build a colorful and tasty variety of treats. Exposing gift recipients to an interesting array of new tastes will not only provide them with a great gift, it will also show them that a great deal of thought and consideration was put into their treats.

Consider making cookies that are popular in different regions of the world for an internationally themed holiday tray. Several treats can be produced themed on a single ingredient, to display the many ways a particular flavor can be used in cooking. One can opt to simply create a smorgasbord of awesome cookies designed to delight all of the senses without centering on a particular theme. The options are unlimited.

## **Gingerbread House**

Making a gingerbread house for a family member or friend, especially if they have children, is a wonderful gift to create. The house can be decorated with different types of candy, sprinkles and icing and the house itself can be filled with candy bars before placing on the roof.





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Mount your gingerbread house onto a cake board with icing, pasting extra icing on the rest of the board, making it look like snow in the 'garden'. Add little figurines of snowmen, penguins or a Santa. These items can be purchased from a cake decorating store or your local supermarket.

Wrap your gift with cellophane and tie with a festive bow. Children love gingerbread houses and will have great fun demolishing it and eating the candy as a Christmas Eve treat.



You can easily transform your kitchen and cooking skills into a home-based gift factory that produces fantastic presents for everyone. Unforgettable holiday treats can add enjoyment to anyone's holidays and are far less expensive to produce than searching the aisles of retail stores for a series of drab gifts. All

you need to transform your home into a spectacular holiday gift factory is a little time and a great collection of holiday recipes.



## Candles

Making your own fancy candles isn't as daunting as it sounds. You can purchase cheap candles from your local supermarket or dollar store. Using short fat candles gives a better result but is a little more tricky. You can use ordinary household candles if you wish. You will also need some dried flowers and/or leaves, hot water and greaseproof paper.

Take a piece of the greaseproof paper, large enough to wrap around the candle once or twice and arrange the dried flowers and/or leaves onto this, being careful not to overlap anything. You won't need to use very much, else the decorations will not stick to the candle.

Place the candle on top of the decorations and roll the paper up making sure that the decorations are in direct contact with the candle. Twist the edges to secure everything – it will look like a long thin Christmas cracker.





You will need a container that is as tall as the candle and that can withhold boiling water. Hold your candle at the top end and place into the boiling water, being careful not to scald yourself. Make sure that all of the decorations are under the water line and hold there for about 20 to 30 seconds. Take the candle parcel out and wrap it up in a towel.

Roll the towel and candle parcel back and forth as you would do a rolling pin for about 30 seconds. Carefully unwrap the candle from the towel and greaseproof paper.

Finally, holding the wick, pop the candle back into the boiling water for about 10 seconds. This smoothes the surface and applies a thin layer of wax over your design, fixing it into place. Then hold the candle from the wick for a minute or so for the wax to cool and harden before setting it down, so as not to alter the shape.

This makes a lovely gift for any time of the year.

You can also purchase candle making kits online from [Amazon](#) if you prefer.





## **Holiday Scrapbooking - The Gift of Memories**

The holidays have always been a time for family, for friends, for reminiscing and for making new memories. A perfect gift for Christmas or any other holiday is the gift of those memories. Every family has a treasure trove of photos and other memorabilia stashed away in boxes, drawers and old albums that are falling apart.

Scrapbooking is a way to organize all those photos, postcards, programs, menus, matchbooks, pressed corsages and other pieces of family history in a beautiful album that will be looked at and treasured for years to come. Bringing all those things together in an album often comes to mean almost as much to those that create the gift as it does the person it was created for.



Scrapbooks are a very warm personal and sentimental gift. They can light up any holiday celebration. Once the gift has been opened you'll find everyone spending hours going through the book and remembering all the wonderful times and the people that have passed



through their lives. Photos that bring back memories of weddings and birthday parties, the program from your daughters first ballet recital, the matchbook from the restaurant where you and your future spouse had your first dinner. All these things make the scrapbook a gift that will be cherished.

Putting together an album has come a long way from the days of slipping the pictures under a plastic sheet or, for those of us old enough to remember, sliding the edges of the pictures into the little black paper corners that are glued to a black construction paper page. Modern scrapbooking is an art form but doesn't take any special skills. With a little patience and the proper tools you can build a scrapbook that you would be proud to give as a gift to anyone.

With beautiful decorative papers for the pages, special scissors and other cutting tools for decorative edges and designs, stamps and other supplies, you can custom build a beautiful piece of family history. Scrapbooking is something the entire family can take part in and even a young child can enjoy helping. Just the memories that are jogged and the stories that can be told while organizing the items for the book make the project worthwhile.

Creating a scrapbook for a family member or friend as a Christmas gift will surely be remembered and enjoyed for years to come.



## Conclusion

You may have more ideas that you can use for homemade Christmas decorations and gifts but whatever you decide to do, here's hoping this book has given you inspiration.

Wishing you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!