

Christmas Crafts

Your Very Own Christmas Decorations

Presented By Chelseys Christmas List



Table of Contents

Make Christmas Special.....	- 4 -
Supplies You Need	- 5 -
Make A Christmas Wreath.....	- 6 -
Make Velvet Bows	- 9 -
Angel Ornaments	- 11 -
Snowmen Galore!	- 14 -
A Christmas Tree Topper	- 16 -
Christmas Tree Skirts	- 19 -
Christmas Stockings.....	- 21 -
Non-Candy Candy Canes	- 24 -
Pine Cone Christmas Decorations.....	- 27 -
Storing Your Special Decorations	- 30 -

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Make Christmas Special!

Christmas is a very special time of year. It seems that this is the time of the year when we all feel a bit jolly – or a lot jolly. We all know and appreciate the true meaning of Christmas, but joyfully it has become even more than a religious celebration. It is also a celebration of friends, family, and even winter itself. We want every Christmas to be something special.

Usually, after Thanksgiving, people start gearing up for the Christmas season. They drag out the decorations, cut down or buy a Christmas tree, and start making their homes festive. Those decorations help to truly get us ‘in the Christmas Spirit.’

You could do what most people do. You could go to your local discount or department store and purchase your tree ornaments and other decorations. But how special would it be to make your own? Wouldn't this give each decoration and ornament more meaning than the ones that you purchase in bulk from the store? Of course it would!

Making your own Christmas decorations isn't as hard as one might imagine. You don't have to be overly talented or creative. All you really need is some simple supplies and some basic decorations.

Of course, this isn't to say that homemade Christmas decorations cannot be elaborate. They can be – and many people put in a great deal of time and effort to make such decorations. But you can also make simple decorations that will look great in any home – and on any Christmas tree.

The main reason to make your own decorations is to have something that isn't really available in stores – something different and unique to your home - something that makes Christmas even more special.

Are you ready to make your home festive? Let's get started with some basic supplies that you will need.

Supplies You'll Need

While some decorations will call for special materials, there are some basic supplies that you should have on hand before you get started with your own Christmas Decorations. Here is a checklist:

- Glue, a hot glue gun and glue sticks for the gun.
- Construction Paper and poster board (all colors)
- Scotch Tape (regular and two sided)
- A nice assortment of beads
- Felt cloth and material remnants
- Scissors
- Pencil, crayons, and fine tip markers
- Ruler and compass
- Sewing Needle and Yarn Needle
- Sewing Thread and yarn (white, red, green, gold, silver, blue)
- Paint and brushes

These supplies can be purchased online or at any crafts store. Again, these are basic supplies. Additional supplies may be needed for certain projects. Be sure that you read the information for the project before getting started to make sure that you have all of the needed materials.

Make A Christmas Wreath

Making a Christmas Wreath is not only fun – but you really can get creative with them and make them extremely unique.

Here are instructions for making a traditional holly wreath. With these instructions, you will be able to get the basic idea of how wreaths are actually made, and you can then decide what to do to make your own holly wreath special – or go with an entirely different kind of wreath.

Materials:

- **A 20 inch wreath** - This can be a plain foam wreath, a wreath that already has the evergreens on it, or a twine wreath. For a traditional holly wreath, the ones with the evergreens already attached are ideal.
- **1.5 yards of ribbon** – this can be plain red, plain green, or a red and black or red and green plaid. The ribbon should be about 2.5 inches wide, and can be silk or felt. It's *your* wreath!
- **Pinecones** – you will need about ten. Try to find ones that are well shaped and unbroken.
- **Pomegranates** – six dried pomegranates will do. Don't get fresh ones! Or substitute other dried or good-looking plastic fruits.
- **Additional Foliage** – you need more evergreens (to make the wreath seem fuller) berry sprays and berry clusters.
- **Construction Materials** – scissors, hot glue gun, glue sticks, wire (if there is no hanger on the back of the wreath), sewing needle, thread (same color as ribbon).

If the wreath has no hanger, you will need to construct one with the wire. This should be done first. Make sure that it is secure, and that it can bear the weight of the wreath.

Fluff the existing evergreens and add more. The wreath should have a full appearance. You will most likely need to straighten a few branches here and there – but don't make it too 'perfect.' It should have a 'natural' appearance to it.

Let's make and attach the bow. Cut a piece of ribbon about thirty inches long. Cut another piece of ribbon about four inches long. In the center of the long piece of ribbon, you want to form two loops that will make the bow.

The small piece of ribbon is used to secure the bow, in the middle of the loops. Note that the bow is 'formed' not 'tied.' There are no knots to tie. Secure the small piece of ribbon around the bow, in the back, with the thread. Each end of the bow will be about nine inches long.

You can place the bow wherever you choose to. It could go in the middle of the top, the bottom, or off to one side. The ends should be woven through the foliage on the wreath – or it can hang loose.

It is a good idea to paint the ends of the ribbon with clear fingernail polish to keep them from fraying over time. The bow can be attached to the wreath with glue or with wire. Just make sure that it is secure.

Once you've placed the bow on the wreath, you can glue two of the pomegranates in the center of the bow. The remaining four pomegranates should be glued to the wreath equal distances apart, in groups of two.

Next, glue the pinecones to the wreath. These can be spaced evenly apart sporadically, or in groups of pinecones. Do what looks good to you. Again, it is *your* wreath.

The berry clusters and sprays should also be glued to the front of the wreath. Glue some additional foliage over the top of the bow with a berry cluster for added affect. Remember that there is not specific way that any of this must be done. It is your choice.

It is a good idea to lay the pieces of the wreath on it before gluing anything down. This will allow you to see how the finished product will look before committing to anything. Try different arrangements of the material to see what looks best to you.

Once you've constructed the wreath, set it someplace where the glue has time to harden fully. Once this is done, pick the wreath up and gently shake it to make

sure that everything is secured well. Most wreaths hang on the door, and doors are constantly opened and closed – and even slammed. You want to make sure that your wreath isn't falling to pieces each time the door opens and closes.

In many cases, you may be able to use wire or a needle and thread to make items on the wreath more secure. Heavier items won't be very secure with glue in most cases.

Remember that holly wreaths don't have to be 'busy' to be beautiful. A few simple additions to the foliage is all that it takes.

The bow is typically the object that draws the eye, so make sure that the bow is really well done.

Now that you know how wreaths are made – and how easy it is – you may decide that you don't want a holly wreath at all. You may opt for a themed wreath, a twined wreath, or a truly unique wreath that stands out. The possibilities are endless!

Make Velvet Bows

Don't underestimate the beauty and power of bows. Bows can be used for a variety of things.

In the wreath instructions, you learned that the bow is the focal point of the wreath, so you should have some idea as to how important bows are to Christmas decorations in general.

Bows are also great as stand alone decorations. They can be used on the branches of the Christmas tree, and a large bow can even be used as a Christmas tree topper.

You need one main material for bows – velvet ribbon. The width of the ribbon can vary, depending on how big or how small you want your bow to be.

You also need some type of material to decorate the bow, and to secure the bow. As with the wreath bow, bows are not tied – they are formed and secured so that they don't look knotted.

You can follow the same directions for forming the bow as you did for the wreath. Cut your ribbon, form the loops, and secure the loops with another smaller piece of ribbon that is sewed around the center of the loops.

This is where you always start when making Christmas bows – by forming the bow. Only then do you decorate the bow. Bows can be decorated an unlimited number of ways. You can line the edges with glitter. You can put decorations on the ribbons of the bow, and more.

However, bows also need a focal point, and that focal point is the center of the bow – where the loops are secured. In the wreath directions you glued pomegranates in the center of the bow to dress it up. Again, you could dress the center of the bow with any number of different items. What would suit your particular décor?

Bows look great everywhere. Aside from using them on the tree, you can also use them to decorate staircase railings, banisters, lamp posts, and doorways. You could also use a large bow on your front door instead of a wreath.

You can get really creative with your bow making.

You can make different colored bows, using more than one color of ribbon.

You can make multi-looped bows as well by forming more than two loops. Again, you can decorate the bows anyway that you choose – or leave them quite plain for an understated, classic look.

Remember that you will want bows of varying sizes for different uses. Make sure that you purchase ribbon in different widths, as well as in different colors. For gifts, you will want to use poly satin ribbon.

Angel Ornaments

You can easily make angel ornaments for your Christmas tree. This is a very simple project that does not take a lot of time. You can probably make ten angel ornaments in less than two hours, as long as you have the proper materials.

Materials Needed:

- White felt or lace – use 4 inch or 5 inch wide felt or lace and 1 inch felt or lace.
- 1 inch to 2 inch wooden bead or doll face – this is based on how big you want your angel to be.
- Doll hair (unless you used a doll face that had hair – blonde is the typical color)
- Paint (for decorating face if it is not already decorated)
- Gold Glitter glue
- Wire or fishing line
- Gold pipe cleaner or gold colored ring (for halo)
- White sewing thread and sewing needle
- Hot glue gun and glue sticks
- White netting (optional)
- Starch

The body of the angel is made out of the lace or felt. You want to gather the lace or felt until it is full enough for the angels dress. The dress should be triangular. You may want to stuff the inside of the dress to make it appear to be fuller as well. Secure the dress with matching thread.

Don't skimp on the material used for the angels dress. This is the body of the angel, and you want it to be very full and 'fluffy.'

One tip of the triangle will be attached to the bead or dolls head. The head is attached with hot glue. If possible, you should also sew the head on for added security.

Once the head is attached and dried, you can use the 1 inch felt or lace to form the collar around the neck of the angel.

This material should match the material that you used for the dress. Secure the neck decoration with thread.

Next, you want to make the wings. These can be made from white netting, felt, or lace. You will need to cut the material in the shape of a butterfly, and the material will most likely need to be starched before attaching it to the angel.

After you've cut and starched the wings, you can decorate them with the gold glitter glue. Allow the glue to dry before attaching the wings to the angel. The wings are attached with either hot glue or thread.

The wire or fishing line should be attached to the angel, just above the wings, for use as a hanger. Obviously, it will need to be formed into a loop. Fishing line is ideal for this, as it can be woven through the lace of the body for added security, and it does look better than wire.

Next, if your angel does not already have hair, glue the doll hair to the top of the angels head. Use the paint to decorate the angels face if this is not already done as well. Glue or sew the gold ring or the gold pipe cleaner to the top of the angels head for the halo.

Finally, you can use the gold glitter glue or gold metallic thread to really dress your angel up. Just as you make unique bows and wreaths, your angels should also be uniquely yours.

A great idea is to allow each member of the family to make their own special, unique angel for the tree. You could purchase doll hair that matches the hair of each member of the family if you want to. The kids will love this project, and it allows them to contribute to their families special Christmas.

Tip: If you are not good with paints, you could use fine tip markers to draw the face. Alternately, you can purchase angel doll heads if you don't want to do the hair and face yourself.

Angel doll heads are suggested for younger kids – and if younger children will be decorating their own angels face, this should be done first – before the head is attached to the body.

Snowmen Galore!

Most people would agree that you can't celebrate winter – or Christmas – without at least one snowman, even if you live in the southern hemisphere and enjoy sunshine at Christmas time. Snowmen are very cheap and easy to make, and they make wonderful tree ornaments as well as stand alone decorations, such as a centerpiece for a dining or coffee table.

Materials:

- Round Styrofoam balls – you will want various sizes. Remember that the top of the snowman is the smallest, the middle is mid-sized, and the bottom ball is the largest. Buy the appropriate number and sized Styrofoam balls based on this criteria.
- Plaid ribbon or material – this is used to form the scarf. Yarn could be used for smaller snowmen. If using yarn, buy several Christmas colors and braid it together to form the scarf.
- A little straw broom – all snowmen need a broom. These are sold in crafts stores, but you could also make one from straw, with a piece of string to tie between the broom handle and the 'bristles.'
- Arm material – numerous materials can be used to make arms, but the easiest to work with is pipe cleaner.
- Top Hat – you need a top hat for your snowman. You can make this yourself, or purchase it where doll making materials are sold. Think about the size of the ball used for the head when making or purchasing the top hat.
- Face decoration – any number of materials can be used to make the face, and this is dependant on the size of the snowman. Buttons and beads are often used, but the face could easily be drawn on with markers as well. The eyes should be black, and the mouth can be either black or red. A carrot is often used for the nose of large snowmen, but yours can also be a black bead.

Decorate the face first, and make sure that all materials used are secure. They can

be attached with hot glue.

Once the face is dry, you can put the body together with hot glue and let it dry. The pipe cleaner arms are poked into the snowman.

Put the scarf around his neck, and glue his top hat on.

Put the broom in his hand – and you have your very own snowman!

Congratulations! Now how many of these will look terrific around your home this Christmas?

A Christmas Tree Topper

The topper used on the Christmas tree seems to be the most special thing about the tree. Each year, different members of the family want to be the one that gets to place the angel, bow or star on the top of the tree – but only one person can do it each year.

The biggest mistake that people make when either making or purchasing a Christmas tree topper is that they often make or purchase one that is too heavy for the top branch of the tree. This causes the branch to bend sideways, and often the topper falls off.

For this reason, the Christmas tree topper has to be big enough to warrant gracing the top of the tree, yet light enough to actually stay up there without requiring you to have a degree in engineering. Keep this in mind when shopping for materials for your tree topper.

Alternatives for your special Christmas Tree Topper...

A Christmas Tree Bow:

This is a very easy tree topper. It does not cost a lot of money and it looks terrific. Use the directions for the Christmas Bows to make your bow topper, but make sure that it is a really big bow, with long flowing ribbons that will hang down the tree for added effect. Use felt ribbon.

You can secure the bow to the tree with a wire loop on the back of the center of the bow. This is ideal for trees that sit in the corner of the room, where the back of the bow won't be seen.

Be sure to decorate the bow with items of your choice for the center of the bow, and with glitter glue along the edges of the bow and ribbon.

A Christmas Tree Angel:

There are a variety of options for making a Christmas Tree Angel. They can be very simple, or very complex and detailed.

The important thing to remember is that the body of the angel is basically set on the top tree branch. You may need to use some discretely placed wire to secure the angel to the top of the tree.

Here are directions for a classic Angel Christmas Tree Topper. Remember that this is your angel, and you can make her look however you want. The directions below will help you to form the basics of the Christmas Tree Angel.

Materials:

- 2 of either 8 inch or up to 16 inch doilies – depends on how big you want your angel to be. Fold the doilies in half, and this will give you some idea as to the length of your angel.
- White netting or lace (for wings)
- Spray Starch
- 6 inch Foam cone
- 1.5 inch Angel Doll Head – choose one that has a neck and shoulders
- 2 of 1.5 inch doll arms
- Gold glitter glue
- Ring or gold pipe cleaner (for halo)
- Toothpicks
- Craft Glue
- Hot Glue Gun and Glue Sticks

Directions:

1. Cut a one inch hole in the center of both doilies. Put toothpicks in the top of the foam cone and attach the angel head to the cone by placing it over the toothpicks. Push it down until the head meets the foam.
2. Slip one doily over the angels head. Smear craft glue along the edge of the hole, and press it firmly around the shoulder of the angel doll head.
3. Arrange the folds of the lace doily so that they look nice and full. When you have it like you want it, spray it well with the spray starch. You will want to use a lot of starch – it needs to be nice and stiff.
4. Once the first doily has completely dried, repeat step 2 with the second doily. Again, make sure that the dress looks really full and that the folds fall

nicely.

5. Cut the material that you have chosen for the wings into the shape of a butterfly. Spray with the spray starch and allow it to dry.

6. Attach the wings to the back of the angel with hot glue or thread. You can also use an additional doily for this, and just fold and shape it until it looks like wings. Use pins to secure it in position, spray it, and then attach the wings to the angel when they are dry.

7. Remove the angel from the foam cone. Work the arms through the body of the angel so that they are positioned properly. Glue or tack them in place, from the inside.

8. Finally, use the glitter glue to decorate your angel tree topper as you see fit. If the dress isn't stiff enough to support itself on the tree, you can spray it with more starch.

Christmas Tree Skirts

Just as you need a topper to grace the top of the Christmas tree, you need a Christmas tree skirt to grace the bottom.

The Skirt is often used to hide the Christmas tree stand, and to provide a nice ‘backdrop’ for the gifts that will go under the tree. Remember that the skirt will eventually be covered up with gifts. Therefore, the materials used to decorate the skirt must be flat and durable.

Materials:

- 45 inch Felt material. For the basic skirt, you will need about 4 yards. However, you may want 4 yards each of two different colors. One will serve as the base, and is usually green, red, or blue. The top piece should be white.
- Christmas Theme Iron-Ons. You can purchase iron-ons at any crafts store, or order them online. This is the easiest possible way to decorate your Christmas Tree Skirt. If you are really artistic, however, you may want to use cloth paint and paint your own. You can ‘print’ the designs on the material with transfer paper.
- Ribbon and/or gold glitter glue – used to decorate the edges of the skirt.

Directions:

1. Using the base colored felt, mark and cut a circle. A good way to determine how large this should be is to measure the diameter of the bottom branches of the tree. Cut this material in a diameter that is about ten inches wider.
2. Cut a slit from the outside of the skirt to the inside – to the center. This is how you will ‘wrap’ the skirt around the tree.
3. Cut the white felt about four inches shorter in diameter than the colored felt. Cut a slit from the outside to the center of the inside.

4. Decorate the white felt, as you see fit. If you want to put any decoration on the outer edge of the colored fabric, this should be done now also.
5. You can tack the two pieces of felt together at the slits. Put the skirt around the tree by sliding it around the tree at the slit. Pull it up so that it hides the Christmas tree stand.

Christmas Stockings

Making your own Christmas Stockings is a great deal of fun, and this is something that each member of the family can participate in. Kids can decorate their own stockings – or at the very least, design their own.

Materials Needed:

- Felt – the traditional color is red, but you can use any color that you want. You will need two complementary colors for each stocking. One color serves as the base of the stocking, while the other color serves as the ‘cuff’ at the top of the stocking.
- Appliqué shapes – You can find a multitude of small Christmas oriented shapes that you can print out for patterns. These can then be sewn and stuffed with cotton. Remember that you need two of each shape to make the appliqué, and you may need various colored materials.
- Beads, ribbon, glitter glue, sequins – These are all used to decorate the stocking and the appliqués used on the stockings.
- A stocking pattern – like appliqué shapes, these can be found all over the Internet and printed out. You will use these patterns to cut the shape of the stockings. Use legal sized paper for printing.
- Letter Stencils – for tracing names on the stockings.
- Other Materials – scissors, needle, thread, glue

Directions:

1. Using the color of felt desired for the ‘foot’ or base of the stocking, cut two stocking shapes from your pattern. Using the appliqué patterns, determine how the appliqués will be placed on the stocking. It is a good idea to take a digital picture of your layout for future reference.
2. Cut out and make all appliqués. Sew them together and stuff them, and

decorate them as you see fit. Pin them onto the stocking, using your digital picture for reference. Sew the appliqués to the front piece of the stocking.

3. Cut the cuff for the top of the stocking. Cuffs are usually about three inches long, depending on the size of your stocking. The cuff should cover the top and back of the stocking.
4. Sew the two ends of the cuff together. There should be enough room at the top of the cuff for it to fit snugly down into the stocking once it is attached. The person's name can be stenciled on and filled with cloth letters, ribbon, or glitter glue. This goes on the cuff of the stocking, before it is attached to the stocking.
5. Sew the back of the stocking to the front of the stocking along the edges, leaving the top open. A quarter inch seam should be used, and it should be sewn with the insides facing each other, and then turned right-side-out once it is sewn.
6. Place the cuff of the stocking over the top of the stocking, and pull it down until the name is where you want it to be. Tack the stitched side of the cuff to the stitched side of the stocking. Stuff the top of the cuff down into the stocking to make the top edge of the stocking nice and smooth.
7. Attach a loop just inside the stocking, on the side that you wish the stocking to hang from. The loop can be made of felt, cord, or any other material that you desire. Make sure that it is strong enough to bear the weight of a filled stocking.

That's all there is to stocking making. Note that you can also purchase stocking kits at craft stores and online that provide everything you need to make your Christmas stockings. These cost anywhere from \$20 to \$60 however.

The overall design of a Christmas stocking is fairly simple and straightforward – it is the decoration used that makes a stocking unique. Get really creative and use the beads and sequins in unique ways.

Note that fake white fur can also be used for the cuff of the stocking, but it is difficult to get a name on the fur. If you want a white cuff, and you want a name, choose white felt as your cuff material, instead of white fur.

Alternately, you can still use the white fur and put the name on the body of the

stocking instead.

Another stocking idea, instead of appliqués, is to transfer a Christmas or winter scene onto the stocking body. The design can then be filled in with cloth paint, glitter, or even needle point or cross stitch depending on the pattern that you have chosen. Again, such patterns can be printed from the Internet for free.

Make sure that you double sew the seams of the stocking. Stuffed stockings can come apart if they are not sewn well. You can use a machine or hand stitches for this – just make sure that you use strong thread, and double stitch it for greater stability.

If your stockings need to be stiffer than the material allows for, use spray starch on the inside pieces of the stocking before piecing it together.

Non-Candy Candy Canes

Candy canes are a vital part of Christmas. Most of us buy candy canes and put them in candy dishes designed for stick candy, and we even use them as decoration on the tree. When we take the tree down, we either eat the candy canes used for decoration – or we throw them out.

You can make non-candy candy canes very easily – and use them year after year. One advantage of this is that the non-candy candy canes that you make won't break as easily as candy canes do. They also don't get eaten.

Non-candy candy canes can be made out of a wide variety of materials, depending on how large you want your candy canes to be. Possible materials include wood, yarn, foam, Styrofoam, and cloth.

Some materials, such as cloth, will need a stabilizer which the cloth will be placed over. This might be wood or pipe cleaners, depending on how strong you need your candy canes to be. Spray starch can also be used to make many candy canes stronger, if cloth or yarn is used.

The easiest possible candy canes to make for your tree are made with pipe cleaners. Pipe cleaners, however, are typically thin. You may need to twist five or six pipe cleaners together to form your candy cane.

This form can then be covered with shiny ribbon, for the best looking candy cane. You will need white and red ribbon, and the ribbon should be about 1 centimeter wide. It should have plain edges, as opposed to fancy edges. Cut small pieces of the red ribbon, and cover the bottom end of the candy cane and the top end, under the hook. Glue the ribbon in place.

Using a hot glue gun, glue the edge of the red ribbon to the bottom edge of the candy cane. Spiral it up until the entire candy cane is covered with the red, and glue the other end to the candy cane as well. Cover the entire thing in red, so that none of the pipe cleaner shows.

Next, take the white ribbon and glue one end to the bottom edge of the candy cane and spiral it up, leaving spaces between the white spirals so that the red shows through. Glue the end to the top edge of the candy cane, at the hook.

Candy cane shapes can also be cut out of Styrofoam, but it is ideal to have a pattern to work with and to cut carefully with an exactor knife, so that you have nice smooth edges. The foam can then be wrapped or painted.

Yarn candy canes are fairly easy to make as well. Simply braid strands of red yarn together and then braid strands of white yarn together. With the red braid, form your candy cane, and use spray starch for stiffening. Allow it to dry – and use a lot of starch so that it holds the shape.

Once the red yarn is dry, simply wrap the white braid around it, leaving space so that the red shows through. The ends of the white braid can be attached to the candy cane with a thread and needle.

With yarn candy canes, you may need to re-spray them with starch each year. Remember that candy canes hang from the tree by the hook of the cane. Therefore, the hook needs to be fairly sturdy to support the weight of the candy cane.

You could even make a large wall decoration with two candy canes crossed at the stem. These are made of cloth, and are actually appliqué type constructions, in that they are stuffed with quilt batting. You could also stuff them with some mint for added effect. Simply cut the ‘stripes’ of the candy canes and sew them together. Be sure to make bows for the bottom of the hooks!

For lawn candy canes, the shapes are usually cut from wood, with the use of a jigsaw. The wood is then painted with red and white paint, and you will most likely want to put some weather resistant coating over the paint, after it has dried.

These candy canes are set up with the use of a ‘T’ type stand on the back of the candy cane in most cases. This is done by attaching a block of wood to the top of the back of the candy cane. For this to work the candy cane wood must be at least a half inch thick – you don’t want the nails to come all the way through the front of the candy cane.

You can then just prop the candy cane up with a dowel or a piece of wood that goes from the ground – at an angle – to rest under the block of wood that you have attached.

All candy canes don’t have to be plain. You can dress them up with bows. The bow

is usually placed on the straight part of the candy cane, just below the hook at the top. The bow can be made of any materials, and decorated as you see fit. Obviously, the size of the bow will be dependant on the size of the candy cane.

Note that making your own non-candy candy canes does not save money. Real candy canes are very cheap, and can cost just a few dollars for a box of eight to ten at any discount store.

Pine Cone Christmas Decorations

What can't you do with a pine cone? You can do all sorts of neat things, in terms of creating decorations, with pine cones. Pine cones are free if you live in an area where pine trees grow – and if you don't, you can purchase pine cones from a crafts store.

If you are using pine cones that you pick up yourself out of the woods, make absolutely sure that you shake them well before bringing them in to dispose of any live bugs that are inside the pine cone. If they are especially dirty, it is fine to spray them with a water hose to wash them off. You can then either leave them outside to dry, or bring them in to dry.

Pine cones have seeds inside, and may produce sap. To avoid this, put the pine cones that you want to use on a cookie sheet in a 200 degree oven for an hour.

Pine Cone Christmas Ornaments:

Here, you are free to let your imagination run wild. You can spray paint the cones either gold, silver or white. Spray paint the cone, and then sprinkle glitter on it while the cone is still wet – or use glitter glue after the paint is dried for a more controlled decoration. Ribbons, sequins, beads – the possibilities are endless. It's kind of like decorating Easter eggs – there doesn't have to be a set pattern to anything.

Pine cones can be hung from the tree branches either upside-down or right-side-up. The choice is yours. Use wire and wrap the wire around either the top or bottom of the cone, making sure that you push the wire as far into the opening of the cone as you can so that it doesn't show. Form a hook from the end of the wire, and it is ready to hang on the tree.

Pine Cone Clusters:

Pine cone clusters can be used as center pieces, tree ornaments, or even wall decorations. They are commonly used in wreathes as well. You will need pine cones that still have stems on them for the best possible results.

Cluster the pine cones together by the stems. You can tie them together with string for security, and then cover the string with a bow. Add some berry clusters to the cluster as well. You can decorate the individual pine cones as you see fit. Again, get creative. You are only limited by your own imagination! Make it unique, and make it special.

Pine Cone Basket Decorations:

Pine cone baskets are very popular and classy. All you need is a basket – again, this is your choice. Choose a basket that appeals to you. It can either have a handle or not have a handle.

You will need several pinecones, in various shapes and sizes. Arrange the pine cones in the basket. Further fill the basket with bits of holly and other evergreen foliage. You can even decorate the basket with Christmas tree lights, ribbon, glitter glue, or a variety of other materials. If it has a handle, make a nice bow and attach it to the handle of the basket.

These work well on coffee tables, dinner table center pieces, and on fireplace hearths. If you have cats or small children, you may want to glue the contents of the basket in place.

Pine Cone Angel:

Get a nice sized pine cone, and spray paint it white. Use glitter glue to decorate the angels ‘dress,’ which is the pine cone.

Purchase an angel doll head or use a 1 inch to 2 inch wooden bead. If using a bead, purchase doll hair and glue it on top of the bead. Decorate the face with markers or paint.

Place glue inside the edges of the hole in the bottom of the doll head and press it down over the top of the pine cone firmly.

Wings can be made out of a variety of material. Some suggestions include white netting, white felt, white cloth, and white lace. Cut the wings in the shape of a butterfly and attach them to the back of the pine cone – on the angel’s back – with hot glue.

Pine Cone Christmas Tree:

For this project, choose a pine cone that is opened up really well.

Using green or red ribbon, form and tie a loop to the tip of the pine cone. This will serve as the hanger. Spray paint the pine cone green, and sprinkle either silver or gold glitter over the pine cone while it is still wet. Allow the pine cone to dry.

Glue sequins on the 'tree' for ornaments. Use a variety of colors for this. Finish decorating your tree with garland. You can use a couple of single strands of silver tinsel for this – or use rick-a-rack, which can be found near the sewing supplies in any crafts store.

You can even put a little snow on your tree with some white paint. Again, use your imagination and try different things. Pine cones are free, and if they aren't free, they are very cheap!

Storing Your Special Decorations

After you've spent so much time and effort, and put so much love into your Christmas decorations, you will want to store them and use them year after year – for many years to come. You may even want to eventually hand them down to your grandchildren so that your great-grandchildren can enjoy them.

Unfortunately, some decorations won't store well. Anything that was made with live materials, such as live foliage can't be stored, unless that foliage can be removed and replaced each year.

When you are creating your decorations, think about storage and only use materials that can be stored well. Also make sure that pieces of the decorations are attached well.

Wrap each individual decoration in tissue paper. This not only helps protect them, but it also keeps all of the 'parts' of each decoration together in the event that they fall off. Glue has gotten stronger and stronger over the years – but it does 'wear out' over time.

After wrapping each individual decoration, store them in a big, airtight plastic container if possible. This will keep air and moisture out, but it won't prevent the ornaments from being affected by heat. Therefore, if your ornaments may suffer from heat, don't store them outdoors or in attics. Instead, store them in a closet or spare room.

Note that you don't want your decorations 'squashed' by other, heavier decorations. Place your decorations into the container carefully.

You may want to use shoe boxes inside of the larger container for better protection. Some decorations, such as the tree topper, may need its own shoe box. Other smaller decorations can share shoe boxes.

When you drag the Christmas decorations out next holiday season, carefully unwrap each decoration and closely inspect it. Have a hot glue gun and a sewing needle and thread nearby for any needed repairs.

By making your own decorations, you will find that Christmas is indeed special.

Not only can you say 'I made that myself' when you are complimented, but by including the whole family in Christmas projects, you will all be sharing this special time of the year together – more closely.

Merry Christmas to you and yours...

Chelseys mom