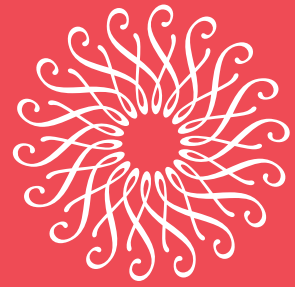


Make Your Own Holiday Wrapping Paper Activity



At a Glance

Have fun creating your own wrapping paper to cover your holiday gifts this year. Use vegetables from your kitchen, fallen leaves, twigs, or shells to stamp plain paper, turning it into one-of-a-kind pieces of art.

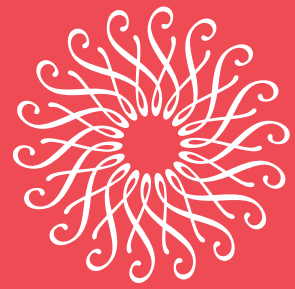


Did You Know?

The ancient art of wrapping gifts dates to 100AD in China. History tells us that money was wrapped in envelopes made of natural materials such as bamboo fibers, hemp, and rice straws. These envelopes were called "chih poh". Other Asian countries had similar traditions using reusable cloth made of silk fibers. The tradition of gift wrapping was slow to move to Europe and eventually North America. Paper used to wrap gifts in the United States did not become a widespread practice until after 1919, when a company called Hallmark began printing wrapping paper. Up until that time, only the wealthy could afford to wrap gifts in beautiful paper. Hallmark made wrapping gifts in paper available to all.

Today, anyone can create unique gift wrap for the holidays.

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Material Hunt

Explore outside and find natural materials in your yard or local park. Collect tree branches, twigs, leaves, acorns, or pinecones. You may want to break off a few evergreen branches as well. Plan to use some natural materials to decorate the top of your package.

Materials

- Natural materials (branches, twigs, leaves, acorns, evergreen needles, pinecones)
- Vegetables or fruit from the kitchen (apples, potatoes, carrots, or celery)
- Butter knife (supervision required)
- Tape
- A roll of craft paper, plain white paper, or cut brown lunch bags
- A drop cloth to protect your work area
- Rubber gloves (optional)
- Acrylic Paints
- Paper cups for paint (optional)
- Paint brush
- Paper towels
- Cup of water
- Twine or ribbon
- Scissors

Directions

1. Prepare your work area, using the drop cloth on your table or floor for easy clean-up. Set up the paint, water, brushes, paper towels, and natural materials.



2. Tape your paper onto the drop cloth to help keep paper in place while printing.



3. If using fruits or vegetables from the kitchen, you will need to take some time to prepare them for printing with the paint.



- a. Carrots:
Cut about one inch from the base of the carrot.
This will allow you to hold the base securely while dipping in paint and stamping.
- b. Celery:
Cut the stalks off the base of the celery.
You can use the base to stamp a cool rose-like design.
You can use the stalks to stamp a "c" pattern.
- c. Potato or apple:
Use the butter knife to cut the produce in half.
Carve out a design on the cut side of the potato or apple,
with the butter knife.

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4. Put on your rubber gloves and dip the paint brush into the paint and begin to paint the bottom-side of your object.



5. Hold the object tightly and press the paint side down onto your paper. Press firmly and lift upwards, being careful not to smear the paint.



6. Continue stamping your paper with different materials. You may want to try rolling your materials onto the paper for a different effect.



7. Allow paint to dry and wrap your gift with the printed paper.

8. Use the twine or ribbon to wrap around gift and finish it off with some evergreen needles. They look pretty and smell great!

