

rustic crafts

A rustic Christmas theme lends itself to homemade crafts made from easy-to-find materials, such as pine cones and branches, twigs and cuttings from the bottom of your live tree.

To top it all off, all these materials come with the added bonus of being environmentally friendly. If you're feeling crafty this Christmas, here are projects for homemade rustic décor.

Rustic ornaments

Turn pine cones or decorative wrapped twig balls into ornaments by tying burlap ribbon into bows and attaching to the top with hot glue. Then, loop a 6-inch length of twine or raffia through the knot of the bow on the back of the ornament and tie a double knot at the top.

Twig Christmas tree

Round cutting from the bottom of a tree

Five types of Christmas ribbon, all about ¼ inch thick, in lengths of 5 1/2 inches, 4 1/2 inches, 3 1/2 inches, 2 1/2 inches and 1 1/2 inch

1 twig, about 6 inches tall and 1/4 inch in diameter

low-temperature hot glue gun

low-temperature hot glue sticks

Construction paper or craft paper

Glitter

School glue

Twine

Place the bottom of the twig in the center of the round piece of wood and attach using a 1-inch brad-type nail and hammer. Stand the tree up on its round wood base and begin tying the center of the longest ribbon around the twig, about 1/4 inch from the bottom. Secure the center of the knot to the branch with a dab of hot glue. Do the same with each smaller size ribbon, spacing them evenly along the twig so that the shortest length of ribbon is tied near the top of the twig. Make a star for the top of the tree by cutting a shape from brown or yellow construction paper or brown craft paper. Add a thin layer of school glue and sprinkle glitter to cover the star, then shake off the excess. Once the school glue has dried, attach the star to the top of the tree with hot glue. If you'd like, you can glue each end of a 4-inch length of twine to the back of the star to turn the decoration into an ornament.

Burlap candleholder

1 glass hurricane vase, about 4 inches in diameter and 6 inches tall

1 white pillar candle

Spare branches from the Christmas tree, with foliage

Strip of burlap fabric, the same diameter as the candleholder and about 2 inches tall

Mod Podge

Sponge brush

Twine

Plate-style candleholder

Place the vase in the center of the plate and place the pillar candle inside. Arrange branches around the base of the candle to a height of about 3 inches. Add a thin layer of Mod Podge to the back of the burlap fabric using the sponge brush. Press the burlap flat around the base of the candleholder, with the sticky side facing the glass. Tie a length of twine around the middle of the burlap fabric with a simple bow. For a snowy effect, sprinkle faux snow on the branches. For a touch of elegance, replace the twine with lace ribbon. For a simpler, quicker version, wrap twine around the middle of a pillar candle and secure with a bow in the middle.

