

# Today’s crafted ornaments, tomorrow’s keepsakes

By JENNIFER FORKER  
Associated Press

Making your own ornaments and decorations for the holidays has its own rewards — the need to create is strong in many of us — but it feels particularly good to dig out your art supplies at this time of year.

As Bob Richter puts it in his new book, “A Very Vintage Christmas” (Rowman & Littlefield): “At the heart of it, this is what Christmas means to me . . . passing along warmth, memories, tradition, stories and so much more.”

Richter keeps his childhood memories alive by decorating with vintage ornaments, some of which he received as a small child from relatives. Each delicate piece evokes a memory.

“As my grandmother grew older, she took pleasure in letting me decorate her tree, and I have many happy memories of doing it,” Richter reminisces in his book. “Now one of my favorite and most treasured ornaments is her favorite Santa Claus. Each year when I hang him on my tree, I think of her and smile.”

Our children’s handmade ornaments — perhaps incorporating a tiny handprint, a school photo or the year of its making — evoke similar sentiments every holiday season.

“Especially in this culture of time-pressed, technology-obsessed and often distracted people, I think it’s more important than ever to pass along the things that really connect us,” says Richter. “And Christmas does that.”

From the December/January pages of Woman’s Day magazine come a few ornaments that evoke holidays past. We’ve amended them with another from the magazine’s website that evokes a vintage feel. These crafts require just the simplest of materials, such as toothpicks, yarn and wooden clothespins.

Especially when little glue-sticky fingers are at work, these crafts could become next year’s treasures.



This undated photo provided by Woman’s Day shows different ornaments hanging that may be crafted for the holidays using simple items around the house, such as toothpicks, yarn and cinnamon sticks. Crafting ornaments gives families an activity to do together and provides ornaments that may become next year’s treasures.

## Knit bauble

“The ball ornament is the most recognizable ornament at Christmastime,” says Woman’s Day lifestyle director Taryn Mohrman. “You can use one that’s a little chipped . . . with a bit of yarn, you can turn it into something that evokes soft and cozy, and adds warmth to your tree.”

Remove the metal top from a plain ball ornament. Hold two colors of yarn together and hot-glue them inside the opening of the ornament. Once dry, wrap both strands around the ornament to cover it completely; use hot glue to secure as you go.

Then apply red acrylic paint to the balls of two rock candy sticks, and trim the ends into points using scissors. Once dry, thread these “knitting needles” through the yarn

on the ornament and replace the metal top.

## Sweet scented tree

“These ornaments make great gift toppers,” says Mohrman. Bend a 3 1/2-inch piece of naturally coiled wrapped wire, available at crafts stores, in half to form a loop, and then gently push each end into the hollow part of a cinnamon stick. Use hot glue to attach cut sprigs of fresh rosemary for branches and small gems for ornaments.

## Sparkling starburst

This ornament “is about the metallic, the glitter and the shine,” says Mohrman. Carefully push whole and halved toothpicks into a 1 1/2-inch foam ball, and then apply one or two

coats of silver spray paint. While the ornament’s still wet, dust fine silver glitter over it. Use a dab of hot glue to attach a string for hanging.

## Clothespin snowflake

“This is a good sturdy ornament that can be packed away and stand the test of time,” says Mohrman. You need: eight clothespins, craft glue, white acrylic paint, a paintbrush, a foam paintbrush, white glitter, red string and scissors. Start by carefully sliding the metal clips off of the eight clothespins and discard. Reattach two wooden clothespin pieces by gluing the flat sides together. Repeat for the remaining wood pieces. Arrange these reattached wood pieces in the shape of a snowflake and glue together at the base; let dry completely.

Apply white paint to the edges and one side of the snowflake. While the paint is still wet, sprinkle on white glitter.

Once dry, flip the snowflake over and apply paint and glitter to the other side.

Finally, slip a length of red string through one of the openings in the snowflake and tie the ends into a bow; use it to hang the ornament.

## Even simpler nostalgic DIY ideas?

Richter suggests stringing popcorn and cranberry chains — three popcorns for each cranberry — and tying hole-punched vintage holiday cards to tree branches with red ribbon. Find boxes of old cards at flea markets for a few dollars, he says.

# Furry, fuzzy, fluffy: holiday decor with a soft touch

By KIM COOK  
Associated Press

This season, faux furs, wools and other softly textured materials are giving holiday decor a cozy, festive feel.

The trend was prominent at this fall’s Maison et Objet trade show in Paris. Booths were populated with winsome, appliquéed, felt people and animals. Glamorous, jewel-toned feather trees dressed up tabletops. There were furry pillows printed with wildlife photos or embellished with metallic threads, sequins and pearls.

“That natural, organic, homespun feeling was all over the runways and it’s trending at home, too,” says New York designer Elaine Griffin. “For holiday, it manifests as an emphasis



This undated photo provided by Target shows a soft, cozy throw pillow which features a plaid and stag print, from Threshold.

on bringing the outdoors in — think stylish, simple-chic arrangements of branches, leaves, berries, pine cones and

moss — coupled with cozy, textured, wintry textiles like felt, faux fur and chenille.”

There’s a lot of versatility in these materials because faux fur, brushed wool, hides, and even velvet or feathers can say “winter cabin” as easily as “luxury suite.” It’s all in how you incorporate other style elements.

Emily Henderson, host of HGTV’s “Secrets from a Stylist” and a Target home-style expert, is also a fan.

“Yarn and wovens are two of my favorites — they make a space feel extra warm and welcoming, which is what the holidays are all about,” she says.

Grandin Road, an online retailer, has a collection of hooked wool pillows with whimsical images of moose, cardinals, foxes and various canines sporting holiday garb.

A faux fur throw that looks

like pheasant feathers could be repurposed as a glamorous tree skirt.

Or get creative with 5 feet of chocolate-y brown faux

fur trim, from New Orleans-based ribbon designer Donna Stevens. It could edge a mirror, wrap a gift or garland a tree, perhaps.

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