

"We're crafting for Christmas!"

OUR CREATE AND CRAFT PRESENTERS AND EXPERTS REVEAL WHAT THEY'LL BE MAKING THIS FESTIVE SEASON



Who's getting what... or can't you say?

This year it's all about practical pieces and storage gifts. I've already upcycled a few plain wooden boxes for my nieces and created a pretty wall art piece for my Mum. I've painted glass bottles using chalky paints to give them texture which will be perfect to use as single stem vases for my sisters - I just need to get a move on! I try to make pressies that I know will be useful as well as stylish or pretty. Mainly, my ideas come from knowing what the person may like or need, but I find magazines and shops are great for inspiration.

So, what's your perfect practical gift?

This year I've decided to make tote bags to use as gift bags. I buy so much fabulous fabric and this will be a great way to use some of it. Not only is it eco-friendly but it's practical, too. I can't wait to start making all manner of totes!

Do you buy or make your festive decorations?

Unbelievably, I've already made a few as you can see here. I decorated bauble, heart and Christmas tree shapes and added ribbon for hanging.



"This year I've decided to make tote bags to use as gift bags. Not only is it eco-friendly but it's practical too!"

Jacqui Joseph

I used the Folk It Starter Kit which comes with all the tools, DVD, instruction booklet, paints, glitter and tracing papers. It's super-easy to use and creates the most stunning designs.



What's Hot

Trends for a crafty Christmas 2015

The countdown

Make a calendar with a difference this year: think paper pockets, little drawers and advent 'houses' that are blank and can be decorated as you wish - check out our fabric one on page 26.

Animal magic

Include a menagerie of woodland favourites amongst your makes - deers, foxes, badgers and owls (even a raccoon or

two!) are all set to be big news this year. Use these wild critters as felt tree decs or even a knitted stag head to hang on the wall.

A warm welcome

Make a wreath using polystyrene wrapped with yarn, twine or ribbon... and then get embellishing. Have fun decorating with gift bows, felt mistletoe, woodland animals, snowflakes, and anything that grabs your fancy.

Five of the best

- Classic Scandi paired with gold
- Slot-together decoupage reindeer blanks
- Pom poms made into baubles and Christmas trees
- Inventive baking with 3D cake decoration
- Felting kits: polar bears, snowmen and penguins



Why not involve the whole family?



I am very guilty of leaving Christmas to the last minute because of my busy life and hectic work schedule. However, this year I have grandchildren to enjoy the festive season with, so I will be making time to create a wonderful experience for them. Like Leonie, I would love to make an MDF train. I'd fill it with Christmas goodies like hot chocolate and marshmallows for my grandson.

Festive crafting

"I always try to make decorations for my home as I love the process of creating something amazing from paper. I have made Christmas swags for the last two years, but this year I am planning on making a village

from MDF. I think it is lovely to create something that not only can be displayed year after year, but can also be passed down from generation to generation.

"Ideas for Christmas gifts and decorations just pop into my head. I also love exploring Pinterest for ideas too. I'm most looking forward to making felt toys for my grandchildren. I haven't sewn since I discovered papercrafting and to try something different that is simple to achieve is very exciting for me. For Christmas papercrafting projects I'll be using my Brother ScanNCut and TODO as the combination of perfect cutting and hot foiling will be versatile and very exciting."

"This year I have grandchildren to enjoy the festive season with, so I will be creating a wonderful experience for them"

Mel Heaton



Get in the mood with music

"I always try to start my Christmas crafting early by making a few items each week"

Dawn Wheeler



personalise one for each member of my family as table presents. For decorations, I like to make a Christmas wreath for my door each year. Plus, with all the new book folding techniques I want to try to make a Christmas tree book.

Is Christmas on your crafty schedule yet?

I always try to start my Christmas crafting early by making a few items each week as the new festive craft products come out, but then time just runs away with me. I normally end up crafting things at the last minute! However, I have started on my main project: the Couture Christmas gift boxes. I'm planning to make and

Your festive essential tool kit consists of what?

I love to use all my craft tools as it's the only time I can really go over the top with my projects! I'll definitely use my ScanNCut, Couture dies and Grand Calibur.

Where does your gift inspiration come from?

I look at each person I need to make something for, then use their favourite colours and style as a starting point, taking inspiration from how they dress or decorate their house. Sometimes simply a shape or colour can give me all the inspiration I need. I am most excited to get started on my kids' Christmas cards and my Mum's birthday card. Her birthday is on New Year's Eve.

Our top tips

Dawn says...

"Take your time. Relax and put on some Christmas music to get in the festive mood - even if it's August! I always find this works for me."

Jacqui says...

"Keep calm, get organised and get making! Make a list of all the family members, loved ones or friends that you'll be creating gifts for. Jot down what the gift will be next to their name, and, most importantly, stick to it!"

Mel says...

"Choose colours that you really love and work well within your home. You don't have to stick with traditional colours... it's your Christmas so make it your own. Also, enjoy the process and get the family involved."

