

Alternative Gift Wrapping Ideas

Sometimes wrapping gifts can be equally as stressful as buying — and sometimes equally as expensive. Here are some quick and cost-effective ways to nix the wrapping this year.

- 1) Baskets:** They come in all sizes and shapes and can make even simple gifts look attractive. Packing your gifts in baskets doubles the pleasure as most will reuse as holders for bread, towels or fruit, or simply as an accessory. Wrap your goody-filled basket in cellophane and tie with a ribbon.
- 2) Tins:** Antique and reproduction tins make useful and decorative additions to any kitchen. They are ideal for packing such food gifts as gourmet coffees and teas, spices, candy, cookies and cakes, and they will most likely continue to be used.
- 3) Jars:** A Mason jar is the perfect container for homemade condiments, preserves or store-bought candies. Tie a red-and-white cloth napkin around the top and secure with a plaid or gingham taffeta bow.
- 4) Cloth bags:** You can make these by sewing two colourful pieces of cloth together and inserting a drawstring, or you can purchase bags at a store or online. Small bags can be reused to hold jewellery, while larger bags are great for laundry.
- 5) Photo boxes:** This saves a lot of time. Simply place a gift in the photo box and add a tag and a bow. Photo boxes come in an array of colours, patterns and sizes and you can find them for almost any occasion, giving the gift the feeling of being wrapped.
- 6) Recyclables:** You can use movie posters, newspapers, pieces of fabric, comics, maps or whatever else you have lying around the house! Depending on the occasion or the recipient, you can be as basic or as creative as you like.
- 7) Ribbons and Bows:** If something is large enough — or too awkward to wrap — avoid the wrapping process all together and stick some curly ribbons or a pretty bow on it. Scraps of coloured yarn can work for those who are trying to be extra thrifty.

8) Envelopes: For gift cards or gifts of money, place in a card and envelope. Write a letter on the outside of the envelope, roll up and place in a bottle to create a 'message in a bottle' effect — or punch a hole through the corner of the envelope and tie a colourful ribbon through it to hang it on a tree.

Being creative and using items around the house can save you time and money. Have fun with these great ideas – the recipient of the gift will enjoy your creative thoughtfulness.

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