



Wrapping It All Up: Recycled Style!

I'm on a mission here, a mission to convince you that you never need to buy wrapping paper again. Don't buy it! The stuff gets ripped up and thrown away: money in the trash.

I'm not here to tell you that gifts look better without wrap, or that gift cards are the best way to go. I'm here to teach you how to reuse most everything that winds up in the recycle bin so you can make holiday gift wrap on par with a Godiva gift box or a professionally wrapped gift from Neiman's.

Personally, I think most store bought wrap is gaudy. Yes, it might look cool in the store, but definitely not so cool when stacked beneath the tree. We've all seen beautifully appointed homes with magnificent Christmas trees, decked to the nines, and then, as visitors arrive and gifts stack up, everything gets a bit confusing. There's the Disney wrap next to the holiday Duck Dynasty, next to the tartan plaid with frilly ribbon, only to be juxtaposed with the transformers wrapping paper. Ok, the kids love it, but most adults don't, and the kid's care about what's in the package, right? So why not make your own giftwrap that takes on that wonderful European and creative look?

Really, it's super simple. Focus on reusing brown paper bags, butcher paper, magazines, and newspapers. Then, look around your home for odds and ends that you could stamp paper with, glue to paper, paint on paper, or tie around the paper once it's covered the gift.

I've used the end of toilet paper rolls, corks, leaves, bottoms of plastic bottles, twine, glitter, foil, parchment paper, fabric, leaves, pine cones, fresh holly, cut flowers, old ribbons, even small plastic toys to create and embellish my recycled wrap.

I also enjoy making beautiful gift tags that can easily take the place of giftwrap. For example, when I package my baked goods in simple tins or cardboard boxes, I don't wrap them. I simply create a beautiful hand written tag and fasten it to the package with basic twine, ribbon, or yarn. I usually write a holiday wish on one side, and share my recipe on the opposite side.

In this workshop, I'm going to show you how I repurpose, reuse, and recycle all sorts of materials for packaging holiday gifts without spending a dime. Grab a coffee and watch me work my magic. I'll share all my tips, tricks, and where I look around my home for the best self made wrap materials.

Because there's not an exact recipe or a specific set of rules to making your own wrap, I've made an extra special "how I do it" video for you. So, go ahead and press play, and watch me turn random household items into gorgeous gift packaging.

You'll see I really let my creativity flow into action, and, after the video is over, you'll flow right into your own DIY holiday wrap action too!

Merry Christmas. Happy Holidays. Spread Joy.

- Jessa -

are many creative ways to roll combined sheets of colorful beeswax to create candles that resemble Christmas trees, logs, and even sushi rolls.

You will see, when you pair the rolled beeswax candles with my natural wood candle holders, the look is something between Pottery Barn shabby chic and Crate & Barrel modern. I designed the natural wood candleholder to look clean and modern, yet warm and woodsy.

For inspiration I went outside and studied our stacks of logs. I singled out a few with gorgeous rings and coloring and went to town. Literally, I drove to town to look at more wood. I even searched the scrap pile at the hardware store.

I found what I needed and took my wood blocks home. I sanded the edges and, after I was satisfied with the smoothness of the blocks, I taped off the bottom 1/3 and painted them white. I left the top 2/3 of the blocks natural. This step beautifully combined the rustic and modern elements I was after.

Then, I drilled tiny holes into the tops of the blocks. Well, first I decided where the holes should be. The holes will house an upside down nail to hold a candle to the block. Some of the blocks called for a symmetrically placed hole, and others called for an offset hole or more than one. So, depending on the size and look of the block, I drilled my tiny holes accordingly.

Next, I filled the holes with super glue and fit an upside down nail into the hole. Yes, I wanted, and you will see why, the pointy bit of the nail to face the sky, not the head. The head of the nail is the part glued deep into the hole.

After the glue completely dried, I drilled a small hole in the middle of a candle cup, coated the bottom with wood glue, positioned it over the nail in the wood block, and let dry. Once the glue was completely set, I placed a rolled candle over the nail.

Voila! Secure. Safe. Beautiful. Modern.

Here's What You Need:

- Clean flat surface
- Beeswax sheets (one sheet makes two 4 inch candles)
- Candle wicking
- Scissors
- Wood blocks (varying shapes, sizes, dimensions, to your liking)
- Drill
- Nails (use 2 inch)
- Candle cups
- Crazy glue
- Wood glue
- Sand paper (varying gauge)
- Masking tape

- Paint
- Paintbrush

Here's How You Do It:

- Cut the beeswax sheets in half.
- Lay a wick at the edge of the cut sheet, making sure it runs the entire length and has at least an inch access on one end.
- Tightly roll the beeswax sheet into a candle.
- Make sure the bottom is flat and candle is evenly rolled.

Then...

Select your wood (I used a 2x2).

Place your wood into a vice and cut varying lengths according to your taste.

Sand and paint your cut wood blocks.

Drill holes approximately 1/3 inch deep into the wood and drill holes through the center of the candle cups.

Fill the holes in the wood with crazy glue.

Set a nail, head side down, into the glue.

Apply wood glue to the bottoms of the candle cups and place over the nails.

Let dry.

After your candles and candleholders are complete, simply place a candle over each nail. Wrap a ribbon around the center of the candleholder, add a thoughtfully drafted gift tag, and perhaps attach a sprig of Holly and a pinecone. Now your project is ready to be gifted to those you love.

Please remember to never leave candles burning unattended. Gently remind those you love to always keep an eye on their burning candles too.

Enjoy the light!