

Handmade Ho-Ho Homicide

REPURPOSED GREETING CARD CRAFTS

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For the May issue of *American Woman*, Anastasia selected National Creativity Day to feature as her unusual holiday and chose projects that could be made by recycling greeting cards. These craft projects work especially well for Christmas, but can also be used for other holidays, special occasions, or anytime decorating.

3-D Ball Garlands

Choose cards in colors and patterns that work well together and match your decor. If you have a 2" scalloped circle punch, punch out six circles. Otherwise, use a compass or template to draw 2" circles on the back of the picture side of the card, then cut out the circles with either pinking shears or scalloping shears. You will need 6 circles for each ball and 3-4 balls for every 12" length of garland.

Fold the circles in half, wrong sides together, to form a crease. To make each ball, glue the wrong side of half of one circle to the wrong side of half of the next circle for all but the last two halves. A glue stick will work best for gluing.

Determine the length you want your garland. Add at least 24" (12" for each side) if you plan to tie your garland in place rather than drape it. Cut a piece of ribbon or cord to this length.

Place the ribbon or cord on a flat work surface. Apply glue to the two remaining panels of one ball. Beginning in the center of the garland, sandwich the ribbon or cord against the center of the 3-D ball between the unglued remaining halves. Glue the remaining halves together.

If desired, tie a knot to either side of the ball to add an additional decorative element.

Once you've finished attaching the center ball, determine how far apart you'd like your balls, and repeat the process for the remainder of the garland. You can also thread beads between each ball as you add them.

To display, drape the garland over a picture frame, from a fireplace mantle, over a doorframe, across a window, or along a stair railing.

3-D Ornaments

These ornaments are made using the same technique as the garland balls but can be made in various shapes. Hearts and simple Christmas tree shapes work well, and you can use cookie cutters as templates.

Cut out six shapes for each ornament. When all but the last two halves are glued together, cut a 9" length of ribbon. Fold the ribbon in half, and sandwich inside the remaining halves with the loop extending above the top of the ornament for hanging. Glue together the two remaining halves.

Triangular Flag Garlands

Vertical cards work best for this project. Cut a large isosceles triangle from one card and use it as a template for the other triangles.

Score 3/4" along the right side of the short edge of the triangle and fold over, wrong sides together, to form

crease.

Determine the length you want your garland. Add at least 24" (12" for each side) if you plan to tie your garland in place rather than drape it. Cut a piece of string to this length.

Arrange the triangles in the order you want them. Points should touch but not overlap. Turn the flags over so the wrong sides face up. Place a piece of double-sided tape along the top edge of each flag above the crease.

Center the string along the flag crease lines. Fold the top edge of each flag down to tape the flags to string.

Triptych Wall-hanging Photo Frame

On the wrong side of the picture side of six greeting cards, draw a 3-1/2" x 3-1/2" square. Cut out the squares. Continuing to work on the wrong side, on three of the squares, measure in 3/4" from outer edge of each side to draw a 2" x 2" square centered within the larger square. Cut out this center square.

Tape a photo behind each of the square openings.

Cut an 11" piece of 1/4" ribbon. Glue vertically along the center back of the wrong side of the squares without the photos, leaving 1/2" between the squares.

Cut a 9" length of ribbon. Glue to the top of the wrong side of the top square, 3/4" from side edges to form hanging loop.

With wrong sides together, glue the squares with the photos to the top of the other squares.

Greeting Card Wreath

Trace a holly leaf, approximately 2-1/2", on the wrong side of the picture side of a card. Cut out the leaf and use it as the template to trace and cut many more leaves. The number of leaves needed depends on the size of the wreath, but you'll need quite a few for full coverage.

Glue toothpicks centered to the back of each leaf, 3/4" from bottom edge of leaf.

Tie a ribbon around the top of a Styrofoam wreath as a hanging loop.

Beginning at the outer top edge of the wreath, insert the toothpicks at a slight angle into the wreath, working around the wreath with each leaf slightly overlapping the preceding one. When the first circle of leaves is complete, begin the next circle, slightly overlapping the first circle. Continue in this manner until the entire wreath is covered with leaves.

DIY Decorative Gift Bags

Gift bags are expensive, but you can achieve that expensive look for pennies by with a glue stick and recycled greeting cards. Purchase inexpensive solid color brown paper gift bags. You can often find these in bulk at dollar stores, craft stores, and discount stores. Glue the fronts of greeting cards onto the front of the gift bag.

If desired, dress the gift bag up even more by gluing decorative trim or ribbon around the card and tying a bow to the handle.