



9 Thanksgiving-themed Craft Ideas

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Thanksgiving Craft: Greeting Cards

There are cards available for just about every holiday out there, and Thanksgiving is no exception. But who wouldn't love receiving a handmade card as a keepsake? With a little creativity, imagination and time, you can create wonderful cards for family and friends. There are quite a few techniques and mediums that can be used to create cards from the heart. Children and adults alike can have fun making the cards.

One of the simplest Thanksgiving cards to create is the standard "hand turkey" that can be cut out and glued to either folded construction paper, card stock or even scrapbook paper. This is a great project to do with younger kids. First, trace your child's hand on a piece of paper, being sure to have them spread their fingers as far apart as they can. Make it dimensional, by not gluing the finger feathers down. Use a pencil to curl the feathers, so that they stand out off the paper a little.

There are many rubber stamps available in holiday themes, sometimes combined in kits. Different inks, embossing powders and paper can be combined to create unique looks, even when you use the same stamps. Practicing on scrap paper before making your final product can sometimes provide ideas that you might not have thought about, such as overlapping the same stamp a couple times, with different colors, offset a bit. This particular technique provides a shadow effect.

Stencils are also a simple way to make a nice design on your greeting cards. Using either stencil brushes or sponges can give you totally different looks. Playing with different layouts such as overlapping things can allow you to create many different and unique designs.

Stickers can also be used to create simple cards or can be combined with other mediums. There are many kinds of stickers including those with metallic accents. There is enough variety of stickers that make it easy to create a nice scene on the front of the card complete with turkeys, Pilgrims and Indians. There is also a lot of free clip art available in graphics programs and online. Many can be printed on sticker paper or on regular paper and glued in place.

By using some scrapbooking techniques, you can create some very artistic looking cards. Layering different kinds of paper together, changing angles, ripping edges, etc. will allow you to create an almost old fashioned look. Accenting it with stickers, paper cutouts or other details will give your card some wonderful finishing touches.

If you know calligraphy, or someone who does, hand lettering can really set off a handmade card nicely. Even if you can't do calligraphy, there are many nice fonts that can be found on your computer. Print the words out on a nice paper,

cut out creatively (scrapbooking edge scissors are great for this) and glue onto your card.

Another alternative to making several hand-made cards, is to make one card, either by hand, or using scrapbooking software. Then create a picture file (.jpg or .gif) on the computer of your card front, by taking a picture, cropping the image digitally – you can even add text to the picture.

The greeting card services at GreetingCardConnections.com allow you to upload your image onto the front, or inside of a card, then you can send your card to whomever you want. You can type your own message and they print your card, and mail it in a real, stamped-envelope to your loved one.

No matter how you create, and send your card, even if you feel like you have no artistic talent at all, there are many options available to make card making easy and enjoyable. As with most handcrafted items, it doesn't have to be perfect. That's what makes it special; they are made with love, not mass-produced in a factory. So try your hand at a handcrafted card this Thanksgiving and let your loved ones know how thankful you are they are in your life.

Thanksgiving Craft: Hair Bows

Hair bows have always been an attractive accessory to wear on any occasion. Thanksgiving is no exception. If you love making hair bows, here are a few suggestions for Thanksgiving hair bows which may be helpful in creating a unique and beautiful accessory for you and your daughter to wear on this special day.

Depending upon the outfit you are wearing on Thanksgiving, you can choose wide ribbons in the following colors: white, orange, or ivory. Black would be more appropriate for an adult. Choose satin ribbons since they are classic and elegant as well.

Next, decide what ornament you wish to place in the center of the bow. For Thanksgiving, you may want to choose one of the following: autumn leaves, a cornucopia, or a large sunflower. Next, tie the satin ribbon into a large bow. Find another ribbon of lesser width to place under the centerpiece of your choice. For example, if you are wearing a large sunflower, you may want to buy light brown ribbon and cut two pieces, make an X shape and glue or staple it to the center of the satin ribbon. On top of the brown ribbon, the large sunflower would be glued.

Depending upon the centerpiece you choose for your satin ribbon, you can choose among a variety of different color ribbons to highlight the piece. For a cornucopia, you can add red, green or whatever enhances the piece. Use a hair clip to attach the bow to your hair or that of your daughter.

Here's another suggestion. You can decorate your Thanksgiving table by placing the bows at the bottom of the tablecloth and spacing them about 3 inches apart all around. If you have a particular color scheme, you can make hair bows that reflect the colors in your dining room or mix and match them to your table wear. Thanksgiving is not only a time for thanks, but creating an elegant look to your table will make it more special. Don't forget to take pictures for your scrapbook, too!

Hair bows have been utilized for every day wear, evening wear, and exotic wear. No matter what the color, it adds a touch of class to anyone's entire outfit. This Thanksgiving, check out the satin bows at your craft store, along with centerpieces they have on hand. You and your daughter will have a great time creating Thanksgiving hair bows.

Thanksgiving Craft: Pilgrim Hat & Bonnet

Every Thanksgiving, moms and kids have a fun time creating Thanksgiving crafts, especially the making of Pilgrim hats. It also seems that every year, the traditional black hat with a belt buckle is ingeniously created to wear, hung as an ornament, or made as a centerpiece.

In researching favorite Thanksgiving crafts, there is one item that has rarely been mentioned – a Pilgrim's Bonnet. While you may see plenty of assorted Pilgrim's hats for men and boys, it's time to share a few tips on how to make Pilgrim bonnets for women and girls.

If you are good at sewing, there are plenty of online sites where you can print out a pattern and make a lovely bonnet. If you would like to keep it simple, you can make a bonnet out of white paper. At your local office supply store, you will be able to locate 12x15 white paper. Lay it out on the table, and fold the back underneath about two inches and scotch tape the fold to the back of the paper. Take both corners of the top section and fold them down so they meet in the middle, then scotch tape both corners to the middle section. This is the basis of the hat. In order to wear it, fold it over your head or that of your daughter, and take a hole puncher and punch a hole at each bottom end. Take two pieces of thin white ribbon and put each one through the hole, knotting it from the inside. Now you can take each piece of ribbon that has been secured in place and tie it around the chin. Voila!

There are some wonderful traditional Pilgrim hats which can be made as centerpieces. One such hat was made using black felt material which lined a flower pot. Then a beautiful large buckled strap was placed around the middle of the pot. What was so unique about this piece was the black felt was draped to lie flat, so that when set on a table, it made a lovely centerpiece.

There are so many ways in which you can use Thanksgiving crafts to make Pilgrim hats. Be sure to include bonnets as well. Whether you make them to wear, or have the kids cut and paste to hang them proudly in their room or the kitchen. Either way, it is not only fun, but you can also start a new tradition by having the entire family wear hats and bonnets this Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving Craft: Indian Headdress

The most colorful and creative Thanksgiving craft you and your kids can engage in is making Indian headdresses. Whether you prefer one feather, or the full regalia – they are beautiful and fun to wear as well.

Let's take a look at how to make a few of these headdresses. Basically, it's one stop shopping at your local craft store. Purchase a plain headband; then choose a wide variety of colored feathers, long, short and in-between. In addition you will need some gold sparkles or stars or any color your kids choose.

Next, have your kids decorate the headbands with the sparkles using glue. Then take the feathers and one by one, glue each feather to the inside side of the band. Start with the first row of short feathers, then the next row of medium sized feathers glued to the first, and so on, until the last row contains the longest feathers. Mix up the colored feathers and place the band around the forehead and Voila! You have a superb looking Indian headdress.

Perhaps one of your children doesn't want to be the Indian chief, but an Indian girl. In that case, one feather on a colorful band made by your daughter will be just as attractive.

In addition, there are some Indian headdresses which call for a feather placed from the bottom of the headband to the chin, denoting a specific tribe. Your kids may want to name their tribe as well by choosing a logo which they can also place on the headband.

Indian headdresses can be as simple or as ornate as you wish. There is no right or wrong way to make a headdress. The only requirement is that the kids have fun and you take lots of pictures for your scrapbook or family album. Oh, and don't forget to tell the kids they have to make up an Indian dance as well so you can capture it on video to view for years to come.

Thanksgiving Craft: Necklace and Bracelet

When we were young girls, we were fascinated with making bracelets and necklaces using beads in all shapes and sizes as well as their brilliant colors. Today, your kids can make a necklace and bracelet for Thanksgiving as well.

One trip to your local craft store is all that is needed to begin the process of creating necklaces and bracelets at home. Choose a leather cord and a variety of beads in all shapes, sizes, and colors. Then put the cord through each bead until you have the desired look. Follow this same process for both necklace and bracelet.

In the old days, shoelaces were used. You can do the same as well. Choose black or white shoelaces, which are easier to push through the hole in the beads, and tie a knot at both ends and you have a lovely necklace or bracelet.

Perhaps your kids would like to use some of your costume jewelry instead of beads. If you have several loop type earrings, you can make a lovely bracelet from those as well.

If your kids would like to make “sweet” necklaces and bracelets, they can use lifesavers which come individually packaged. Pick up the variety bag, and the kids can have a great time making candy necklaces and bracelets as well.

Here’s another fun idea. How about using elbow pasta to make a necklace and bracelet? The kids can use sharpie pens in different colors and really make unique and colorful jewelry. Of course, there is the traditional popcorn bracelet and necklace but how about using caramel popcorn to add a bit more color?

Does this bring back fond memories for you? Well then join your kids in making these necklaces and bracelets for Thanksgiving and proudly wear them. Snap lots of pictures for your scrapbook and remember the important thing is to have fun creating jewelry using unique ideas and items around your home as well.

Thanksgiving Craft: Placemats and Place Holders

A beautiful table setting is the finishing touch to a wonderful Thanksgiving meal. By collecting a few simple things from around the house, and maybe a trip to the craft or fabric store, you have the makings of a festive table. Standard placemats start with a rectangle of construction paper, or fabric, in fall colors or white and come in endless varieties, limited only by your imagination.

Handy Turkey Placemats - Trace around a hand, with fingers spread, to create a turkey. The palm is the body, the thumb is the head, and the other fingers are the tail feathers. Each child can make their own. It can turn into a game, to try to find their handprint at dinnertime, to see who sits where.

Fall Foliage Placemats - Collect colorful fall leaves from your own yard to make a lovely, natural placemat. You can also use artificial leaves from the craft store, if you prefer. Cut two rectangle pieces of contact paper the size you need. Arrange the leaves neatly on the first piece. Carefully place the second piece on top, peeling part of the paper backing off a little at a time, and press in place. Give the placemat a border by gluing strips of construction paper about an inch wide along the edges.

Pilgrims and Indians - Draw or find a pattern for simple silhouettes of Pilgrims and Indians. Place one of each on either side of the placemat. Decorate them, or leave them as simple silhouettes. Craft feathers could be added for details around the edges.

Burlap Placemats - If you want to go with a more rustic look, cut rectangles of burlap. If you have a sewing machine, stitch around the outside edge about an inch in, with a zigzag stitch, to keep it from raveling too far. Decorated the placemat with ribbon or yarn.

Fabric Placemats - There are many lovely fall prints available that could be made into placemats. They could be bordered with a nice ribbon (make sure it's washable) for a simple placemat. The ribbon could be attached with fabric glue or double stick tape. Just be sure to use the permanent kind, if you want to wash them. Alternatively, you could make a quilted placemat and finish it off with binding, for a very elegant looking table.

Placeholders or place cards, can also be a nice touch at the dinner table. These help to eliminate the arguments of who sits where at dinner. They can be made by taking a piece of card stock, or heavy paper, about four inches square, folded in half. Print the name on both sides. If someone knows how to do calligraphy, that can add a nice touch. With all the interesting fonts available, it is easy to print out nice ones, and even add small graphics that fit the theme of the season right at your home computer.

Thanksgiving Craft: Cornucopia Centerpiece

One of the most recognizable symbols of Thanksgiving is a cornucopia, or horn of plenty. It represents a bountiful harvest. It can make a lovely centerpiece on any holiday table. There are many different ways you could make a cornucopia, using different materials, many of which you can find around your home.

By using a wicker basket shaped like a horn, it is quite easy to do a basic cornucopia. Most craft stores carry them, usually in early fall, if not year round. Once you've selected a lovely basket, you can either fill it with artificial or real fruit and vegetables. If you chose to use real produce, it's probably best to wait to fill the basket the day of your dinner so it doesn't spoil before dinner. Some fall leaves scattered around the cornucopia are a nice finishing touch.

If the children want to make their own cornucopia, they could make it out of paper. There are many patterns online for adorable paper cornucopias. Have the children glue the horn to a green piece of paper and arrange the fruit anyway they want, gluing them in place. They could even be covered in plastic and used as placemats, in addition to a centerpiece. Younger children might need help cutting the more complicated shapes. Remember to supervise children as is appropriate during the cutting and gluing stages of any craft.

Salt dough clay could be used to create a one of a kind cornucopia. With a little patience, forming the horn isn't very difficult. Start with a flattened piece of clay (use a rolling pin to flatten) and trace a circle using a plate. Cut out a wedge, so it can be curled around to make the horn. You can use a funnel to help hold the clay's shape while it dries. Some types of clay can be dried in the oven. Once dry, paint the cornucopia tan. Then make the various fruits and vegetables that you want to fill the cornucopia, following the same drying procedure for the clay you are using. If you want the pieces to last longer, spray them with a clear sealant once the paint has dried completely.

A horn could also be made from paper mache' by using a wire frame shaped like the horn. Some fruits and vegetables could be made over various size balloons. Again fresh or artificial produce could be used to fill the cornucopia as well.

With a little creativity, it does not take long to make a lovely cornucopia centerpiece for your table. Look around your house and you may find all you need already there. Saving some money is always something to be thankful for.

Thanksgiving Craft: Turkeys

Turkeys are popular at Thanksgiving time, both as the main dish and as decorations. There are many different ways to create nice turkey that may become a tradition for decorating for years to come.

The simplest turkey to make is by tracing around a hand, fingers spread. The thumb becomes the head, the other fingers the feathers and the palm is the body of the turkey. Color the turkey, add details like eyes and cut it out. They can be hung on the walls, scattered around the table or used to create a mobile.

Another fun project is a paper mache' turkey. Prepare the paper mache' paste. The two most popular methods are:

1. Non-cooked - 3 part white glue to 1 part water
2. Cooked - 1 part flour to 5 parts water, boil about 3 minutes and let cool

Blow up a large balloon and cover with newspaper strips that have been covered in the paste. Once dry, prime the body and paint brown. Cut out colorful feathers, feet, and a head and attach them to the turkey body.

If you don't want the mess of a paper mache' turkey, you can make one out of a paper bag. Stuff the bag with newspaper or plastic bags and shape the body. You can decorate it like the paper mache' turkey, with feathers, feet and a head.

Another turkey craft that could also be used for a game is to make 2-liter bottle turkeys. Put a little bit of sand in the bottom to keep them from falling over. Paint the bottles brown and then decorate them. After you have ten of them, you could let the kids go bowling for turkeys.

If you have a pine tree, as well as other trees that have beautiful fall foliage, in your back yard, you have the makings of a completely free turkey craft. Gather the items from your yard, arrange the leaves on a piece of paper in a fan shape, to look like the turkey's tail feathers. Glue the pinecone at the base for the body. Add google-eyes, or cut out construction paper eyes, feet and beak and you have an adorable turkey right from your own yard.

To create a turkey wreath, cut out a circle of cardboard with the center cut out, leaving about a two-inch ring. Cut strips of red, orange and yellow construction paper an inch wide by about 4 inches long. Glue the ends together to create rings, and arrange them on the wreath for the feathers. Cut out a head and feet and attach at the bottom of the wreath.

With some imagination and a few simple supplies, you can create not only nice decorations for your Thanksgiving celebration, but memories too.

Thanksgiving Craft: Wreath

There is nothing more special than to hang a Thanksgiving wreath on your front door. It is inviting as well as pleasing to the eye. For this Thanksgiving, why not involve your entire family in the craft of making a Thanksgiving wreath? Here are some suggestions.

Having ventured out to various stores, Thanksgiving items are already being displayed. One store had a beautiful wreath made of grapevine with fall-colored leaves attached. Although the leaves were plastic, it was a simple, yet elegant wreath. The more one looked at it, the more it seemed it could be spruced up by adding additional items such as berries, nuts, or perhaps a small pumpkin in the center.

Another wreath was quite impressive. This one used the basic grapevine, but the leaves were freshly picked and dried, then glued to the vine. In addition, there were feathers and beautiful red and green checked fabric which was used to tie berry branches to the vine as well.

One wreath that was quite unique was made out of a large 8-1/2x11 picture frame. The leaves covered the outer part of the frame with berries and nuts placed within the leaves. The center, however, was the focal point of the wreath. A picture of a family with small text indicating three things they were thankful for on this special day.

Thanksgiving, after all, is a day of giving thanks and signifying not only the beauty of the holiday but one's sentiments as well. A Thanksgiving wreath is not only a lovely way to express the holiday's meaning, but a gift to share with family, friends, and neighbors as well.

There are so many different wreaths one can creatively and ingeniously make to celebrate Thanksgiving this year. Your local craft store has all of the items you need to create a wreath unlike any other. Remember to take pictures for your scrapbook as well. If the Thanksgiving craft in wreath-making has been a tradition in your home for years, then every picture taken is a reminder of how much love and attention you have given in designing a special wreath for your family.

At a time when world events seem to invade our daily lives, this year it is especially important to show not only how thankful we are for all we have, but show our thanks for the freedom we enjoy every day. Perhaps a wreath with a teddy bear dressed in red, white and blue may be appropriate at this time.

Bonus: 5 Christmas / Holiday Crafts for Kids

Once the kids are home for winter break, it won't be long before they are "bored already". The weather is cold, wet and nasty. What do you do? Keep them busy making something with their hands, instead of you tearing your hair out. Here are some fun ideas that kids will love.

1. Christmas cards are always a great craft. Provide the kids supplies like construction paper, card stock, scissors, glue, glitter (the bottles of glitter/glue in one package are a very nice low-mess way to dress up a project), pencils, crayons or markers and old Christmas cards. Let the kids use their creative energy to make wonderful handmade cards that can be shared with family and friends. By cutting pictures out of old cards, even the younger children can make something really nice (and recycle at the same time).

2. Snow globes are a favorite. If you want to make your own, gather glass or clear plastic containers, like baby food jars or mustard or mayonnaise jars. Wash and dry them completely. Gather small plastic Christmas or winter decorations. Try to find some that float. Winter themed stickers or small foam cutouts are also nice. Decorate the outside of the jar with stickers or glue a few of the foam pieces on it. Attach a couple of the floating pieces (things like snowflakes or stars work well) to string and glue a figure to the inside with the string underneath the figure to anchor it (which will become the base). Fill the jar with water and some glitter. Carefully glue the lid in place using waterproof glue and let dry. Once dry, shake it, set it lid down and watch the glitter swirl around.

3. Candy crafts can be fun, as well as a tasty gift. A train can be a quick craft that can be used as a decoration or gift. Use a roll of hard candy (like Lifesavers) for the main part of the train. Use individually wrapped round candy, like peppermints for the wheels. For the front, glue a square candy, such as a caramel or a Starburst with a Hershey kiss on top. If you add a string, they can be used as a tree decoration. Experiment with other kinds of candy to create other things, like robots, animals or even angels.

4. Garland trees can be a great project for the kids, especially if there is limited room for a Christmas tree. Take a large piece of green poster board and cut a circle, with a slit out to make a cone. Tape it with clear packing tape. Take an artificial pine garland and wrap it around the cone, completely covering it to create a small tree. Fasten the ends in place so it doesn't unwrap. The tree can be decorated with lightweight paper ornaments that the children can also make.

5. A cozy fireplace can warm up any room but not everyone has one. Let the kids make one. Find a large cardboard box and cut an opening in the one side for the fireplace. Using sponges, paint bricks on the box, leaving space in between to be the mortar. Paint the inside black if you want. Paint flames on the inside

back section of the box. Use paper towel rolls to stack up in the fireplace as logs. Decorate the top to look like a mantel.

Get creative and think up your own Christmas crafts as well. Children will love the fun involved in creating these crafts and so will you. You can even give the crafts as a gift which will warm even the scroogiest of hearts.