



Making spirits bright

Get the kids together, and rock the paper and scissors for these holiday crafts.
By Chantal Lamers

EASY DIY

Amid the swirl of the holidays, it can be tempting to loosen the rules on your kids' screen time. But mother of three Merrilee Liddiard has another suggestion: Give them a glue stick instead. "In our fast-paced digital age, I try to encourage creative, nostalgic play," says Liddiard. A doll-maker and the editor of the children's arts and crafts blog Mer Mag (merrileeliddiardshop.com), she recently invited a band of her kids' friends to her Springville, Utah, home for a day of glittery fun. And while Liddiard's known for her modern, magical aesthetic—her Pinterest account can leave the average parent gaping in disbelief—she believes in giving children enough freedom to put their own spin on a project. "Kids always have the coolest ideas," she says. "Let them go for it."



MERRILEE LIDDIARD WITH THE HANDMADE DOLLS SHE CREATES

SPLATTER GIFT WRAP Kids who excel at making messes will embrace this easy project.

MATERIALS

- ▶ Drop cloth
- ▶ Thick, solid-color wrapping paper
- ▶ Firm toothbrush
- ▶ Acrylic craft paint
- ▶ Ribbon

INSTRUCTIONS

- Step 1** Spread drop cloth on floor. Cut a sheet of paper big enough to wrap around your present.
- Step 2** Dip tip of brush into paint; use index finger to flick paint from the bristles onto the paper.
- Step 3** Let paper dry, wrap gift, and add ribbon.

SANTA ORNAMENT

Inspired by Liddiard's Santa-adoring son Oliver, 9, this cheeky guy can adorn a tree and double as a gift-topper.

MATERIALS

- ▶ Papier-mâché bulb ornament
- ▶ Small paintbrushes
- ▶ Acrylic craft paint
- ▶ Wool felt
- ▶ Low-temp hot glue gun
- ▶ Card stock
- ▶ Butcher's twine

INSTRUCTIONS

- Step 1** Paint nose and eyes on ornament.
- Step 2** Cut felt into a triangle. On the widest side of the triangle, cut a small oval in the center, leaving some fabric above it. Fold down the edge of the felt just barely over the mouth to create a mustache; adhere with hot glue. Add felt eyebrows.
- Step 3** Create a template for a cone-shaped hat that children can trace onto card stock, then cut out hat. Tie twine to ornament's existing hanger, measuring to ensure it will extend a few inches beyond the tip of the hat.
- Step 4** Thread twine through top of hat, and adhere hat to head with hot glue.

"I LOVE THINGS THAT ARE SIMPLE TO MAKE BUT HAVE A LITTLE WOW FACTOR."

— MERRILEE LIDDIARD



MILK CARTON VILLAGE

"Glowing houses seem so cozy and comforting against blustery snowy days," says Liddiard, who came up with this milk carton version to make with her kids.

MATERIALS

- ▶ Varying sizes of milk and cream cartons
- ▶ X-Acto knife
- ▶ Acrylic craft paint, including white
- ▶ Paintbrushes
- ▶ Battery-powered tea lights
- ▶ Accessories like bottle brush trees, woodland creatures, and wooden figurines

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1 Open up top of milk carton, and cut about 2½ inches off the top along the back and sides of it. Leave the front side intact, and cut into a façade design of your choosing.

Step 2 Use a pencil or pen to trace doors, windows, and trim. Parents can use an X-Acto knife to cut.

Step 3 Apply a primer like white paint. Let dry; apply final layer of paint in the color of your choice.

Step 4 Insert tea light and place among trees and figurines.



MAKE IT A PARTY!

In addition to providing supplies for holiday crafts, add a cookie-making station, as well as crayons and doilies so kids can create as they please.

DIGITAL BONUS Watch Liddiard make paper leaf crowns and the other crafts on these pages at sunset.com/kidscrafts. ▾

