



## Crafty Green Gifts

The festive season is here and with it a time to buy gifts and decorations for the home. However there is a cost to the environment as we once again throw away used wrapping paper and decorations. Before heading off to the super market, we would like you to consider some more earth-friendly options.

There is nothing more personal than giving your family and friends a gift that has been made by you. They know that you have spent time and energy into making the present and that you have thought long and hard as to what they would like. The most fun however is the process of making the gift, where you begin with nothing and end up creating something you are proud of. This is also a wonderful way for you to spend time with your children as you can take them through some gift ideas that they can make for family and friends. You will be a great role model by showing your children that all sorts of goods can be reused to make terrific gifts.

### Easy to make decorations that are fun for the whole family:

#### Paper Chain Garland



Use your old wrapping paper cut-offs to make a paper chain garland that you can use as a decoration. Use shimmery double-sided paper (a 12-inch by 12-inch page will yield two dozen 6-inch by 1-inch strips). Cut out strips, then staple bands to make interlocking circles, alternating solid and patterned sides as you go.

#### Tie Wreath

Use those old ties and make something unique. You'll need a 14-inch wire wreath form from a crafts shop and 19 ties. Cut all ties but one into 15-inch lengths. Position the narrow end of first cut tie, front side up, on a section of the wreath. Wrap tie around form until pointed end is positioned as shown, hiding the rolled tie; secure with pins. Repeat, overlapping ties slightly. Flip wreath over; sew rolled-up ties to the backs of points. Pin on the uncut, bowed tie.



#### Wrapping Paper Napkin Rings



Make napkin rings crafted from leftover wrapping paper, rickrack, and double-sided tape. To do: snip strips of paper roughly 1 1/2 inches wide and five inches long (test one on your linens, as the size varies depending on your rolled-up napkin's thickness). Wrap the paper around the napkins, using double-sided tape to affix. Cut out 6-inch lengths of rickrack, and tie around the bands for a finished look. Set the table and wait for guests to open them.

## Star Ornament



Copy sheet music; then gather scissors, white glue, ribbon, cording from a trim or crafts store, and a corrugated cardboard box (break it down and peel apart the layers to reveal ridged sheets). Cut out stars from cardboard and music; tie bows of cording; layer stars and bows as shown; glue. Once dry, glue a ribbon loop to the top back of each ornament to hang.

## Woven Magazine coasters:



Reuse your old magazines and make durable coasters that will make lovely gifts. You can even colour code them. Package a set of 6 in a creative way while spending very little and proving that something made which is completely green, can be stylish.

Visit: <http://projectfidgetyfingers.blogspot.com/2010/06/start-weaving-magazine-coasters.html>

## Gift tags

To make the gift tag, use purchased luggage labels or make your own by cutting rectangles of card (approximately 5cm x 9cm). Trim two corners diagonally to form tag shapes. Punch a hole in the top of each tag and thread with string, twine, ribbon or raffia.



### Button Snowman

Instructions:

1. To make a snowman, glue one large and one small button onto a tag.
2. Cut a hat from sparkly card and stick at an angle above the small button.



### Button and Music

Instructions

1. Cut a strip of brown card with pinking shears and glue into position on your tag.
2. Add a strip of printed paper – we used old sheet music – and finish with a heart-shaped wooden button.



### Material Heart

Instructions:

- Cut a heart from fabric and glue in place, adding a tiny ribbon bow. To prevent fabric fraying, draw your design in reverse on the wrong side of Bondaweb and iron it onto the reverse of the fabric. Cut out and fix to card.

## Small, but smart:

These are some clever ways to use your left over scraps of material and other materials. Visit: [www.the36thavenue.com](http://www.the36thavenue.com) to learn how to make them.

- Fabric Scrap keyrings
- Reversible Cup Sleeves
- Bottle Top Flower magnets



Visit these inspirational websites for more craft ideas that will show you how to use things you would usually throw away. And you can save money in the process!

[www.goodhousekeeping.com](http://www.goodhousekeeping.com)  
[www.marthastewart.com](http://www.marthastewart.com)  
[www.craftynest.com](http://www.craftynest.com)  
[www.indestructibles.com](http://www.indestructibles.com)  
[www.allaboutyou.com](http://www.allaboutyou.com)  
[www.the36thavenue.com](http://www.the36thavenue.com)

Please contact us if you wish to share your green living story. E-mail us at [Better.Together@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:Better.Together@westerncape.gov.za)