

We've got your nice and naughty list covered with cool and quirky DIY gifts you won't find in any catalog. Plus, you can make them on the cheap. Ka-ching!

Nifty Gifting

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Pillow Talk

The Concept: Commands that pet-loving loungers will love to obey.

The Goods: Pillow covers and inserts (\$12-\$16, potterybarn.com), about a yard of gold craft fabric, Fray Check adhesive, and craft glue.

Cost and Time: \$35 and about an hour per pillow.

How To Do It: Cut hand-drawn or computer-generated letters/artwork and trace them on pillow covers turned inside out. Cut them out with scissors. Use Fray Check around the inside edges (don't worry—it dries clear). Apply glue around the cutouts and cover them with a large piece of gold fabric. Let dry overnight, then turn cover right side out and replace the insert. Good boy!

Infuse the Holidays with Spirits

The Concept: Leave a couple of shots of chili-infused vodka out for Santa and see where the presents—and reindeer—end up.

The Goods: A bottle of decent vodka (\$25), a bundle of hot chili peppers (\$3, Whole Foods) and a needle with embroidery floss.

Cost and Time: About \$30 and 15 minutes (longer if you string 'n' sip).

How To Do It: String the chilies together with the needle and floss, then visit wikihow.com/Infuse-Vodka-with-Flavor for directions. Cheers!



A Lesson in Gift-Giving

The Concept: Make a little look like a lot by thinking outside the box.

The Goods: Use your imagination here. We opted for eight bars of fancy soap (\$6 each, loccitane.com), four boxes of antioxidant-packed green tea (\$3 apiece). Also try tins of flavored coffee or even tissue boxes (for a very grateful teacher).

Cost and Time: \$9 to \$48 and minutes.

How To Do It: Stack items to look like a gift box. Tie together with colorful ribbon, and add panache with bows.

Kid-At-Heart Toy Bling

The Concept: Deconstructed, retro-chic jewelry for adults who still like the scent of Play-Doh and think Scooby-Doo rocks.

The Goods: A nice multistrand necklace (\$20, urbanoutfitters.com); cuff links and/or a tie clasp from a thrift store or your dresser drawer; thin Lego blocks; classic game tokens (think Clue, Monopoly or Battleship); and strong glue.

Cost and Time: \$5 to \$25 and a few minutes.

How To Do It: Remove existing baubles from necklace and use the clasps to reattach game tokens. Or glue Lego pieces onto tie clasps and cuff links. Fashion has never been this much fun.



Stress-Bustin' Kits for Power Couples

The Concept: Nothing says Christmas quite like homemade stockings stuffed with his and hers stress-relief toys; think Valium without all the prescription hassle.

The Goods: Half a yard of fleece for each stocking, pinking shears and goodies galore. Go wherever you want on this one. For him, we went superhero: a Captain America vintage T-shirt (\$24, urbanoutfitters.com), energy bars, a rubber band squeeze ball from an office-supply store, and Army men from a dollar store. For her, we opted for a tub of body scrub, a writing journal with pen, and cozy slippers (all target.com).

Cost and Time: \$40 to \$45 for his, \$25 for hers; one hour each.

How To Do It: Cut out stocking pieces to desired size with pinking shears and hand-stitch them together with a strip of fleece. Stuff to capacity.



Pulp-Fiction Picture Frames

The Concept: Turn friends into frame-ous characters.

The Goods: Vintage paperbacks from Goodwill, used bookstores or your attic, and photos (suitable for Facebook postings, please).

Cost and Time: A few bucks and a few minutes per frame.

How To Do It: Find a book—think hard-boiled, Raymond Chandler-ish crime noir fiction, for instance—that totally reflects the giftee. The cheekier, the better. Cut a window in the cover, being sure to leave the title intact. Tape or glue a photo behind it and—voilà!

freshface



I make my own baby gifts by dyeing Onesies, then using fabric paint and alphabet stencils to make custom monograms. Mixing different dyes creates amazing colors, and the monogram is a chic touch. You can apply the same method to just about anything: T-shirts, hats, totes. My local craft store even stocks solid white dog T-shirts awaiting a made-by-me makeover.

—Lindsey Ellis Beatty, Birmingham, Alabama

FRESH FAVORITES



Managing Meal Expectations

The Concept: Fashionable kitchen wear for novice, cooking-impaired chefs (fire extinguisher is optional).

The Goods: Iron-on letters (\$3.50) and a plain red apron (\$9) from a craft store.

Cost and Time: \$12.50 and 30 minutes.

How To Do It: Apply letters, present the gift—then check his or her smoke detector batteries.

Shakers for Sk8er Boys and Grlz

The Concept: Even couples who don't know Tony Hawk from Shaun White will have fun passing the salt and pepper with these wheely cool shakers.

The Goods: Two Tech Deck Fingerboards (\$6 a pair, toysrus.com), salt and pepper shakers from a dollar store, adhesive letters from a craft store and glue.

Cost and Time: \$10 and 30 minutes tops.

How To Do It: Apply letters to shakers and glue shakers to fingerboards. Sick, dude!



A Chore No More

The Concept: Funkified, glammed-up cleaning accessories make desperate housewives a little less, well, desperate.

The Goods: Plastic cleaning tote, sunglasses (\$10), kitchen wipes (\$3 each), fancy feather duster (\$8), sponges (\$1 each); flip-flops (\$5) and flask (\$3, target.com).

Cost and Time: \$40 and minutes.

How To Do It: Pack the caddy and let hilarity ensue.



Eco-Friendly Edible Wreath

The Concept: Sustainable holiday decor for green-minded, diet-forsaken sweet tooths.

The Goods: Metal wreath frame from a craft store; two bags of Tootsie rolls; one bag of Lindt Lindor Truffles; small scissors from a dollar store; white yarn; ribbon.

Cost and Time: \$15 to \$20 and about an hour (longer for candy hounds who may need a second candy run).

How To Do It: Use yarn to tie Tootsie Rolls to the frame until it's full. Mix in clusters of truffle "ornaments." Make a ribbon bow and attach to top of wreath, then tie scissors to it with ribbon. Use scissors to secure a festive, individual serving. Chew. Swallow. Repeat as needed. 🌟

Snip!

Snip!

