Homemade GIFTS + CRAFTS AS EASY AS PRINTING PAPER!
Homemade Gifts and Crafts – As Easy As Printing Paper!

Paper is a great medium for creative expression, especially if you find yourself struggling when it comes to the arts involving yarn or thread, or making a mess out of your decorated baked goods. You’ll be amazed at the wonderful types of gifts that you can create with some laser toner, paper, and a little bit of time and forethought. You’ll save money, simplify gift-giving, and your creative genius will become the envy of friends and family members.

This guide provided for you by Ink Technologies. For more gift ideas, and all sorts of information about printers and printing, visit our Ink Splash blog.

**Gifts for Relatives: Sharing Love Far and Wide**

Do you have an extended family you’d love to give gifts to without breaking the bank? Show how much you care by whipping up a batch of print-at-home Christmas calendars!

**Print-at-Home Christmas Calendars**

With advanced ink technologies, you no longer have to worry about sending your calendars out for printing, incurring shipping fees, delays, and the risk that the end product will look like it came out of a cranky fax machine before ending up as bedding in Santa’s reindeer pen. The easiest way to make a family calendar is to collect thirteen great images from the past year – one for the cover, and another for each of the 12 months. If you want to get fancy, and you have a lot of smiling faces that you want to squeeze into 365 days, you can arrange several photos on each new page.

Farming the job out to family member with photo editing skills and specialized software can make the project go a lot smoother, but you can easily find free templates on the internet that will work with the programs already on your computer. Remember that getting everyone to submit their images on time can be harder than wrestling a turkey away from the family dog, so send out your requests as early as possible if you don’t want to explain why your Christmas gifts are coming by way of the Easter bunny.

**Gifts for Her: Show Her Your Thoughtful Side**

You might hear women say, “I don’t care how much he spends, I just want him to put some thought into what he gets for me!” This might be true for the woman you’re wooing this holiday season, but she certainly won’t appreciate how long you spent wracking your brain for gift ideas if the end result is a gas station gift card.

**Homemade Photo Book**

With a bit of time, some printer ink, and a dash of ingenuity, you can give your loved one a gift they will treasure for years to come. You’d be amazed at how many brownie points you’ll gain from taking an
hour or two to pick your favorite photos from the previous year (or your entire relationship, if you’re feeling creative), print them out, and slide them into the pages of a cute photo album, which you can buy at just about any department, drug, or big-box store. This gift not only demonstrates how much she means to you, but also shows that you’re willing to spend your time helping her take care of something she’s probably been meaning to get around to for ages.

Framed Memory Collage

Bring back memories of your days spent sticking your fingers together in kindergarten, and create a gift that will make her tear up in surprise! Gather some memorabilia from recent trips, like a printed-off flight itinerary and local brochures, assemble them on a piece of poster board, frame, and create a piece of art that will make her reminisce about all the wonderful times you’ve had together.

Gifts for Him: A Special Treat for a Super Guy

Men are just as excited to get personalized, thoughtful gifts as their female counterparts. Paper gifts are great if you’ve decided to cut back on how much you spend for each other and focus on the kids, for a first-year Christmas (to go along with the “paper anniversary” theme), or for hiding a special treat such as big-game tickets or money to start a hobby.

Print-at-Home Paper Wallet

Now he can showcase photos of his kids without having to dig around for them. Alternately, print an attractive design or photo of a favorite family getaway spot before following the instructions on Instructables to create a fun homemade money-storage device.

Gifts for Kids: Get Crafty with the Meaning of Christmas

You might be hard pressed to find children willing to forego the whiz and bang of traditional electronic presents and brand-name toys in favor of something simpler and more meaningful. However, if you do manage to get your brood on-board, the positive effects of handmade gifts will be powerful and long-lasting.

Homemade Paper Craft Kit

Assemble all the materials (including pre-printed papers and pages you’ve printed at home), tools, and instructions for fun activities such as origami and other art projects. Include some typical crafty accessories such as popsicle sticks and googly eyes; package the bundle into a decorated cardboard box with compartments for each special item.

“...THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF HANDMADE GIFTS WILL BE POWERFUL AND LONG-LASTING”
watch out for the glitter – once you commit to the sparkly stuff, you can never go back to having a glitz-free living space!

**Paper “Blocks”**

Wooden blocks are great, but why not create paper blocks for a fraction of the cost using business cards or home-printed cardstock? Cardcubes make for a fun project, and a collection of them can easily make for an attractive and entertaining gift. Be sure to include instructions, and watch as your kids become their very own toy factory.

**Gifts for Parents: Love in Paper Form**

Are funds tight this year, or do your kids just want to give something from the heart? Let them get creative with art supplies while making coupons that you can redeem at your leisure. Printed calendars and photo books can also make great gifts for the kids, especially for adult children.

**Coupon books**

Let kids print off colorful coupons for cleaning, yard work, or “breakfast in bed” services, and then either decorate or laminate this gift that keeps on giving. Encourage them to use their imaginations – coupons labeled “eat all my green gummy bears” or “take a trip around the house with your eyes closed” can double as a game the whole family can enjoy.

Coupon books aren’t just for parents! Kids often appreciate your time more than any gift or gadget. Coupons for special trips or events spent together can make the joy of Christmas last for months to come.

**Gifts for Acquaintances: Save Money, Spread Joy**

Finding gifts for office mates, delivery people, teachers, and other people can become quite a challenge. By using your home printer, you can simplify the process of finding gifts this year, and still keep each present unique and thoughtful.

**Personalized Christmas Cards**

Personalized, printed cards are a good choice for gift-giving to people you care about, but don’t know particularly well. For the cost of a little laser toner, you can brighten the day of everyone on your list. Just don’t get too into the spirit of crafting the perfect sentiment – a couple of fun designs will be plenty to go around.

**DIY Gift Cards**

Have a product or service you’re willing to give away? Print off gift cards to turn in for baked goods, child care, or technical assistance. Just make sure you’re capable of going through with the offers when the cards are redeemed!

**Crafts for Kids: Harnessing the Christmas Spirit**

Construction paper is fun but if you want to really shake things up, use home-printed designs to add new life to traditional kid’s holiday craft-making. Your imagination is
the only limit to the types of printed papers you can make, and your kids will love seeing how images they create on the computer can transform into real-world art.

**Printed Christmas Chains**

Reinvigorate an old theme by printing out your own paper strips to form a personalized Christmas Chain! Images can be seasonal, or showcase favorite photos from the previous year. Consider testing out specialty printing papers – such as photo or heavier weight – to give your child's crafts some extra flair. Making the chain is a simple matter of cutting the strips to size, gluing the ends together to form a circle, and then slipping the arms of the next circle through the first one. Repeat until the whole house is filled with colorful paper loops. You can even tear one paper-link off each day for fun a New Years countdown!

**Crafts for Adults: Make It a Heartfelt Season**

Paper-based crafts for the holiday season tend to be less time consuming than other types (such as knitting, crocheting, blacksmithing, etc.) Many can be started and stopped at will, without having to detangle an amorphous mass of raw material, and the results will still be stunning (even for crafting newbies)!

**Paper Ornaments**

You might be surprised at how gorgeous and simple hand-made paper ornaments can be with a little creativity. Buy pre-printed paper, repurpose last year’s Christmas cards, or use a bit of your own printer ink to customize the look and feel of your projects. Whether your preference is for cutting and gluing or if folding and shaping is more your taste, you can find the perfect ornament project to fit your style.

**A Season of Giving**

Christmas is all about love and gratitude – with a little bit of surprise and wonder tossed in for good measure. Printed paper crafts and gifts are a perfect way to express how much you care, and are just creative enough to elicit surprised and appreciative grins from all those you hold dear. When the holidays are over and the debris piles up, please consider recycling.

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**GIVE YOUR GIFT A PERSONAL TOUCH BY MAKING IT AT HOME AND ON A BUDGET!**

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