

# wraps

## ideas for holiday wow!

for the artist's touch.

For perfect, pretty and easy assembly, buy an ensemble of pre-matched paper, card and bow. Some ensembles include everything needed to wrap a gift in one retail package — tape, scissors and all.

If that's a little too structured for your tastes, mix and match yourself. Combine bright solid-color paper with metallic ribbons for a look that practically sings "Jingle Bells."

Choose classic paper of deep forest green with embossed white holly or country-theme paper displaying heart and quilt patterns or a parade of geese, cats and cows. Romance the stuffing out of her stockings with lacy poinsettia paper and a decidedly Victorian flair.

Win over the youthful set — whether chronologically young or just young at heart — with dancing snowmen, candy-cane munching teddy bears and even sled-riding dinosaurs! Kids with an artistic flair can buy color-your-own wrapping paper.

If none of these paper options suits your fancy, substitute leftover fabric, wallpaper, aluminum foil, scarves, kitchen towels — even pages from newspapers and magazines.

Whatever your choice, the paper primes the canvas of the gift for the rest of the decor. It's just the beginning. Next down Santa Claus Lane come bows, ribbons, stickers, tags and whatever personal touches will spread seasonal cheer.

SOMETIMES THE personality of the gift or the person to whom you're giving the gift just screams out a theme.

If your giftee is a jogger, wrap up some new running shorts in fliers from the most recent half-marathon in town. Tie up the package with shoelaces, add a miniature ornament and make a subscription gift coupon to a sports magazine the gift tag.

For your music fan: Wrap the gift with Christmas carol sheet music, tie on a brassy trumpet ornament with bright red yarn and use tickets to the symphony as your gift tag.

For your bibliophile: The book review section of the daily newspaper is the wrapper, a bookmark is your tag. Dress up the gift with shiny Mylar curling ribbon.

Little extras and a little extra thought work elfin magic. Instead of standard ribbon, decorate with pieces of silvery garland, lace mini-ornaments, figurines, stickers, cutouts

from old Christmas cards or silk flowers.

You'll be so pleased with your gift that the usual To: From: tie-on tag just won't cut the fancy mustard in the crystal gift jar. Buy inch-tall alphabet stickers in shiny gold to spell out MOM, or smaller letters for a longer message.

Humor gift recipients with a sheep on a tag saying "Just for Ewe" or a chicken that warns "No Peeping Till Christmas."

Write on tags with sleek silver or glittery gold pens and the names will shine out as brightly as Rudolph's nose.

Stick it to cards or gifts — stickers are easier than tape for fumbly fingers — with sentimental wishes "God Bless Us Everyone" or a jolly Santa descending the chimney. "Hope Your Holidays Soot You," says ol' Saint Nick.

What happens if you don't have the luxury of giving a present that fits into a nice, even box? What if your gift is a bulky, bumpy bottle or jar?

For bottle beautiful, cut a circular piece of fabric — not paper — large enough to gather around the throat of the bottle. Stand the bottle in the center of the circle, gather material around the neck of the bottle, tie with a bow. The fabric folds as gracefully as an angel's wings, where paper would crease into hard lines.

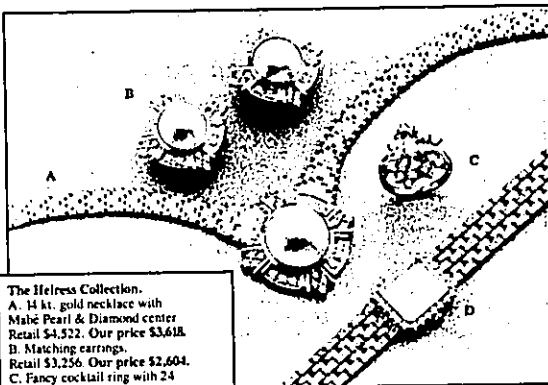
FOR CHIC CYLINDERS, such as a can of tennis balls, trace both ends of the gift on wrapping paper. Cut out circles and glue one to each end of the gift. Cut a piece of paper the length and girth of the gift. Center cylinder on edge of paper, roll it up in paper and tape.

For a ruffy Christmas jar, cut a circle of fabric five inches wider than the diameter of the lid. Secure the fabric over the lid with coordinating yarn or ribbon. For a puffy lid, place some polyester fill on the lid before you cover it with material.

Looking for a simpler solution? Bag it in bright, cheerily designed handle or drawstring bags — just drop the gift inside and add a flourish with colorful tissue and a splash of confetti. Leave the bag open, or seal it with a sticker — no peeping until Christmas, you know.

If you're a home baker, there are plenty of helpers around to make sure your goodies are packaged to perfect

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