Allen County 4-H

Gift Wrapping

GIFT WRAPPING

Have you ever met someone who did not like to receive presents? It is safe to say that everyone likes to receive presents.

If you think back to the best gift anyone ever gave you, what was it about that gift you liked? Was it because the gift cost a lot of money, or was it something that you had been wanting for a long time? Did you like it because of the person who gave it to you?

Do you remember the way it was wrapped?

When we give a gift, we want that gift to be just right. Whether it is for your mom at Mother's Day or your best friend's birthday, we try to pick something that they will like. Those special feelings can be put into the way you wrap the gift, too. The care we take and the ideas we use add a special message to the gift, no matter what it is.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN: (Be Patient!! You will not learn all of these things in one year.)

⇨ To prepare gifts for packaging

⇨ To select proper box for the shape and type of gift

⇨ To learn how to place gift in the box for a neat appearance

⇨ To learn the proper way of folding tissue for inner lining

⇨ To select the proper paper for the occasion, age, and personality of the receiver

⇨ To select the proper paper according to size and shape of the package

⇨ To learn wrapping procedures for rectangular, square, and cylindrical packages of various sizes

⇨ To learn how to make a neat, tightly wrapped package

⇨ To select the type of ribbon or trim which is suitable for your package

⇨ To learn how to make your own basic bows

⇨ To learn the importance of the overall appearance of a package

⇨ To discover ideas that you may use in place of bows and ribbons

⇨ To create your own wrapping paper and gift bags

⇨ To use your imagination in wrapping oversized items

and most importantly,

⇨ To learn that **PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!**

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GETTING STARTED

Before you begin, you will probably want to think about the answers to the following questions:

✓ *Why am I giving this gift?*

   Birthday? Christmas? Wedding? Graduation?

✓ *To whom am I giving this gift?*

   A friend? A baby? A graduate?

✓ *What is the age of this person?*

✓ *How can I make the gift wrap something special to this person?*

   What is this person's favorite color?
   Do they have a hobby or interest?
   Could I design a package which would catch this person's imagination? Clowns? Teddy Bears? A Box of Candy?

✓ *Could I find a wrapping material or trim which could also be useful to this person?*

   A rattle for a baby shower? A scarf for a woman? A tie for a man?

✓ *How much do I want to spend?*

   You will want to keep in mind that the wrapping materials should not cost more than the gift!

✓ *What materials do I already have that I can use?*

BEGIN WITH THE BASICS:

You will want to begin your gift wrapping project with a well supplied box of items that you will need. It is important to have all your wrapping items in one convenient place, so that when you find something that you think might work on a package someday, you will know right where to put it! By keeping these things, you will always be ready to wrap your packages, no matter what the occasion!

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS OF ITEMS YOU MIGHT WANT TO START COLLECTING:

PAPER: NEWSPAPERS, SHELF PAPER, CONTACT PAPER, CONSTUCTION PAPER, TISSUE PAPER, PLAIN GIFT WRAP, PLASTIC BAGS, ETC. (Did you know there were so many types of paper?)
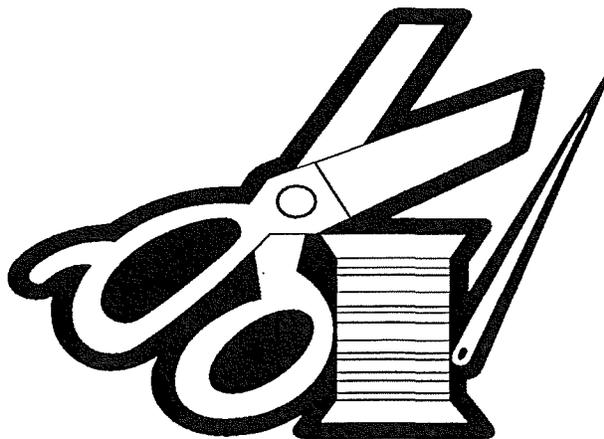
CONTAINERS: TUBES, CARTONS, SACKS, CANS, BOXES, ETC. WHEN YOU BUY GIFTS (OR EVEN SOMETHING FOR YOURSELF), ASK IF THE STORE PROVIDES BOXES FREE OF CHARGE. YOU WILL WANT CONTAINERS THAT ARE STRONG AND CLEAN. IF YOU PUT THE CONTAINERS INSIDE OF ONE ANOTHER, YOU WON'T NEED AS MUCH STORAGE SPACE.

Do you know what the word ' to NEST means when it is used in the following sentence?

"To conserve space, I NESTED the boxes."

As you might have known, it means to put the smaller boxes inside of the larger ones. This is always a good idea when storing boxes for gift wrapping!

TOOLS: SCISSORS, GLUE, DOUBLE-STICK TAPE, TRANSPARENT TAPE, LABELS, PINKING SHEARS, TAPE FOR MAILING PACKAGES, ETC.

DECORATIVE ITEMS: RIBBON, FABRIC SCRAPS, LACE, PIPE CLEANERS, OLD GREETING CARDS, YARN, PIPING, SILK FLOWERS, ETC.

Store your box of supplies in the same location after each use and aviod borrowing tools and supplies from it. In that way, you won't have to waste time looking for 'lost' items!!

Preparing the Gift

Wrapping a gift begins with preparing the gift for wrapping. Remove the price tag. If the item is wrinkled, press it. If the gift needs dusting, polishing, decorating, or trimming, do whatever is required. Some items look better wrapped in the box in which it was purchased, while others do not (especially if the box is "shop-worn"). Use your judgement in making that decision.

Box Selection

Putting the gift in a box enables the giver to wrap the box with greater ease. Most articles need to be put in a box to maintain the gift's shape, or because the article has an unusual shape.

In selecting a box, you should follow these guidelines:

☐ Select a clean box, in good condition.

☐ The box should be sturdy with straight corners.

☐ The gift should fit the box, leaving only a small amount of space between the box and gift.

☐ The box should be well-shaped. Odd shaped boxes are difficult to wrap. Common box shapes are rectangular, square, and cylindrical.

A Neat Appearance Inside the Box

After the box has been selected, white or pastel tissue paper should be placed in the box before the gift. The paper should cover the bottom of the box and completely cover the top of the gift.

☐ Items such as clothing should have one or two pieces of tissue paper, folded in the center and placed in the box before the article is put in.
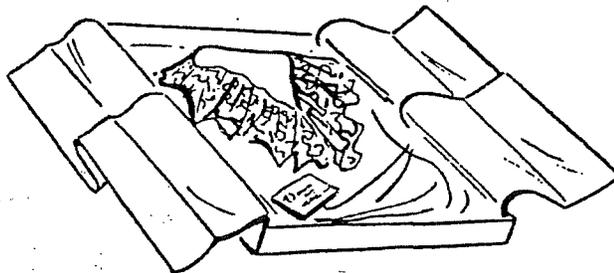
☐ With toys or household articles, small pieces of tissue should be crumpled and placed at proper points so that the item won't break or rattle.

☐ Often a combination of both procedures can be used to make your package neat on the inside.

☐ A lace paper doily makes an attractive lining for a small gift such as jewelry or a scarf. Fold the corners over the top and fasten with a seal in the center.

Selection of Wrapping Paper

When you select the gift wrapping paper, you need to ask yourself these questions:

☆ What paper is available?

☆ Is there enough paper to wrap the gift?

☆ Does the paper suit the occasion?

☆ Does the paper take into account the age and personality of the receiver?

☆ Is the design in proportion with the size of the box?

Measuring the Paper

Measuring paper accurately saves time and money. Money, because you use paper efficiently and waste less. Time, because it is easier to work with paper if it is the right size. The sides and ends of wrapping paper form perfect right angles, so use them in cutting paper to size. The truer the angles, the simpler it is to line up the paper and box.

To find the appropriate length of the paper that you will need to fit the package, put one side of the box at the edge of the paper, flop the box over to the next side, then to the third side, and finally to the last side. Make sure you have allowed for all four sides. Add an additional 1 inch for folding under a hem and overlapping.
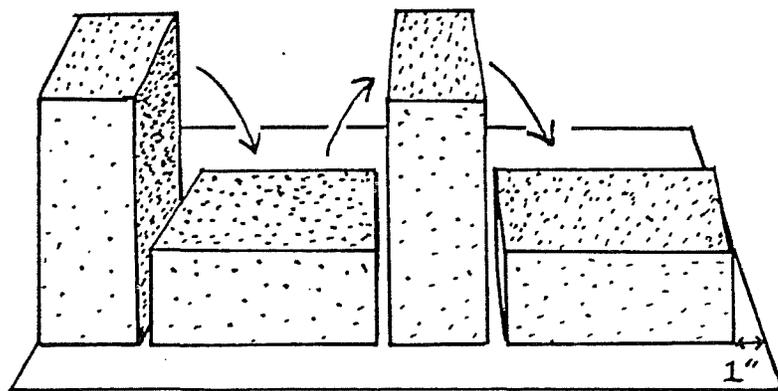
Flop the box on all 4 sides, add 1 inch, and you have the width for the wrapping paper.

To find the appropriate width of the paper that you will need, put the center of one end at the edge of the paper, flop the box over to the side, and finally to the center of the other end. Again, add an additional 1 inch for folding under a hem and overlapping.

You can also use a piece of string to measure the length and width. Knot one end of the string and, to determine the width, hold the string at one side of the box, and wrap it around the box. Grasp it where the string meets the knot. Stretch the string across the paper and add 1 inch for overlapping. To determine the length of paper you need, stretch the string down one side of the box, across the length of the box, and up the other side of the box.

Taping Techniques

Nothing spoils the effect of a beautiful package more than a messy job of taping. You need tape to get crisp lines and to hold the paper taut. Bulges and wrinkles never enhance.

Transparent tape that is adhesive on both sides - called double-stick tape - allows you to keep this homely tool hidden to the eye. It helps produce a neater, prettier package and thus is the first choice. The second choice is transparent tape, preferably non-reflecting, which is adhesive on one side only.

1. Begin by taping the center back seam. Turn under a 1/2 inch hem at the top of the paper so that no raw edges show. Tape the lower edge to the box, or just hold it firmly in place.

2. Place double-stick tape on the inside of the top 1/2 inch hem.

3. Press the top paper into place.

If you are using single-sided transparent tape, press it on the inside of the top hem and then double the tape, adhesive side out. Now press the top paper into place. The tape will not show. Use it the same way when you tape the final flap of the package ends.
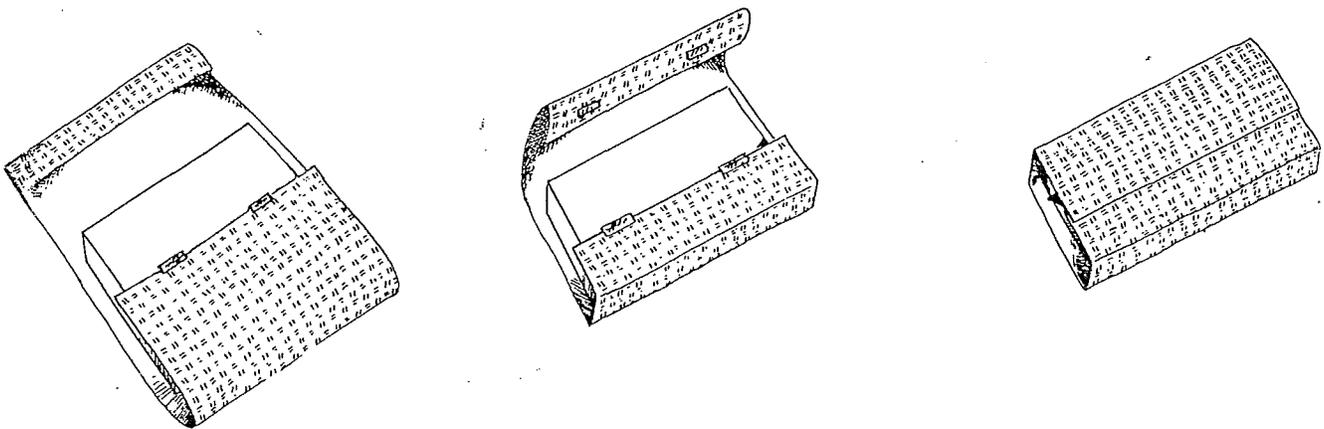
THE PROFESSIONAL WAY
TO WRAP A BOX
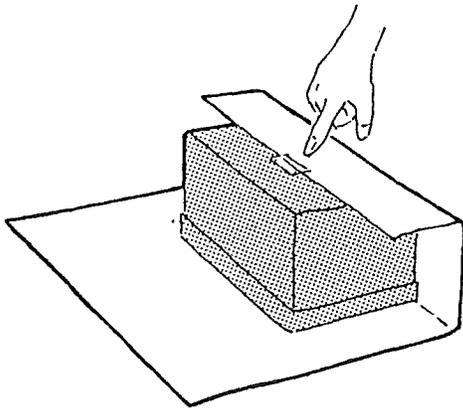
1. Place the box, top down, on a length of wrapping paper. (Cut just enough paper to cover all four sides of the box.) Center the box on the paper. Bring one side over and tape it to the box.
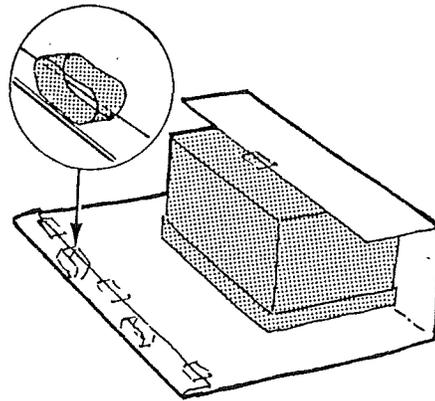
2. Fold the remaining side over about 1 to 2 inches. Place a few pieces of double-stick tape on the folded edge or form circles of regular tape, sticky side out, and place these along the folded edge.
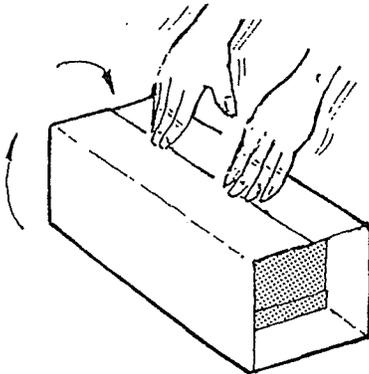
3. Wrap the paper around the box securely, pressing down on the taped edge.
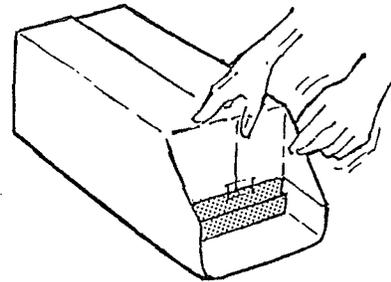
4. To wrap the ends, start by folding the top down as shown. Tape the edge in place. Now miter the sides, creasing the corner edges.
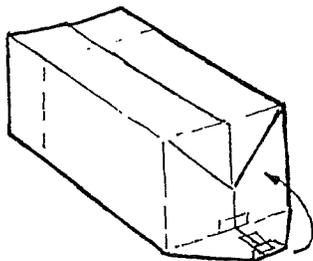
5. Fold the sides toward the center, creasing the paper along the edges of the box as you do so. Tape these sides together at the bottom. Fold the bottom flap over about 1 inch. Place a piece of double stick tape on the folded edge or use a circle of regular tape.
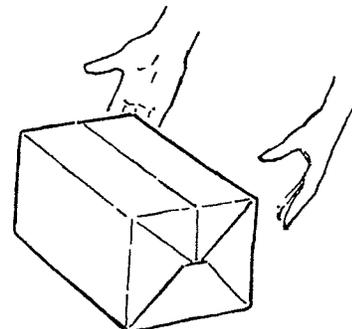
6. Bring the bottom flap up, pressing the taped edge down. Repeat this procedure for the opposite end of the box.

Wrapping a Cylinder

If you prefer *smooth* ends:

1. Trace the ends of the cylinder and cut out two circles of the wrapping paper.

2. Wrap the cylinder with wrapping paper, allowing an overlap on both ends.

3. Fold the overlap at the ends (cutting is sometimes necessary) and paste or tape down. Be careful not to get paste on the gift!

4. Paste or tape circles over folds. A decorative seal may be used in place of the circles.
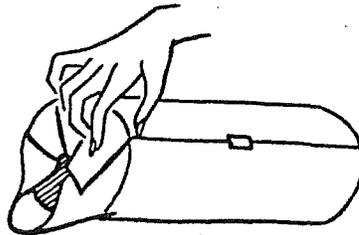
If you prefer fringed ends:

1. Wrap the gift in wrapping paper allowing enough for the ends to be gathered and tied. Generally, this is 1 1/2 times the diameter of the cylinder. Tape securely in middle of the paper.

2. Gather paper at ends and tie securely.

3. Cut ends in strips to make fringe.
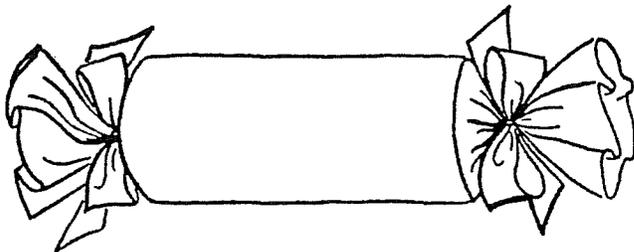
Selecting the Ribbon for the Package

Choose the color that harmonizes or contrasts with the paper, and a width that is in proportion to the size of the box. The wider ribbons are used on large boxes; narrow ribbons are usually used on small packages. In place of one strip of wide ribbon you may substitute two or three rows of narrow ribbon across the end. Sometimes two or three rows of narrow ribbon are more pleasing than one wide band.

Do not use ribbon so wide that it will cover most of the design on the paper. If the paper has a distinct morif which has been properly centered on the package, use the ribbon across the ends or corners so that it does not cover the pattern on the paper.

Do not combine too many kinds of ribbon or too many colors or widths on one package or it will appear cluttered. Be especially careful to select appropriate colors and widths of ribbon if you are using a printed paper. If in doubt, always keep the effect simple.

Tying the Ribbon on the Package

There are many ways to put ribbon attractively on a package. Here is one method that is popular with the authors of this book:

* Lay one end of ribbon on top of the box in the center. Hold it with one thumb, leaving 4 or 5 inches of the end free.

* With the other hand, wrap the ribbon completely around the box, coming back to the center where you started.

* Cross the ribbon and turn at a right angle.

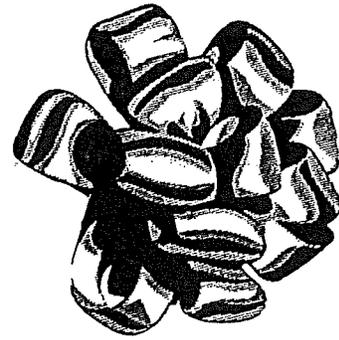* Now wrap the ribbon completely around the box so that the top of your box looks like this:

* Bring the ribbon to the center and tie in a hard knot. Cut the ribbon, leaving two ends 4 to 6 inches long for attaching the bow.

NOTE: The bow should always be made separately and then attached to the package.

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BOWS

Glamour Bow

2 3/4 yards of 2-inch ribbon are needed to make the bow shown here.

* ✳ 3 1/2 inches from one end, pinch gathers in ribbon and hold between thumb and fingers.

* ✳ Seven inches from this point, pinch gathers in the ribbon again and bring up to the first gathers to form a loop 3 1/2 inches long, as shown in A.

* ✳ Continue making loops in the same way, as shown in B, until you have twelve loops and an extra end about 3 1/2 inches long. If ribbon has right and wrong side, keep right side out by turning ribbon under thumb and fingers as loops are made.

* ✳ Wind wire or thread around gathers to hold them in place.

A

B
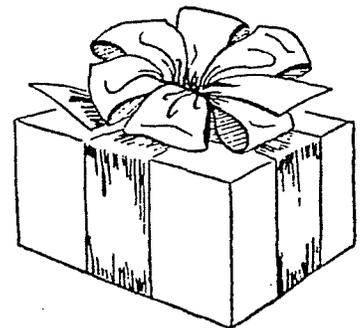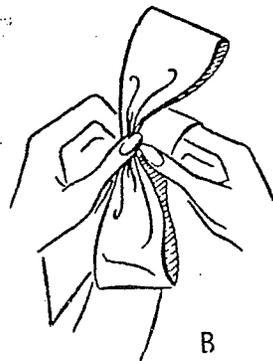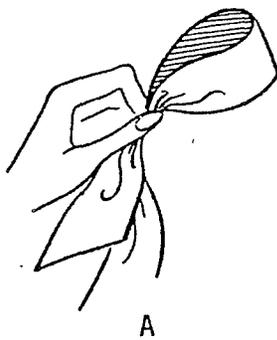
Variation - Carriage Bow

* Use 3-inch ribbon and make a glamour bow which has only six loops.

* Tie in center with narrow ribbon and arrange loops to form a circle.

* Make a second glamour bow with only four loops, using same or contrasting ribbon. Lay it on top of the first bow.
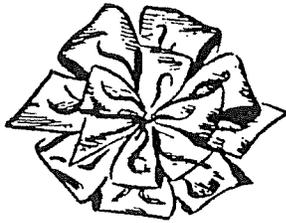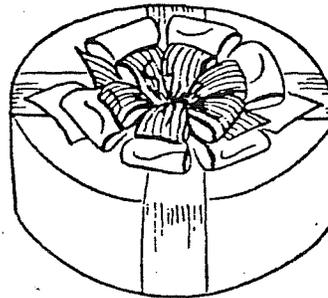
* Tie both bows together and attach to package.

FIG. 1

FIG. 2

Flat Bow

* Cut a piece of paper about the length you desire the bow to be.

* Staple the end of the ribbon to the end of the paper.

* Loop the ribbon and staple again close to the first staple. Repeat this step to the end of the paper. The size of the loop can be varied to create different effects.
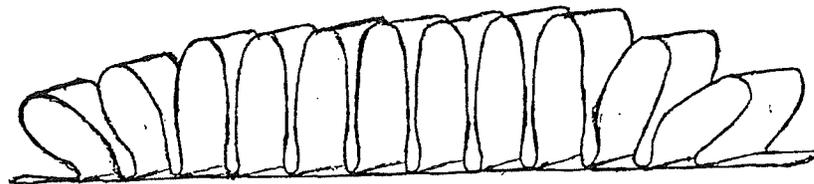
Another variation is to loop the ribbon back and forth, decreasing the size of the loop and using as many loops as desired. End by making one small circle loop in the center.

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Fuzzy Pom-Poms

Use any yarn that has plushy ends, such as knitting yarn and macrame cord. Make multicolored fuzzy pom-poms by combining odds and ends, thus using up your old scraps at the same time.
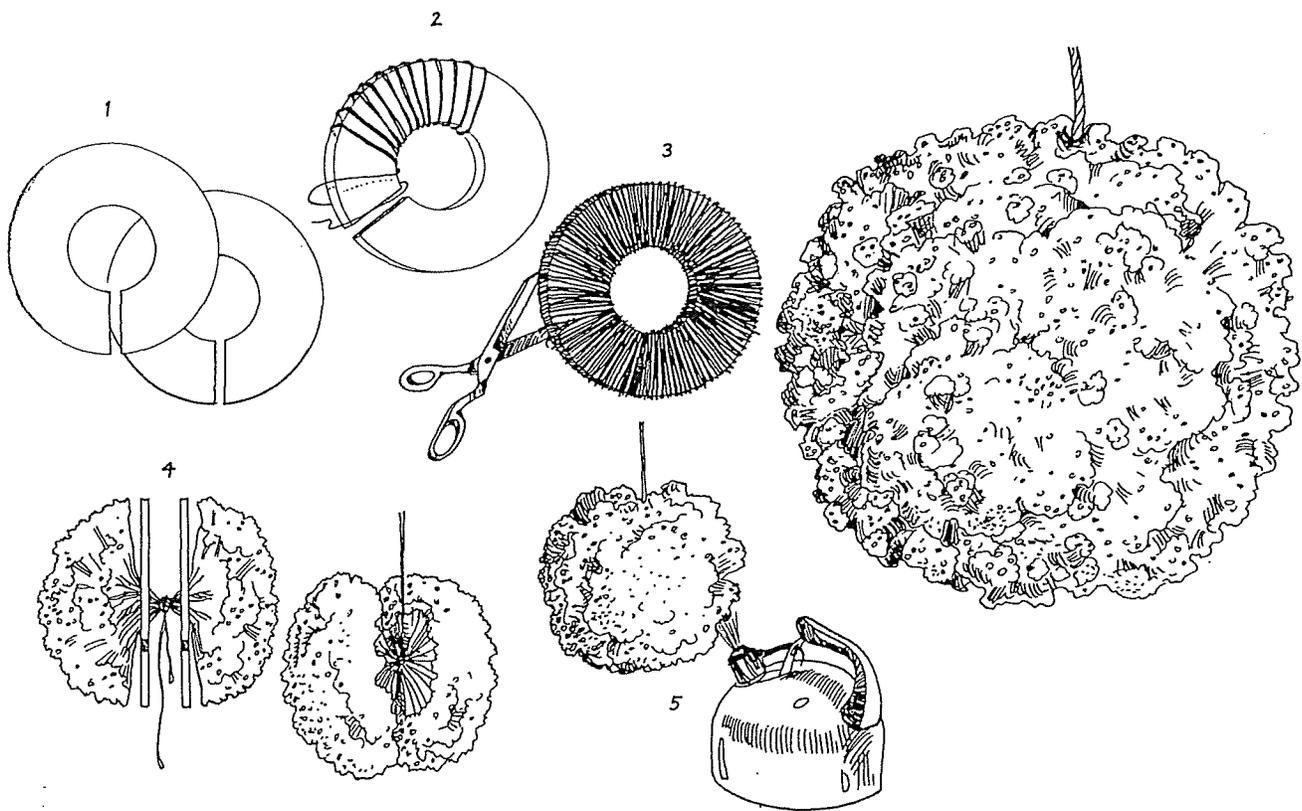
1. Cut out matching cardboard circles, each with a hole in the center and a slit wide enough to slide the yarn through.

2. Place cardboard circles together and wrap yarn around them from the center to the edge until the cardboard surface is covered.

3. Slide scissors between the two cardboard wheels and cut the yarn just on the outside perimeter.

4. When the yarn is cut, slide a length of yarn between the two cardboards with extra length for attaching, and tie a firm knot around the center of all the cut yarns.

5. Cut off the cardboards. Fluff the ball by hand or steam over a steam iron for extra fluffiness.

Small versions of the pom-pom can be transformed into charming, fanciful animals by adding bits of felt for hands and feet, and dots for eyes.

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Advanced Categories

How to Pack and Wrap for Shipping

At some point in time, each of us will have an occasion to send a gift through the mail to someone far away. You will want your gift to arrive in good shape. You have already learned to wrap it nicely, but, for travel, it must also be packed well. These hints should help you wrap and address your package to assure that it will arrive at its destination looking just as attractive as when you sent it.

+ Use a sturdy container.

+ Cushion the contents - bottom, sides, and top. Gifts decorated with a flat design are best. However, if your gift package has a bow, it can be protected by inverting an empty box or berry box over the bow and surrounding it with your packing material.

+ Close the container securely. You may use strapping tape, pressure sensitive plastic tape, water-activated tape, or reinforced tape. Masking tape, cellophane tape, or string are not suitable.

+ Securely attach a single label on top of the carton containing the name and complete address, including the zip code, of both the sender and the receiver. Place a duplicate label inside the carton as a guarantee in case the outer label is damaged somehow in shipping. The labels should either be typed or printed clearly.

+ If additional information is needed on the outside of the package such as "Fragile", "Perishable", etc., these markings may be placed in three places -- above the address, below the postage, and on the reverse side.

+ The U.S. Postal Service and other parcel services have requirements concerning the weight and size of the package being shipped. One of the requirements refers to the GIRTH of the package. This is the measurement completely around the carton. The Post Office and other parcel services periodically may change shipping requirements. It is always wise to call for current information.

+ Be aware that the more your package weighs and the farther it must travel, the more it will cost.

Covering the Lid and Box Separately

So your gift wrapping is too beautiful to destroy by opening the package? Why not wrap a box and lid separately so that you can reuse it?

To cover the box, cut paper two inches wider than box and long enough to reach around it. Spread paste or tape along top and bottom edges of box, then wrap the band of paper completely around the four sides. Clip corners. Fold 1 inch of the paper over the top edge of box and paste or tape to the inside. Fold 1 inch of the paper over the bottom edge of the box, and paste or tape to hold fast. Cover the lid with the same or contrasting paper, allowing 1 inch to fold inside lid. Secure with a thin layer of paste or tape. Clip corners and make a neat overlap. When done, the lid can be decorated as shown in (b).

Combining papers makes for some unusual effects. You might try printed paper on box and plain paper on lid, or vice versa. Another idea would be to use two plain colors, one on the lid and one on the box. By using the same color paper all over, you could rely on the ribbon alone to give contrast.
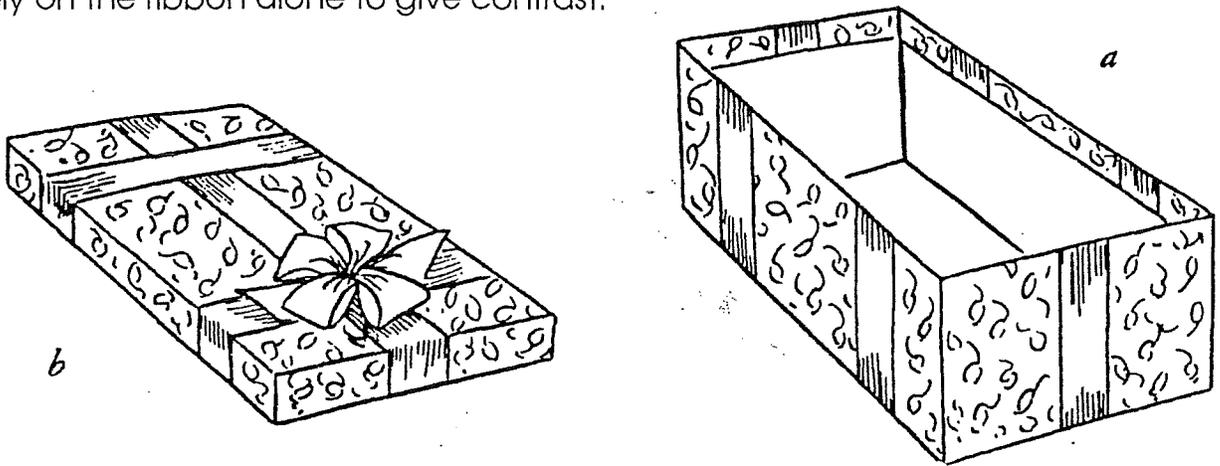
Using something other than wrapping paper

Let your creativity shine! Here are some ideas, but we're sure you'll have even more.

- ◆ Wrap package with a baby blanket and use diaper pins instead of tape.

- ◆ Wrap a package in a dishtowel.

- ◆ Put package in a basket, possibly wrapping in cellophane.

- ◆ If you are giving a jar of home-canned preserves, why not dress the jar in an apron?

Gift Bags

If you can't seem to wrap it, bag it! The instructions for the two types of bags in this section should cover your needs, whether you're wrapping a small or large gift. Be sure to remember that you'll need sturdier paper and ribbon than you might otherwise use on a boxed gift. If you have a lightweight paper that you would like to make into a bag, use freezer paper as a lining and strong support.

Easy Gift Bags

You'll get a perfect bag every time if you use this fool-proof method.

1) Start with a sheet of paper about twice as large as the bag you'd like to make. You can use construction paper, commercial wrapping paper, wallpaper, or even fabric.

2) Fold the paper over about one inch along the length. Using a box the size of the bag you're making, place the box in the center of the wrap, and bring the two long sides of the paper together, taping them to one another. Be sure you secure these loosely enough so that the box can be easily removed.

3) Now tape one end of the package closed as you would if you were wrapping a gift box. Do not tape the paper to the box at any point.

4) Remove the support box.

5) Stand the bag upright and fold about 1 inch of the open end into the bag, giving a nice, neat finish to the top.

6) For handles, attach a length of ribbon from one side of the bag to the other, or use two smaller handles, one at the front of the bag and one at the back.
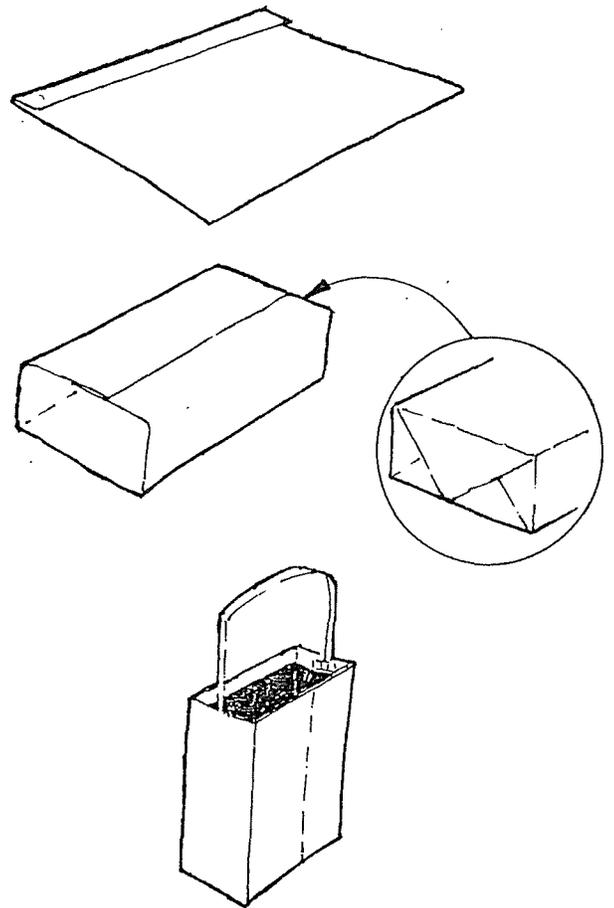
Easy Envelope Bag

This bag might work especially well for gift certificates or compact discs!

1) Start with a piece of construction paper, white freezer wrap, commercial wrapping paper, or fabric. Cut a piece that is a bit wider than the bag you'd like to make and twice as long.

2) Fold over the lengths of the bag 1 inch at top and bottom and glue these in place.

3) Cut a piece of construction paper as long as the sheet is wide and about 4 inches wide. Fold it in half and glue this to the center of your sheet as shown for reinforcement.

4) Glue each end of the sheet over about 1 inch and glue in place. Before you glue the second end, place a ribbon or yarn handle underneath the fold as shown.

5) Fold the sheet in half and glue together to form the bag.

RE-ENFORCEMENT

FOLD

GLUE

GLUE

FOLD

GLUE
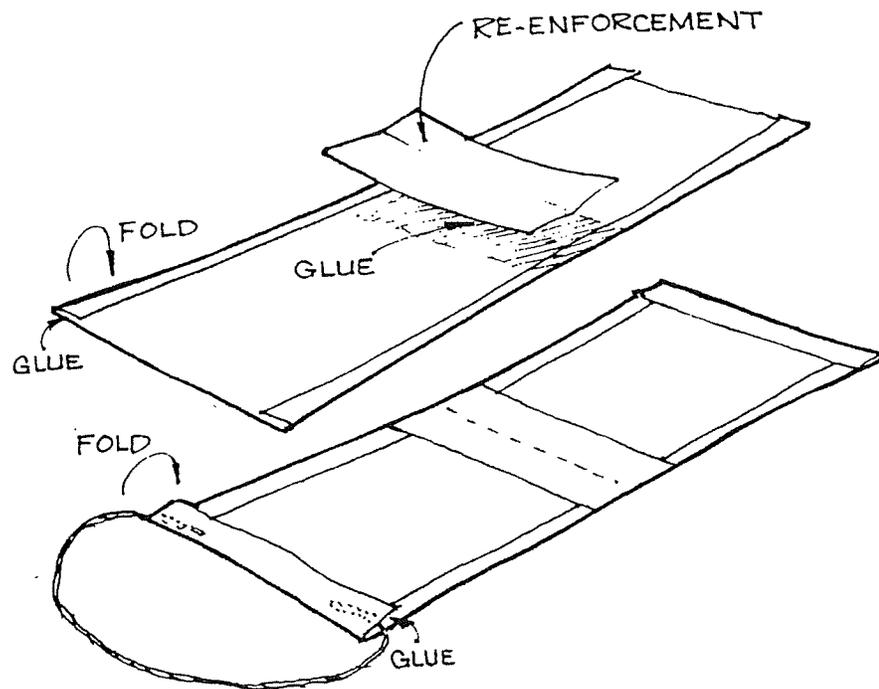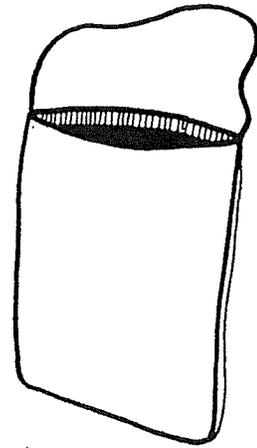
But what if the gift doesn't come with a box?

Half of the fun of receiving a gift is opening it, so don't spoil all that fun by just putting a bow on that hard-to-wrap item. You'll really have to be creative, but here are some ideas to get you started:

- ✤ Embroider a design to place on the lid of a jar of preserves.

- ✤ Use colorful garbage bags to wrap a large item.

- ✤ Wrap a baseball bat to look like a rocket.

- ✤ Turn a mop upside down and turn it into a mop-haired person.

Make your own paper

There's no need to go to the store to buy wrapping paper when you can make it yourself. The possibilities are endless, but here are some ideas we've seen:

- ✤ Use spin art.

- ✤ Use string pulling.

- ✤ Decorate paper with prints made from a carved potato.

- ✤ Illustrate the package with your own original sketches.

Many of these ideas are an art unto themselves, though that doesn't mean it's all that difficult. There are lots of books at the library to help you out. We've given you a couple of titles that you may want to start with later in this manual.
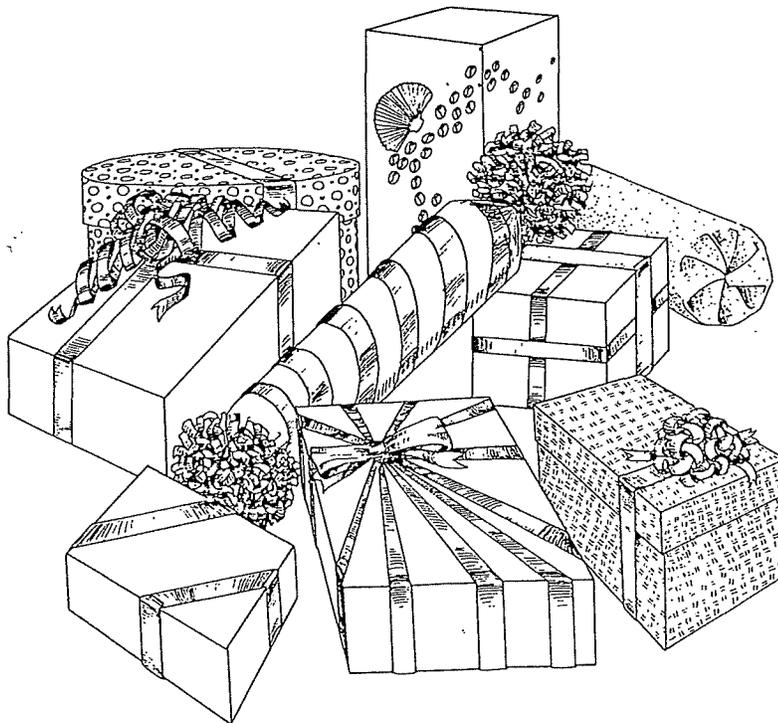
Creative Wrapping Ideas

☐ Decorate with reuseable or recycled items.

☐ Wrap a package to resemble its contents.

☐ Wrap with plain paper for greater versatility and to emphasize the decoration.

☐ For a baby shower, make a rattle from half of a styrofoam ball, lace and white pipecleaner.

☐ For a wedding shower, use small kitchen utensils for decoration.

☐ Cut old greeting cards and paste on top of plain wrapped gift.

☐ Design a dog out of brown paper wrapped around a rectangular box. Use construction paper for details.

☐ Turn a coffee can into a child's drum. Use contact paper and string.

☐ Wrap in a section of the newspaper that would interest the receiver of the gift. For instance, while Dad might be interested in the business section, your brother or sister might like the comic section better. (Or maybe Dad would like the comics best, too!) Use black pipecleaners to spell out 'DAD' or the person's name.

☐ Wrap a box to look like a shirt. Use a contrasting color to make a necktie.

☐ Turn a cylinder into a clown by using a styrofoam ball for head, and making arms and feet from construction paper. Make a collar from ribbon and add a hat to complete.

☐ Decorate a package for Mom using a silk flower or fabric mum.

Judging Criterion

Now it's time to take your exhibit to the fair! Be sure to review the exhibit requirements. Here are some of the things the judge will be looking for:

General appearance

Neatness Taping
          Corners
          Edges/Folding
          Bow and/or Decorations

Coordination of paper and bow/decoration
          Materials
          Color
          Style

Originality

Is the wrapping appropriate for the occasion and recipient?