

Kid-crafted holiday decor ideas

Getting children in on the fun of decorating for the holiday season makes this time of year that much more special. Children who make their own ornaments and other items can proudly display them all season long.

There are plenty of handmade holiday crafts to keep little fingers occupied. Here are some ideas to spark imagination and hours of creative fun.

EASY SNOW GLOBES

A visit to the craft store will uncover various items that can be turned into snow globes. Look for a plastic cookie jar-like container with a lid that screws on tightly; otherwise, choose glass mason jars. Use a general ratio of one cup of water, three teaspoons of glycerine or an oil like baby oil or mineral oil, and a few teaspoons of glitter. Glue a plastic Christmas tree or snowman figurine to the underside of the lid of the jar with a rubberized adhesive or another glue that will hold up to wet conditions. When dry, replace the lid, invert the jar and watch the snow fall.

SALT DOUGH ORNAMENTS

Salt dough is a modeling dough made from two cups of all-purpose flour, one cup of salt, and about 3/4 cup of water. Mix the ingredients together and knead until the dough is smooth and easy to work with. Add more flour if it's too sticky; more water if it's too dry. Kids can use cookie cutters to cut shapes from the rolled-out dough, or sculpt freehand. Remember to poke a hole through the top of the ornament to thread through string or ribbon later on. While the dough can be dried out by air in about a week, a faster method is to bake in an oven at 250 F for 11/2 to two hours, or until the dough is dry and hard. Kids can then paint the dried creations.

PAPER GINGERBREAD FIGURES

Children may delight in making lifesized gingerbread girls and boys they can decorate and then hang up on the wall. A roll of brown postal paper will work, as will other embellishments like markers, paints, crayons, or ribbon. Kids



take turns being traced while lying down on a piece of rolled-out paper. Then the general shape is cut out and decorated. Children can raise their arms, bend their legs, or vary their positions to give life to the gingerbread figures.

WINTER WONDERLAND

It can be fun to create a diorama or small winter landscape that can be set out with other decorations. Craft stores will likely sell small, plastic evergreen trees this time of year, or

they may be available in the model train aisle of a local hobby shop. The trees can be given snowy boughs with a little acrylic paint. Include figures of bunnies, deer and whatever else kids can dream up. A thin strand of LED, battery-operated lights can add some illumination to the scene. Secure all items to a piece of cardboard or foam board for ease.

Children can make the most of their time crafting items for holiday decorating.