

Wrap it with Style

*This free tip sheet was produced by the Cheapskates Club –
www.cheapskates.com.au*

Paper shopping bags

If you get a paper shopping bag keep it for gift wrapping. They look fantastic as they are or you can decorate them with stamps, stickers etc. Use coloured or tartan ribbon to tie the handles together for a distinctive look. For a more elaborate touch make a simple collage using pictures, ribbons, dried or silk flowers and gum leaves and glue to the centre of the bag.

Design and print your own wrapping paper

Computers make this so easy. Using the drawing program or clipart you can create a unique wrapping paper themed to the gift you are giving. Print it off and then create a matching gift tag, greeting card and envelope to complete the look.

Sponged Papers

Take a sheet of butcher's paper and using a dish mop, simply dab it lightly in poster paint, then hit it on the paper. You can repeat with several colours, or use theme colours (like red and green with a gold or silver accent for Christmas.) Or use a kitchen sponge cut to shape using cookie cutters. This makes a striking paper and you can even let the kids do it!

Newspaper

Believe it or not, newspaper can make a really effective gift wrapping. For an extra special touch you could track down the newspaper printed on the birthday or anniversary of the event you are celebrating. You can age newspaper or butcher's paper by spraying lightly with cold coffee and letting it dry in the sun. If the paper crinkles too much run a warm iron over it. Or leave it crinkled for a really old look. Use strips of black and white paper as a mock ribbon and make a bow out of newsprint to stick onto it.

Garbage bags

Black garbage bags are ideal for wrapping large presents. You can tie them up with ribbons and decorate with stickers. Or for a different look and to save on gift tags print off a photo of the recipient and stick it to the bag.

Recycled boxes

For those presents that need something a little sturdier use cereal boxes. Either spray paint them or cover them coloured paper or contact and then glue the flap closed.

Gift tags

Gift tags can be made from anything. Trace around a large cookie cutter onto a piece of cardstock or coloured paper. Cut out, write your message and then stick to the parcel. Print off a photo of the recipient, cut around with decorative scissors, write your message on the back and stick or tie to the parcel. Use two or three layers of the same shape, in different sizes and colours to create a 3D effect tag. Take a largish gum leaf and using texta or silver gel pen write your message on it. Laminate with contact and stick to the parcel.

Ribbons and Bows

Ribbon doesn't have to be ribbon. Try cutting crisp packets into strips and using them silver side out. Or use them to make bows, they look sensational with the silver on one side and the colour on the other. Oven bags make ribbons and bows too, again just cut them into strips. Use leftover wool to knit strips to use as ribbons. Or let the kids finger knit or plait different coloured yarns into ribbons.

How to Make Great Bows

You'll need about 3 metres of ribbon to make this bow. 20cm from one end of ribbon, pinch firmly between thumb and index finger. Make a 12cm loop (half the size of finished bow) pinch tightly. If ribbon is one-sided, twist length to right side. Make second loop and pinch over first two pinches. Repeat this process forming 4 loops on each side. Make a centre knot by forming a small loop over your thumb, pinch and wire all loops together, trim excess. Use a small length of florist wire or a pipe cleaner wire 14" length to back for tails.

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