



Practising hobbies such as arts & crafts can do lots more for us than just practising a skill – taking part in creative activities like these have been scientifically proven to have a positive effect on our mental wellbeing. That's because crafting hobbies are a great way to express your feelings in a cathartic release, bringing about positive benefits to our mood. Studies have even found links between practising artistic hobbies and improvement to our cognitive abilities too.

Of course, the festive season often sees an increase in arts & crafts activities as people like to get creative, making DIY Christmas decorations, stockings, homemade festive wreaths and of course Christmas baking too. And for many of us, money will be tight these holidays, so this really is a great

opportunity to get creative and save some pennies by making your own Christmas arts & crafts. And not only will Christmas crafting save you some much needed cash but it's also a rewarding and meaningful way to prepare for the season of goodwill. So, this year, why not enjoy a homemade Christmas on a budget and experiment with your own DIY festive decorations, crafting, and even handmade gifts for your loved ones?

To help, we've picked out a few of our favourite ways you can save money this Christmas with some DIY arts & crafts. You'd be amazed at what you can create with some simple craft store supplies and a glue gun. Before you know it, you'll have a revolving collection of crafty decor for your home to inter-change with each season! →

For a lot of us, this winter will be all about keeping a watchful eye on budgets – and what better way to keep costs down than getting all creative and crafty this Christmas.

A very thrifty Christmas

→ By Isobel Moran



← Thoughtfully handmade gifts will bring a smile to anyone's face – there's something heart-warming about a handmade gift showing the care and time you put into it. Not to mention this can be a great cost saver too. Some ideas you could give a go are handmade bath bombs, Christmas gingerbread cookies, knitted or crochet mittens, embroidery pillows, lavender sachets, mason jar candles and even homemade jam - the options are endless! There are plenty of step-by-step instructions for all of these online and you might even already have the materials for some. The results from a handmade gift will be so much more personal than anything shop bought and the love and care put into it will be sure to make your loved one smile.

Share with us

If you try some of these nifty DIY activities over the holidays, we'd love for you to tag us in your creations on social media @wellburncare

▲ DIY Christmas decorations

Buying your own luxury Christmas decorations can really set you back. But there are plenty of DIY crafts you can make yourself - you really don't need to spend a fortune to create your own winter wonderland this year. Here are just a few examples of our favourite DIY festive décor:

Hanging salt dough ornaments – Start by making your salt dough. You'll need:

- 500 g Plain Flour
- 250 g Table Salt
- 125 ml Warm Water (hand warm)

Start by mixing the salt and flour together in a large bowl. Then gradually add the warm water as you mix it together by hand. Turn out on a lightly floured surface and knead for 5-10 minutes until you have a smooth dough.

Then use any glass object to create unique shapes in it – try paper doilies, leaves, needles or even crystal cut glassware. Then use a fancy biscuit cutter to create your hanging shape. Use a straw to make a hole at the top for a ribbon/ string hanger and if you like, you can paint your ornament too. Air dry or bake in the oven at 150 degrees/ 1 hour to harden. You can personalise these hanging salt dough ornaments however you like to create your own bespoke festive decorations at a fraction of the cost!

▼ Paper snowflakes

These beautiful intricate paper snowflakes will add dimension to your festive décor and can be hung from your window or mantel piece. Experiment with different festive colours or go for an all-white look. This is the perfect paper craft which can be made as detailed or as simple as you like– the latter being a great activity for kids too.

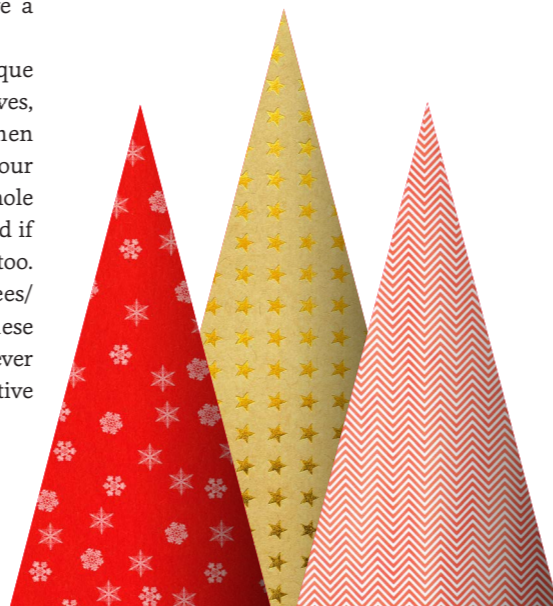
▼ DIY layered garland

Making your own layered garland not only looks festive but smells great too!

Bundle together 12-inch lengths of different greenery – you could use fresh cedar, pine, or grapevine twigs. Then use green metal wire to hold them together. Repeat this until you have your desired garland length and affix the bundles in an overlapping pattern with the wire. Next add lights, ribbon, berries, and pine cones, weaving the decorations into the greenery for the perfect festive garland!

▼ Wrapping paper trees

We love this one for finding use out of those annoying wrapping paper scraps. If you've got spare bits of wrapping paper too small to wrap anything with, don't throw them away - instead why not create some mini wrapping paper tree ornaments. Simply wrap your pieces of wrapping paper around a cone shaped cardboard 'tree' and place them amongst your other festive ornaments!



▼ Handmade Christmas wreath

Christmas wreaths are one of the easiest and most traditional types of festive holiday décor – and there are tons of options for making them too, depending on how creative you're feeling. To create a traditional classic Christmas wreath, you'll need to start with either a wire or natural wreath base. From here, use wire to attach sprigs of fir to the wreath, repeating this to cover the whole wreath. Next secure your decorations with more wire – these can be cones, crab apples, berries, ribbon, and sprigs of holly. The key is to use natural dried ingredients but the options are endless! Finish your wreath with a large festive bow and hang on your door for the most festive door on the street! And instead of a classic Christmas wreath, you can even get creative with some stylish modern designs too.



▲ Handmade Christmas cards

Sending a Christmas card in the post is a festive and wholesome tradition that really shows someone you care. This year, why not make it extra special with a handmade card which can be kept and treasured by your loved ones. Personalise each card with your own designs and sentiments- the options are endless; embroidered Christmas cards for the sewing lovers out there or if you're good at calligraphy, you can use your writing skills to make cards with beautiful hand-drawn personalised messages. And if you have spare leftover buttons lying around, you can repurpose them to make a button ornament card. Use a few pen strokes and stick your buttons to the card to become vintage looking ornaments! For a simple, yet elegant design, try sewing pieces of red and white gingham cloth shapes onto plain white cardstock backing. Finally, sponge printed cards- these are great for kids and can be made with just a sponge, some green and red paint, and a bunch of small decorations like stars and sequins to decorate your tree. Or you could use potato printing to cut out simple stars and tree designs and print onto your cards! →





← Doing DIY Christmas activities not only means you're embarking on a festive arts and craft project, which is a cosy way to spend a cold winter evening, a handmade Christmas is also a more sustainable way to show your loved ones you care, and a great way to save money this Christmas too.

Here at Wellburn, across all 14 of our homes, our residents' love getting involved in a variety of arts and crafts too, with plenty of their day-to-day activities centred around getting creative. Whether that's flower arranging, cupcake making, knitting, painting and this time of the year, festive crafts is hugely popular.

And these activities are integral to our residents' wellbeing too, enabling them to stay physically, mentally, and socially involved in a meaningful way. Practicing arts & crafts gives residents a sense of purpose and responsibility, but also gives them a new found freedom and confidence in their own abilities.

Providing that sense of accomplishment also helps to relive stress, anxiety and puts less focus on those daily worries – all contributing to an improved overall wellbeing. All giving a super positive boost to wellbeing levels, and it should be noted that this isn't exclusive to older people.



Getting creative also helps to stimulate the mind and keep our brains active, which is particularly important for our residents living with dementia - helping them to reminisce on past memories and retain new ones.

And this year, as we prepare for our biggest festive highlight, our residents will be making their very own Christmas arts & crafts for Wellburn to sell at our charity Festive Craft Market over at our Grimston Court home. With all profits from our stall being donated to the fantastic York Food Bank, who Wellburn are partnering with for the day. Residents in our homes are currently getting crafty decorating Christmas baubles, making mini terracotta

festive plant pot tree decorations, mini wooden decorated Christmas trees, festive felt stockings and even some mini wooden Santa Claus to sit on your mantlepiece!

These lovely handmade items from our residents will be sold alongside specially designed Christmas cards (above), gift tags (above left) and limited-edition prints. If you'd like to get your hands on one of these lovely handmade items, simply pop along on the day of our festive craft market, Saturday 3rd December 12-5pm and show your support– we'd love to see you there! ■

For more event details, please visit: wellburncare.co.uk/festivemarket

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