



BAKE IT

Chocolate
& salted
caramel log



MAKE IT

Classic
Christmas
wreath



CROCHET IT

Glamorous
evening
shawl



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Twit
twoo!

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FRIENDS

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A JANOME
SEWING
MACHINE!

Quick
gift ideas

- DECOUPAGE PENDANT
- PATCHWORK CUSHIONS
- VINTAGE-STYLE HANDBAG

Real life

"WE CRAFT-SELL ACROSS AMERICA!"

DESIGNERS BREAD & JAM SHARE THE SECRET BEHIND THEIR INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS...

79
handmade

CHRISTMAS IDEAS TO
MAKE & SELL TODAY

HOW TO

BOOST
YOUR
FESTIVE
SALES

TOP TIPS FOR THE
DECEMBER RUSH

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Bring old photos back to life with our vintage-style shoulder bag

On the
COVER

16

Customers will fall in love with this adorable owl trio!

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Tempting eggnog cupcakes for your next festive fair



Welcome



Now is the time to start turning up the heat on your Christmas craft-selling, as shoppers begin to hunt for the perfect gifts. And if your festive stock is a little low, don't worry – we've plenty of quick Christmas makes to help you keep up with demand.

We have a Fair Isle knitted hot water bottle cover, perfect for personalising with a name, on [page 32](#). Over on [page 74](#) there's a very pretty, sparkly crochet mini-shawl, great for parties and special dinners. We also have a gorgeous upcycled kitchen blackboard on [page 72](#) – an ideal profit-boosting make. And of course, we mustn't forget our irresistible cover stars – the dinky knitted owls over on [page 16](#)! Owls have been solid sellers throughout the year, so in their cute little Santa hats, these are guaranteed to fly off the shelves (we promise to stop saying that soon!) this Christmas.

Feature-wise, check out our expert advice and top tips on how to sell to the lucrative, last-minute Christmas shopping market ([p79](#)), and over on [page 38](#) we walk you through how to be an award-winning craft seller.

And finally, we're giving you this month a fabulous, FREE calendar – packed with crafting inspiration to keep you busy throughout 2014!

Enjoy!

Zeena

ZEENA MOOLLA – EDITOR

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BE AN INSIDER

We want to know what you think. After all, the more we know about you the better placed we are to bring you the best magazine possible. So we would like to invite you to join our online reader panel 'Insiders'.

Interested? Log on to www.immediateinsiders.com/register to fill out the short registration survey and we'll be in touch from time-to-time to ask for your opinions on the magazine and other relevant issues.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.



Subscribe to the digital edition

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Online loves

Check out our favourite makes selling well on the web this month

Turn to page 102 for those all-important templates

Contributors

Meet three Craftseller designers who have created projects just for you...



Angela Turner

Knit Angela's cute cover stars on [page 16](#), and her Scandi-style hottie on [page 32](#)

Angela likes to knit and crochet small projects, and has had her original designs published in various knit, crochet and craft magazines. She loves to knit baby clothes using luxury yarns, especially as gifts. To see more of Angela's designs and to shop for her patterns, go to luxurybabyknits.co.uk

Marie Parry

Add a traditional craft to your Christmas range, with Marie's wreath on [page 92](#)

Owner and founder of Mim's Flower Shed, Marie is passionate about creating beautiful, contemporary flower arrangements – something for every occasion! Have a go yourself by following her simple instructions for a Christmas wreath. You can catch up with Marie at facebook.com/MimsFlowerShed



Wendy Massey

Glimpse Wendy's glamorous grandma on [page 84](#), when you sew her vintage bag

Wendy's crafting skills include painting, sewing and appliqué. In this issue, she shows you how to turn your treasured photographs into gorgeous makes to keep or sell. Plus, see what she's created with our Christmas papers this month on [pages 50 and 59](#). Visit 1stuniquegifts.co.uk for more of Wendy's work.

A SPECIAL MENTION TO

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Making news

Welcome to your one-stop shop for all the latest craft trends, dates and celebs...



3 minutes with Belle & Boo illustrator...

Mandy Sutcliffe

1 "I studied illustration in Leeds, and during my time there I took part in an exchange to Paris where my love of drawing children was founded. The Parisian children had such an old-fashioned sense of chic about them, which was reminiscent of the drawings of children I loved growing up."

2 "To get noticed in the industry, I took the advice of a wonderful lady at Walker Books: Show you can draw the same characters in different situations, show you can capture emotion, and brighten up your colour palette."

3 "My advice would be to work hard and, most importantly, to believe in yourself. I was told for years whilst working in the greetings card industry that images of children from the front don't sell. I have since gone on to sell thousands of cards with forward-facing children!"

Mandy's nostalgic illustrations can be seen at belleandboo.com, which won Highly Commended at the Junior Design Awards 2013. *The Belle & Boo Book of Craft* is also out now, priced at £14.99.



SUPER SITES

Our pick of the best from the world of online this month...

theamazings.com

Watch video tutorials from craft 'elders' with plenty of skills and experience to share.

liliofthevalley.co.uk

This cute site, aimed at cardmakers, has some of the sweetest Christmas stamps on the market.

raystitch.co.uk

This fab site is packed with fabrics, buttons and ribbons to swoon over. Bookmark it now!

We love the London Jewellery School's new pop-up shop!



Rex/Courtesy Everett Collection

PEARLS ON SHOW

The V&A's Pearl exhibition (until 19 January 2014) is a must for makers who love Audrey Hepburn style!



Ready, steady, washi

Oh, washi tape, you brighten up our lives and make our crafts look so pretty! If it's not already in your tool box, get some in time for Christmas. We love the new Scotch Expressions range at 3MDirect.co.uk (from £2.79), which features on-trend chevrons and funky colours.

CRAFTY
EVENTS

Our pick of the best crafty events around this month...

Exclusively Highlands Arts, Crafts & Food Fair
Crathes Castle,
Aberdeen
2-3 November

Hobbycrafts
NEC, Birmingham
7-10 November

Cake International
NEC, Birmingham
8-10 November

Creative Crafts Show
King's Hall Complex,
Belfast
14-16 November

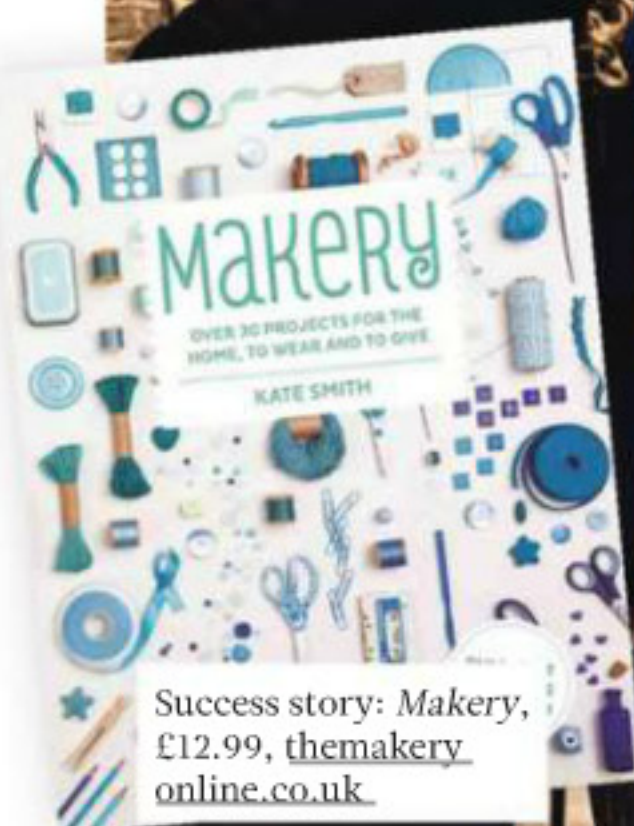
The Knitting & Stitching Show
Harrogate International
Centre
21-24 November

Christmas Crochet
The Farnham Maltings
23 November

The Guild of Jewellery
Designers Exhibition
Waterhall, Birmingham
Museums & Art Gallery
23 November

The West Country
Quilt Show
Bath & West
Showground,
Shepton Mallet
28-30 November

Christmas Craft Fair
The Great Glasshouse,
National Botanic Garden
of Wales
7-8 December



Success story: *Makery*,
£12.99, themakeryonline.co.uk

Could you make it?

We love The Makery – a craft store and workshop space in Bath that's bursting with pretty trimmings and fab fabrics – and after appearing on *Dragons' Den* recently, they've even launched their own book! Fancy braving the Den yourself? Enter online at bbc.co.uk.

LIGHT IT UP

RUTH MCALLISTER, who was one of Theo Paphitis's Small Business Sunday winners this year (search #SBS on Twitter) is making lampshades cool with her bold range of handmade shades. Fancy learning this niche craft for yourself? Benefit from Ruth's wisdom with one of her classes, hold a lampshade-making party(!), or check out her new video tutorial at quincylampshades.co.uk.

Talent
SPOT

Ruth sells her makes as well as teaching her craft to others!

TOP TREND ✓ TOP TREND ✓ TOP TREND ✓ TOP TREND ✓ TOP TREND ✓ TOP TREND

FOLKSY FAIRYTALE

FROM CINDERELLA to Little Red Riding Hood, this Christmas it's all about nostalgia. Think fairytale meets woodland, with a little bit of Nordic thrown in for good festive measure! Go for vivid colours against rich, forest greens – and of course, don't forget to give a nod to traditional characters in your makes.



Tartan Fox Cushion, £17.99, akroomshop.co.uk; Pumpkin Carriage for Mice, £43.20, sistersguild.co.uk; Gingerbread House Advent Calendar, £12.50, totsworldtrading.com

Dear Craftseller

Send us your latest crafting and selling stories – each issue, the star letter wins a StickyTiger prize!

We love seeing how you adapt our designs



Lorna turned our squirrels into cute tweed appliqué

Squirrel shoppers

I WAS VERY EXCITED when I saw the cover of issue 28 – the little squirrels were adorable and I couldn't wait to try my own version! I enlarged the design and put it on a shopping bag, and I'm very pleased with how it has come out. I will definitely be making more in different colours for the new year. I've just started my own craft business and have had so many ideas from your magazine. I'd be lost without it. Thank you very much for all the inspiration!

LORNA RACKHAM, SUFFOLK

Ed: Pleased to help, Lorna. Your squirrels are really cute and we're sure they'll start selling well.

His and hers

I ABSOLUTELY LOVE CRAFTSELLER, and thanks to issue 24 and the Drink Tea Here project, I have found a renewed enthusiasm for cross stitch. I adapted the pattern and we now have 'his and hers' up in the kitchen – mine says Drink Wine Here! I have already had a couple of orders come in, and my Facebook likes have also increased since I put the photos up. So thank you, *Craftseller*, and all your contributing designers. Keep up the good work!

ANDRINA ASKEW, PEAS IN PODS ON FACEBOOK

Ed: We love your new version of this stitch, Andrina!



Andrina's likes prove how cool cross stitch is right now

CRAFTY BLOG

themadhouse-themadhouse.blogspot.co.uk



Living in a madhouse myself, I can totally relate to this crafty blog from Jen Walshaw, a stay-at-home mum with two young boys. She can be found sewing, baking and creating other crafts with her kids, and she also sells her makes via the blog. What an inspiration!

DIANE HOBBS, KENT

Deborah taught herself a unique craft



Origami goodness

I HAVE BEEN BUYING your magazine for the past year, and it has really given me the push I needed to set up Just So Studios – my new business selling handmade 3D origami models and novelty crafts. I learned origami from watching videos on YouTube. Now I create my own designs to sell in our family museum gift shop, a local art gallery, a local craft shop, as well as on Etsy and Folksy. I've got a great USP, because 3D origami is a very unusual craft and there is nothing like it!

DEBORAH BELL, JUST SO STUDIOS

Ed: What an interesting craft. We're impressed! Try our origami bags on YouTube at CraftsellerTV.

DOUBLE TROUBLE



I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT like to see how my geishas turned out from issue 27. Inspired by your idea of creating a back story, I decided to alter the pattern to create her alter ego, Ninja. Unfortunately I couldn't sell them, as they were immediately snapped up by the kids!

JO NICHOLL, SOMERSET

Ed: We love the idea of an alter ego! Time to make some more and sell them, we say.



Jo gave her crochet character an exciting alter ego

Star letter prize!

This month our star letter writer wins £45 worth of vouchers for stickytigersupplies.co.uk



Tanya persevered to make a gorgeous garland of hearts



Wax wonders

I'M QUITE NEW TO crafting and thought I'd give the crayon hangers from issue 28 a try – I wanted to create a garland of them to hang up in my daughter's bedroom window. I found using cheap crayons was a no-no, as the colours all seemed to run together and looked a bit murky. The better the quality of the crayons, the more effective the end result. After ironing, the wax gets extremely hot so you have to be careful not to burn yourself, but you also need to work quickly before the wax sets, so practice definitely makes perfect. I hope these tips help!

TANYA JORDAN, KETTERING

Ed: Thanks for the great tips, Tanya. We're really glad you gave this lovely project a try.

Mummy makes

I THOUGHT I'D SHARE my first craft selling venture with you. I got a bit bored on maternity leave and have taken a break from my RSN course, so I started making baby things. I gave it up for a bit, as I felt daunted by all the safety requirements, but the advice in *Craftseller* has helped a lot and really given me the confidence to give it a go.

JESSICA LEE, ON FACEBOOK

Ed: Good for you, Jessica – your stall looks great.



Jessica's makes look lovely and they're safe for babies, too!

CRAFTY TALK



Here are some of our favourite posts and tweets this month...

@CraftsellerMag
hi from South Africa!
Love your ideas!
@MUM_PLUM

I'm not one for doing
papercraft, but couldn't
resist the free papers.
@THATS_SEW_CHIC

Chilled evening
reading my @Craftseller
Mag loved it so much
am subscribing!!
@FEE_FEE4

My daughter wants
the @CraftsellerMag
satchel in 20 different
fabrics. #gonnabebusy
@MICHELEBADGER

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Dear *Craftseller*, 9th Floor,
Tower House, Fairfax
Street, Bristol BS1 3BN

PIN IT



Homespun

Tweed, canvas and hessian fabrics are big news this season – use them to create a country Christmas appeal





11



12



13

- 1 Hessian Stag, £45, paperchase.co.uk 2 Forest Friends Hessian Stocking, £4, wilko.com
 3 Rural Stag Christmas Stocking, £12, johnlewis.com 4 Owl Door Stop, £12, mandco.com 5 Chic Tweed Shift, £110, boden.co.uk
 6 Jute Robin, £2 for three, hobbycraft.co.uk 7 Embroidered Toile Cushion, £30, johnlewis.com 8 Forest Friends Tweed Heart, £1.50, wilko.com 9 1898 German Flour Sack Wing Chair, £1800, kellyswallow.co.uk
 10 Le Poulet French Feed Sack Cushion, £50, littlemillhouse.co.uk 11 Hessian Noel Christmas Bunting, £19.99, [Paper Beagle on noths.com](http://PaperBeagleonnoths.com) 12 Stag Silhouette Hessian Christmas Sack, £12.99, [Sugarushuk on etsy.com](http://Sugarushukonetsy.com) 13 Assorted Large Hanging People Decorations, £5, hobbycraft.co.uk 14 Wool Blend Stretch Tweed Suit, £350, [Tsyndyma on etsy.com](http://Tsyndymaonetsy.com) 15 Room Set, johnlewis.com 16 Blyth Fabric in Putty, £18/m, johnlewis.com 17 Wool Fleck Fabric, £30/m, johnlewis.com



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Stash it!

Inspiring ideas for your crafty makes



Birds **Clothes Plasters** by Jennie Maizels, £17.95, gilliangladrag.co.uk • Flying Bird Wooden Mounted **Rubber Stamping Block**, £1.92, Stampcow on Etsy.com • Ceramic Willow Pattern and Arts & Crafts **Buttons**, £1.62 each, stockwellceramics.co.uk



White and Pink Birds **Cotton Fat Quarter**, £3.49, myfabrichouse.co.uk • **Wool Felt Die-Cut Birds**, 4cm or 6cm, 25p or 30p each, bloomingfelt.co.uk • **Love Birds Stencils**, 30.5 x 30.5cm, £7.99, stockist info on thecraftersworkshop.com



Birds and Flowers Vintage Crafts **Cotton Ribbon**, £2.95, dotcomgiftshop.com • Cranes, Cloud9 **100% Organic Fabric**, £18 per metre, flo-jobboutique.co.uk • **Silver bird pendant**, £2.99 for two, pandurohobby.co.uk



Three wise owls

Try something different this Christmas with **Angela Turner's** adorable knitted owl chicks, bearing gifts of holly, feathers and mistletoe





INFORMATION

Materials

- * 50g ball Stylecraft Eskimo in winter white (shade 5006), main colour MC
- * 50g ball DROPS Karisma DK in green (shade 45), contrast colour CC
- * 50g ball DROPS Karisma DK in grey (shade 21)
- * 50g ball DROPS Karisma DK in brown (shade 56)
- * 50g ball DROPS baby merino 4ply in off-white (shade 02)
- * 50g ball DROPS baby merino 4ply in red (shade 16)
- * 50g ball DROPS baby merino 4ply in yellow (shade 04)
- * 50g ball DROPS baby merino 4ply in black (shade 21)
- * 3mm (UK 11) knitting needles
- * 3mm (UK 11) crochet hook
- * Polyester toy filling
- * 6 plastic 15mm (1/2in) eyes
- * Holly, feathers and fake mistletoe
- * 33cm (13in) branch
- * 3 cocktail sticks, trimmed to 2/3 of size
- * Strong glue

Size: Each owl is 9cm (3.5in) tall; branch is about 33cm (13in) long
Skill level: Moderate

Offer up these fun little Christmas decorations this season – they'll catch the eye of shoppers looking for quirky handmade items to last from year to year. Each little owl has coloured wings, a fluffy white body and a traditional Santa hat. Individually decorated with foraged feathers, holly and some fake mistletoe, our wide-eyed owls are easy to run up – and of course, the more you make, the more profit you'll reap. Try experimenting with other festive materials to make your owl decorations unique, such as small fir cones, or the tips of fir branches. Or why not add wooden buttons instead of toy eyes for a more retro look?

ABBREVIATIONS

beg	beginning
ch	chain
cont	continue
dec	decrease
inc	increase 1st
k	knit
k2tog	knit 2sts together
p	purl
p2tog	purl 2sts together
rep	repeat
skpo	slip 1, k1, pass slipped stitch over
sppo	slip 1, p1, pass slipped stitch over
st(s)	stitch(es)
st st	stocking stitch
WS	wrong side
yfwd	yarn forward

How to make the owls

BODY

Using CC, cast on 5sts.

Row 1: Knit.

Row 2: Inc knitways in every st. 10sts.

Row 3: Knit.

Row 4: Inc knitways in every st. 20sts.

Row 5: Knit.

Row 6: Inc knitways in every st. 40sts.

Rows 7-9: Knit.

Change to MC.

Rows 10-13: Knit.

Row 14 (make buttonhole for eye): Knit to last 12sts, yfwd, (place a small length of contrast yarn here as a marker), k2tog, knit to end.

Rows 15-21: Knit.

Row 22 (make buttonhole for eye): Knit to last 12sts, yfwd, (place a small length of contrast yarn here as a marker), k2tog, knit to end.

Rows 23-25: Knit.

Change to CC and knit 4 rows.

Row 30: (K2tog) to end. 20sts.

Row 31: Knit.

Row 32: (K2tog) to end. 10sts.

Row 33: Knit.

Row 34: (K2tog) to end. 5sts.

Cut yarn and thread through sts.

MAKING UP

Place eyes in buttonholes, remove marker yarns and secure eyes with backing plates. With wrong side facing, gather up sts round cast-on edge and pull up tightly to close gap.



TOP TIP

Work on the three owls at the same time in an assembly line – it will save you time in the long run



Sew along seam, leaving a small gap. Turn right-side out and stuff firmly with toy filling. Pull up tightly and secure. Make another two owls in the same way, using the other contrast colours to make the wings.

BEAK

Using yellow yarn, cast on 2sts.

Row 1: Purl.

Row 2: Inc knitways in every st. 4sts.

Row 3: Purl.

Next row: Knit.

Next row: (P2tog) to end.

Cast off.

MAKING UP

Fold beak in half lengthwise and sew seam together. Place below eyes in centre of face and secure. Repeat for the other two owls.

SANTA HAT

Using off-white yarn, cast on 36sts.

Starting with a knit row, work 4 rows st st.

Change to red and work 4 more rows st st.

Next row: (K4, k2tog) to end. 30sts.

Starting with a purl row, st st 3 rows.

Next row: (K3, k2tog) to end. 24sts.

Starting with a purl row, st st 3 rows.

Next row: (K2, k2tog) to end. 18sts.

Starting with a purl row, st st 3 rows.

Next row: (K1, k2tog) to end. 12sts.

Starting with a purl row, st st 3 rows.

Next row: (K2tog) to end. 6sts.

Starting with a purl row, st st 3 rows.

Change to off-white and purl one row to begin bobble (RS).

Next row: Inc knitways into every st. 12sts.

St st 5 rows.

Next row: (P2tog) to end. 6sts.

Cut yarn and thread through sts.

Repeat to make two more hats.

MAKING UP

With right sides facing, and tucking bobble into the middle, sew hat seam. Turn right way out and sew bobble seam. Insert some filling and then pull up stitches, cut and secure end. Allow brim to curl. Run a length of yarn round base of bobble, insert a little more filling if necessary, then pull up tightly. Cut yarn and

tie in loose ends. Place the hat on the owl, slightly to one side. Pin in place, then sew securely. Fold down the top of hat and secure at base of hat. On the first owl, glue two small feathers to head, close to hat brim. Use holly leaves for the second owl and mistletoe for the third.

CLAWS (MAKE 6 PER OWL)

Using black, and a crochet hook, ch7. Cut yarn and thread through sts.

MAKING UP

Group three claws together, then sew together at one end with a few sts. Trim the loose ends at this side but keep loose ends at other end for now. Place on branch where owl is to sit. Glue sewn side of feet to branch where the owl sits, then spread claws out a little. Add a little glue to each claw, press onto branch, pulling the loose ends as the glue dries to help keep claws straight. Repeat with the feet of the other owls. Mark the centre between the two feet, then drill a hole for cocktail stick to sit. Put glue in hole, place cocktail stick in with point facing upwards and let dry. Place owl on cocktail stick, adding glue to base of owl to secure to branch. Repeat with other owls to finish.



SAFETY FIRST These owls are not intended as toys, or for young children. Always use fake mistletoe as real mistletoe berries are poisonous. Make sure all loose parts are attached securely. **Remember, if you intend on selling them, even if they are not sold as toys, there are strict regulations to adhere to. Visit craftseller.com/free-downloads for more legal advice on child safety.**



You've made it, now sell it...

Follow our handy hints to maximise profits from your knitted owl trio



- 1 Personalise for festive sales.** Charge extra for letting shoppers choose the yarn and eye colour of their owls.



- 2 Stitch a jingle bell to each hat,** for a traditional touch that is guaranteed to make buyers smile.

- 3 Be kid-safe.** These adorable owls will appeal to children, but stress in their description that they are not toys.

- 4 Add a squeaker** for a fun element, or fill with lavender or rose petals to create a sweet-smelling owl gift.

- 5 Stamp or print plain boxes** with snowflakes, holly or other festive motifs for a pretty packaging idea.

- 6 Use knarled branches** and invisible thread for a quirky winter mobile that buyers can hang in their windows.

- 7 Make your own chic gift wrap.** Simply rub Christmas carol sheet music with sandpaper and edge in brown ink for a distressed, vintage effect.

- 8 Give customers a treat** for multiple purchases – a yummy chocolate coin added to packaging is a sweet touch that buyers will appreciate.

- 9 Tweak the design for the new year.** The woodland trend is still hot, so remove the holly and hats to keep the owls selling after the festive period.

- 10 Vary the size** to make mini and maxi owls. The larger owls can take more detail, so you can be generous with the embellishments. 

NOW SELLING ON...



 **Etsy:** Pair of Quirky, Fluffy, Baby Owl Plushies by Jollysam, £7 or £4 each



 **Etsy:** Knitted Owl Pin Cushion by Sachiyoishii, £17.74



 **Etsy:** Three Lucky Knitted Owls by Brightoldthings, £5.50

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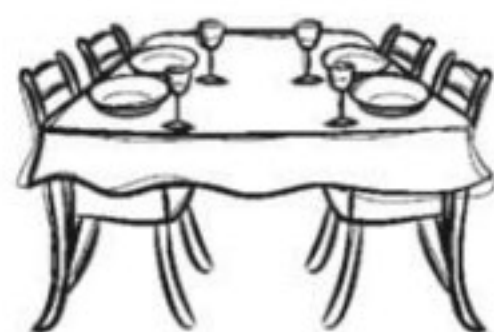
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From our dining table to the world!

Husband-and-wife team, Jamie and Catherine, reveal how after losing it all, they're now selling in the US... **by Karen Dunn**

Nestled just above the Lake District in the heart of the North Pennines down a long, winding – slightly terrifying – road, lies a 17th-century Long House, which is a hive of activity.

In their converted back room, husband-and-wife team, Catherine and Jamie Douglass, are busy printing mugs, packing orders and working on new designs for their company, Bread & Jam. Apart from their daughters, Ella, 12, and Grace, 8, and Jamie's parents next door, there's not a person for as far as the eye can see – just the odd curious-looking cow.

With a lunch of homemade bread and soup sitting on their Aga-style stove, the creative couple take a break to tell us how Bread & Jam came about just over a year ago. Despite being such a new company, sales are already through the roof with stockists all over the country – and America – plus a nomination as one of Not On The High Street's best newcomers. However, success only came after starting from scratch, having lost their business in the recession. Their determination to stay positive has stopped them going under, and given them an amazing life in the countryside. Catherine reveals all...

"When Jamie and I met at university in Leicester 18 years ago, we never imagined we'd be living in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and making a living from craft. We still have to keep pinching ourselves. When we met, Jamie was doing

a design degree and I was doing a business one. Once we'd graduated, Jamie went to work as a shop fitter and I became a bank manager – hardly the most creative of careers! In 2000, Jamie set up a commercial interiors design agency with a friend, and six months later our first daughter, Ella, came along. I left the bank, and when Ella started nursery I began helping with the business. In 2005 we had our second daughter, Grace. Everything was going

"We never imagined we'd be living in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty"

well, but then in 2008 the market crashed.

"We had reinvested every penny we made back into the company, so when the recession hit, the business just disintegrated before our eyes. Every company that was just about to sign on the dotted line pulled out, because their budgets were cut. It was brutal and we were left with enormous debts, and the bank wanting our house.

"We've always been hard workers and refused to let it destroy us, and I wasn't going to lose our little home. Over the next year, we started up a new interiors business and started paying off our debts. After a

year we sold that business for a profit and, after working for the new company for six months, Jamie went freelance. For three years we scrimped and saved. We even got an allotment so we could grow our own food as money was so tight, but we refused to let it get us down and did everything we could to stay positive as a family. The girls were amazing and although it was very stressful, we made sure we kept smiling.

"I'd started making a few little bits and pieces, like paper flowers, decorations and some illustrations, and selling them on Folksy and Etsy. I wasn't making much money, but I was really enjoying it so Jamie started making and selling as well. Jamie made me a lino print that simply said 'Whoops a daisy' for my birthday, and I loved it so much we decided to do more printing. One day in April last year I came home from the school run, turned to Jamie and said: 'Why don't we do this as our job?' and Jamie agreed. Bread & Jam was born.

"We wanted to share our own positive outlook on life and make sure that everything we made would make people smile. At first we worked from our dining room table, hand-printing cards and wooden pencil cases and coming up with new ideas together. Jamie came up with the concept of our product, Random Notes Of Appreciation, which I have to admit I wasn't keen on – but we talked it through, tried it out, and it quickly became one of our best sellers! We work really well



Clockwise from left: Catherine, Grace, Jamie and Ella enjoy the garden outside their stunning Cumbrian Long House; the kitchen is filled with retro-chic crockery; the Bread & Jam stock is rapidly taking over the whole house; Catherine and Jamie love working from home, and who wouldn't if this colourful office was where you spent your days?





From top: Fun slogans are a Bread & Jam trademark; wooden pencil boxes were one of the first ideas; colourful sketchbooks and notebooks

Bread and Jam's Top 3 Craft Business Tips

Learn to give and take

If you're working with your husband or wife, you have to learn to stand your ground. Jamie can be a bit of a steamroller sometimes, but I can hold my own, too! The great thing about sharing a close working and personal relationship is that you always have someone to bounce ideas around with, and give you an honest opinion.

Take the plunge

Just give it a go. It's so easy and cheap to set up a Folksy or Etsy shop, and if you don't try it you'll never know what might have happened. Years ago, we met Wayne Hemmings who ran Red Or Dead, and he was a great inspiration as he started out on a market stall and became a huge success. All the complications of running a business will come later, so just get stuck in.

Keep creating

If you have something that sells well, that's great – but don't get complacent. You should always be thinking of new ideas so your shop changes regularly. New products or new designs give people a reason to come back to you. We still make things for ourselves, for example we recently made a teepee for Grace's birthday, and things like that can inspire you to make different products and work with different materials.

together. I have to say we've never argued over the business – well, not really!

"Then one weekend we came up here to visit Jamie's mum and dad, who had just converted the barn next to the cottage, and they suggested that they moved into that and we take the cottage. At first we thought they were joking, but the more we thought about it, the more perfect it seemed.

"We sold our house in Leicester last September, which finally cleared the rest of our debts, and we moved here for a fresh start. That month, everything went crazy. Not On The High Street contacted us and asked us if we would like to join the site – we decided to give it a go and before we knew it, sales were growing and growing. We were totally unprepared for Christmas and kept having to order more stock. There were more than a few times when we were

working all through the night – we were so lucky to have babysitters just next door!

"In January we were contacted by the department store chain, Anthropologie,

"We have 16 UK stockists and enquiries from Canada and Singapore"

who wanted to stock us in their UK stores. Then in February their US branch, which has 150 stores across America, contacted us too, and we set about sending mountains of stock. Now we have 16 UK stockists, enquiries from Canada and Singapore, and have made over 2,500 sales on NOTHS! We're thinking of moving into studios in

the village – we'd rather not, as we love popping into the garden for a cup of tea and a break. However, we don't have room to store the stock in the house anymore.

"We're always working on new ideas together and the kids are great inspiration. Their drawings have such honesty and they see life in such simple terms – this simplicity rubs off on us, and hopefully shows in our products. When you've lost everything once, you really appreciate what you have. We couldn't be happier. 

Jamie and Catherine



See and shop the full range of stylish Bread & Jam products, plus find out what Bread & Jam are up to and what's inspiring their latest designs at wearebreadandjam.co.uk

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30-minute make

These jolly carollers will make any table or mantelpiece sing, and are really useful for using up all your Christmas stash scraps. By **Annie Bellamy**

INFORMATION

Materials

- * Echo Park Very Merry Christmas paper pack, or oddments of festive paper
- * Selection of felt and ribbons
- * Buttons
- * 3 x toilet rolls
- * Glue

Size: 15cm (6in) high, plus felt hats

Skill level: Easy

TOP TIP

Offer to personalise your carollers for a family – you'll need a clear photo to work from

1 Print out three different-coloured patterned papers onto A5 sheets, glue them to the three toilet rolls and allow to dry.

2 Print a piece of music paper onto card, cut out three rectangles and fold in half. Cut six mitten shapes and glue two to each music sheet. Glue to the caroller.

3 Cut three oval shapes and use coloured pencils to add the details of the faces. When complete, stick faces to the front of the carollers.

4 Cut three wide strips of felt and glue one around the top of each tube. Gather the felt in and tie to form into a hat shape. Decorate with stitching, buttons and ribbons.



TOP TIP

Make mini versions of your polar bear for keyrings, by reducing the size of the templates



Chilled-out Charlie

Create a winter wonderland for shoppers with this cool, quirky, arctic character. It's great as a stocking filler that will charm all year! **By Vicky Craxton**

INFORMATION

Materials

- White felt 23 x 24cm (9 x 9½in)
- Black felt 13 x 21cm (5 x 8¼in)
- Baby pink felt 4 x 4cm (1½ x 1½in)
- Purple felt 8 x 8cm (3¼ x 3¼in)
- Royal blue felt 20 x 3cm (7¾ x 1¼in)
- Matching sewing threads
- Black embroidery thread
- 2 x 3mm round black beads
- Polyester toy filling

Size: 13 x 10.5 x 5cm (5 x 3¾ x 2in)

Skill level: Easy

This fun felt friend is easy to make and won't cost much, so you can really go to town and make a whole family of polar bears. Felt is so simple to work with, it's easy to give your makes lots of character that will warm the hearts of buyers everywhere. As well as looking great, our polar bear fits perfectly in your hand, and will make you feel cosy, too. Finish yours with custom-made hats and scarves, then sell them individually or as a set. When photographing your bears, have fun displaying them in a snowy-white setting.

How to make the polar bear

Cutting out the templates

- In white felt, cut 2 polar bear bodies, 2 polar bear inside legs and 2 polar bear ears.
- In black felt, cut 1 polar bear nose.
- In baby pink felt, cut 2 cheeks.
- In royal blue felt, cut 1 scarf.
- In purple felt, cut 1 beret and 1 stalk.

1 Using an over stitch, sew the nose onto the middle of the polar bear's face on one of the body shapes. Sew a cheek to each side of the nose. To create the mouth, with the embroidery thread, sew one long

backstitch down from the bottom of the nose, and then two long backstitches for the smile. For the eyes, sew two black beads above the nose.

2 On each ear, pinch the end and pull a thread through to hold it in place. With the remaining thread, sew the ears onto the polar bear's head.

3 On the back of each body shape, attach the inner legs using an over stitch. Sew the body shapes together by sewing the top edge and leaving a gap between the legs. Stuff the body with toy filling and then sew up the gap.

4 Wrap the scarf shape around the polar bear's neck, so the ends cross over at the front. Secure in place with a single cross stitch, then cut slits in the ends of the scarf to create tassels.

5 Sew the thin end of the stalk onto the middle of the beret shape. Sew a running stitch that follows the edge of the beret shape. Pull the ends of the thread to pull the edges of the beret inwards. Then sew the beret onto the polar bear's head. 



SHOW US ON FACEBOOK!

We'd love to see your felt polar bear on the *Craftseller* Facebook page

MAKE IT





Personal pendant

This simple technique makes a stunning personalised pendant, and a unique idea for that special Christmas present. **By Dorothy Wood**

INFORMATION

Materials

From i-beads.co.uk

- * Oval frame pendant, 25mm x 38mm (1 x 1½in)
- * 50cm (20in) antique silver chain
- * 3 x antique silver jump rings
- * 12mm (½in) antique silver lobster clasp
- * Sheet of French text from a book, or printed from the internet
- * Resin mix
- * Black card
- * Appligu
- * Fine craft knife and cutting mat

Pendant: 25mm x 38mm (1 x 1½in)

Chain: 50cm (20in)

Skill level: Easy

How to make the personalised pendant



1 Print a sheet of text from the internet or use a page from a book. Draw around the outside of the pendant on the printed paper. Cut out just inside the line. Fit into the pendant frame, trim any excess. Stick the paper into the base of the frame.



2 Using Apple Chancery font in size 72, type and print out your chosen letter. Lay the letter on black card, and cut it out with a craft knife. If you cut out of printed paper only, you'll see white edges around the letter. Stick the letter onto the text.



3 Mix resin according to instructions, and stir gently to avoid bubbles. Lay frame on a steady surface and pour in resin until slightly domed. Remove any bubbles by dragging to the edge of frame with a dressmaker's pin. Leave to dry overnight.



4 To finish the pendant, open up a jump ring and use it to attach the pendant to the middle of the chain. Attach a jump ring to both ends of the chain. Attach the lobster clasp to the right-hand side for a right-hander, or the left for a left-hander. 

Découpage is a really versatile technique, used here to make a very easy but stylish pendant that can be personalised with an initial. Making the resin can be a fiddly process, so we suggest mixing a large amount and preparing several pendants at the same time. Then all you have to do is leave them to set on a firm surface, and your first batch is ready to pack up and sell. Try adapting this simple method to make earrings and bracelets, too.

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TOP TIP

This baby merino yarn is very stretchy, so there's no need to worry about the size too much



Winter warmer

A cosy, hand-knitted hot water bottle cover is always a good Christmas seller. Personalise yours to make it stand out. **By Angela Turner**

INFORMATION

Materials

- * 1 x 50g ball of DROPS Baby Merino in white (shade 01)
- * 1 x 50g ball of DROPS Baby Merino in red (shade 16)
- * 3mm (UK 11) knitting needles
- * 2 toggle buttons
- * Tapestry needle for sewing seams
- * Standard two-litre hot water bottle

Size: To fit standard two-litre bottle

Skill level: Moderate

Tension: Tension is not critical for this project

How to make the hot water bottle cover

ABBREVIATIONS

k:	knit
p:	purl
inc:	increase(ing)
k2tog:	knit 2sts together
rep:	repeat
st(s):	stitch(es)
st st:	stocking stitch



FRONT

Using white, cast on 44sts.

Work 4 rows in st st, inc one st each at end of every row. 52sts.

Row 5: Change to red. Inc in first st, k to last st, inc. 54sts.

Row 6: (P1 red, p1 white) to end.

Row 7: Using red, knit.

Row 8: Using white, purl.

Row 9: Knit.

Row 10: Purl.

Row 11: Inc in first st, k to last st, inc. 56sts.

Row 12: P5 white, (p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p9 white) to last 3sts, p1 red, p1 white, p1 red.

Row 13: Using white, inc in first st, (k2 red, k1 white, k1 red, k8 white) to last 7sts, k2 red, k1 white, k1 red, k3 white, increasing in last st. 58sts.

Row 14: P2 white, (p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p1 white, p3 red, p5 white) to last 8sts, p1 red,

p1 white, p1 red, p1 white, p3 red, p1 white.

Row 15: Using white, inc in first st, k3 white, (k2 red, k1 white, k1 red, k8 white) to last 6sts, k2 red, k1 white, k1 red, k2 white, increasing in last st. 60sts.

Row 16: P3 white, (p1 red, p1 white, p4 red, p6 white) to last 9sts, p1 red, p1 white, p4 red, p3 white.

Row 17: K7 white, (k2 red, k10 white) to last 5sts, k2 red, k3 white.

Row 18: P3 white, (p5 red, p7 white) to last 9sts, p5 red, p4 white.

Row 19: K9 white, (k1 red, k11 white) to last 3sts, k1 red, k2 white.

Row 20: Using white, purl.

Row 21: Inc in first st, k to last st, inc. 62sts.

Row 22: Purl.

Row 23: Knit.

Row 24: (P2 red, p2 white) to last 2sts, p2 red.

Row 25: Using red, knit.

Row 26: Purl.

Starting with a k row, work 2 rows st st in white.

Row 29: K2 white, (k1 red, k6 white) to last 4sts, k1 red, k3 white.

Row 30: P2 white, (p3 red, p4 white) to last 4sts, p3 red, p1 white.

Row 31: (K2 red, k1 white, k2 red, k2 white) to last 6sts, k2 red, k1 white, k2 red, k1 white.

Row 32: Rep row 30.

Row 33: Rep row 29.

Starting with a p row, st st 2 rows in white, »

For a great addition to your personalised range this Christmas, try this Scandinavian-style hot water bottle cover. Scandi-style is so popular, and the red and white colourway is traditional as well as festive – appealing to grandmothers and present-buying grandchildren alike! The baby merino yarn we used is a wonderfully soft, natural yarn that's well-known for its insulating properties, making this a delightful and very practical gift. Be flexible with your range and make some covers with a blank space – you can then swiss-darn or chain-stitch a name on for each unique order.

then 2 rows in red.

Row 38: Rep row 24.

Starting with a k row, st st 4 rows in white.*

Row 43: (K1 red, k3 white) to last 2sts, k1 red, k1 white.

Row 44: Using white, purl.

Row 45: K2 white, (k1 red, k3 white) to end.

Row 46: Rep row 44.

Row 47: (K1 red, k3 white) x 4, k32 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 3, k1 red, k1 white.

Row 48: P19 white, p3 red, p1 white, p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p3 white, p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p4 white, p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p4 white, p1 red, p18 white.

Row 49: K2 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 4, k2 red, k3 white, k1 red, k1 white, k1 red, k4 white, k1 red, k1 white, k1 red, k3 white, k1 red, k1 white, k2 red, k2 white, k2 red, k6 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 3.

Row 50: P18 white, p1 red, p3 white, p2 red, p1 white, p1 red, p2 white, p1 red, p2 white, p1 red, p4 white, p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p3 white, p2 red, p18 white.

Row 51: (K1 red, k3 white) x 4, k2 white, k1 red, k1 white, k1 red, k2 white, k1 red, k1 white, k6 red, k2 white, k1 red, k2 white, k1 red, k6 white, k1 red, k4 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 3, k1 red, k1 white.

Row 52: P18 white, p1 red, p6 white, p3 red, p3 white, p1 red, p4 white, p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p2 white, p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p18 white.

Row 53: K2 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 4, k1 red, k2 white, k1 red, k1 white, k1 red, k1 white, k1 red, k4 white, k1 red, k2 white, k1 red, k6 white, k1 red, k6 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 3.

Row 54: P18 white, p1 red, p6 white, p1 red, p3 white, (p1 red, p2 white) x 3, p1 red, p1 white, p1 red, p2 white, p1 red, p18 white.

Row 55: (K1 red, k3 white) x 4, k2 white, k1 red, k3 white, k2 red, k2 white, (k1 red, k2 white) x 3, k1 white, k1 red, k1 white, k1 red, k4 white, k1 red, k4 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 3, k1 red, k1 white.

Row 56: P19 white, p5 red, p2 white, p4 red, p3 white, p2 red, p3 white, p2 red, p3 white, p1 red, p18 white.

Row 57: K2 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 4, k32 white, (k1 red, k3 white) x 3.

Row 58: Using white, purl.

Rows 59-62: Rep rows 43-46.

**Using white only, st st 3 more rows.

Row 66: Using red, purl.

Row 67: (K1 red, k1 white) to end.



Row 68: Rep row 66.

Row 69: Using white, knit.

Row 70: Purl.

Row 71: Knit.

Row 72: Purl.

Row 73: K12 white, k1 red, k5 white, k1 red, k24 white, k1 red, k5 white, k1 red, k12 white.

Row 74: P12 white, p2 red, p3 white, p2 red, p24 white, p2 red, p3 white, p2 red, p12 white.

Row 75: K12 white, k3 red, k1 white, k3 red, k24 white, k3 red, k1 white, k3 red, k12 white.

Row 76: P13 white, p2 red, p1 white, p2 red, p26 white, p2 red, p1 white, p2 red, p13 white.

Row 77: K8 white, k3 red, k3 white, k1 red, k1 white, k1 red, k3 white, k3 red, k16 white, k3 red, k3 white, k1 red, k1 white, k1 red, k3 white, k3 red, k8 white.

Row 78: P9 white, p3 red, p7 white, p3 red, p18 white, p3 red, p7 white, p3 red, p9 white.

Row 79: K3 white, k2 red, k5 white, (k3 red, k1 white) x3, k4 white, k2 red, k6 white, k2 red, k5 white, (k3 red, k1 white) x 3, k4 white, k2 red, k3 white.

Row 80: P2 white, p4 red, p8 white, p3 red, p8 white, p4 red, p4 white, p4 red, p8 white, p3 red, p8 white, p4 red, p2 white.

Row 81: Rep row 79.

Row 82: Rep row 78.

Row 83: Rep row 77.

Row 84: Rep row 76.

Row 85: Rep row 75.

Row 86: Rep row 74.

Row 87: Rep row 73.

Row 88: Using white, purl.

Row 89: K2tog, k to last 2 sts, k2tog. 60sts.

Row 90: Purl.

Row 91: Rep row 89. 58sts.

Row 92: Using red, purl.

Row 93: Rep row 89. 56sts.

Row 94: Cast off 2sts, p1 red [2 red sts on right hand needle], (p2 white, p2 red) to end. 54sts.

Row 95: Cast off 2sts and, using white only, knit to end. 52sts.

Row 96: Cast off 3sts, p to end. 49sts.

Row 97: Cast off 3sts, k to end. 46sts.

Row 98: Cast off 10sts, p to end. 36sts.

Row 99: Cast off 10sts, k to end. 26sts.

Row 100: Using red, (k1, p1) to end.

Row 101: (K1, p1) to end.

Work a further 8 rows in (k1, p1) rib.

Row 110: Rib 2, (inc in next 2sts, rib 4) to end. 34sts.

Work 12 more rows in rib.

Cast off in rib.

LOWER BACK

Work as for FRONT until *.

Change to red and work 12 rows (k1, p1) rib. Cast off.

UPPER BACK

Using red, cast on 62sts.

Work 4 rows in (k1, p1) rib.

Next row (make buttonholes): Rib 14sts, cast off 2sts, work in rib to last 16sts, cast off 2sts, work to end.

Next row: Rib 14sts, cast on 2sts, rib to last 16sts, cast on 2sts, rib 14sts.

Work 6 more rows in rib.

Row 13: Using white, k to end.

Row 14: Purl.

Row 15: (K1 red, k3 white) to last 2sts, k1 red, k1 white.

Row 16: Using white, purl.

Row 17: K2 white, (k1 red, k3 white) to end.

Row 18: Rep row 14.

Rep last 4 rows once more.

Row 23: Using white, k to end.

Row 24: Purl.

Rep as for FRONT, starting from **. Cast off.

MAKING UP

First, sew the upper back to the front, with right sides facing. Place the lower back in position and sew seams, sewing over the top of the buttonhole band. Tie in all loose ends and trim. Turn the cover right-side out. Add wooden toggle buttons to the button border to match buttonholes. Press lightly. Place a hot water bottle inside, to finish.



Seamstar have recently launched Craft Club, a great community for crafters everywhere! Every month subscribers receive a bundle of gorgeous craft products through their letterbox. Included in every bundle is a 'Monthly Makeable' so you can get crafting straight away.

Here's some more reasons to get involved with the Craft Club:

- 1** Crafting can be expensive. The Craft Club is a great way of getting small amounts of craft products without having to buy big packs or pieces of fabric.
- 2** The bundles are suitable for all levels of ability.
- 3** You get a lovely surprise through your letterbox every month!

All of this for just **£9.99** per month.

If you are interested head over to Seamstar as they only create a limited number of bundles each month.

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10 tips to become an award-winning crafter

Bag yourself an armful of crafty awards – and build your business, boost your profile and get some serious recognition for all your hard work in the process. **By Verity Gough**

The explosion in craft businesses has meant that the number of awards aimed at crafters has grown exponentially. Participating in competitions can attract benefits far greater than just a pat on the back and a glossy certificate, and all you need to invest is a small amount of time. In fact, if you are shortlisted, it can do wonders for your confidence, boost your bottom line and bring you loads of great PR. So to help you with those entries, here are some top tips from crafters who've been there and won a whole cabinet full of awards – you never know, next year it might be you!

1 Get the pitch right

Joanne Dewbury, founder of Charliemoos.co.uk, has won numerous awards including Dorset Business Mum of the Year. Her top tip is to read the questions carefully: "It's not a test, but the same principles apply. Judges are looking for certain criteria, so make sure you're clear about what they're asking." Dan Martin, founder of investment competition Thepitchuk.com and editor of BusinessZone.co.uk, says clarity and brevity are key: "You need to quickly communicate what you do, why we need your product or service, and how it makes money. Those are the three questions judges and investors will ask."



Since her big win, Joanne's business profile has rocketed

2 Blow your trumpet!

"No one knows your business as well as you do, so shout about your achievements," says Gemma Manning-Bentley (Gemmipop-designs.com), winner of the Oswestry & Border Chronicle Business Awards Young Entrepreneur of the Year. Kirstie Sleight, editor of *Cardmaking & Papercraft* magazine agrees: "Cardmakers often tell me they don't enter competitions because they 'know' they aren't good enough, yet they're so talented."

3 Sell your uniqueness

"Remember, you already have the main asset to make your products stand out – YOU!" says Amber Bain of Fingertipsdesigns.co.uk. "Use your creativity, send samples, take unusual photos – even submit your nomination as a scrapbook – just make sure your entry reflects your business."





Entrepreneur Gemma is now a mentor on the StartUp Britain Bus tour

4 Research the market

There are a lot of companies out there claiming to give your craft business a 'seal of approval', but do your homework because some charge up to £200 per product entry and the 'award' isn't worth anything. Instead, award-winning mumpreneur, Leanne Curtis-Cobb, founder of Quackquackmoooclothing.com, suggests going for quality rather than quantity. "If you choose awards that are prestigious, the nomination alone will give customers a good impression of your product."

5 Use the entry as a springboard!

Each time you apply for an award, you propel your business into the limelight and you can piggyback on other companies' online and commercial presence. "Your nomination means your business is affiliated with the company running the award, which gives you free publicity," explains Amber. "If you link it with your web presence, your Search Engine Optimisation will rank higher, boosting your online presence and traffic. This affiliation will give shoppers more confidence to purchase from you."

6 Prepare to win

One of the major perks of a win is the free publicity, but make sure your website and social media is up-to-date. "The local press gave me lots of publicity. Thankfully, I was ready," says Gemma, who became a business mentor on the StartUp Britain Bus tour after her win. Likewise, Paula Holifield won Cardmaker of the Year in 2008 and now works for design teams, as well as designing for magazines. "I've been offered so much work, I've had to turn some down as there just isn't enough time!"

7 Go virtual!

The majority of crafting awards are web-based, as it's cost-effective for the award provider – entrants don't usually have to pay, plus the majority of buyers are virtual these days. Not only are internet awards the perfect way to step onto the awards ladder, they are an informal way of promoting yourself and your business. "The anonymity of the internet makes it the ideal platform for shy crafters," says Amber. Even online marketplaces like Etsy run smallscale awards, so keep a lookout for dates and deadlines.



Amber urges you to use your creativity when entering

8 Use it as a way to improve your business

Applying for an award makes you look at your business from the outside. Gemma found that writing her application gave her food for thought: "It was an opportunity to think about how I want my business to develop, as well as looking back at how far it has already come," she reflects. Joanne suggests asking friends what they like and admire about you and your business. "This will give you a confidence boost, a big picture of your strengths, and lots of examples you can use on your application – as well as helping you focus on areas that need improvement."



9 Don't restrict yourself

Is your blog getting great hits? Are your Facebook likes off the scale? Consider the different elements that make up you and your business. Are you a mum? A woman? Where are you based? Do you create for the wedding, baby or children sectors? Do you blog and tweet, run workshops and clubs, or have you created a stellar e-newsletter? All these make up categories in awards, so do your research before you write any applications.

10 Get ready for awards next year!

"Enter loads, and save copies of your applications – then you can copy the details for future competitions, while refining and perfecting your message," advises Joanne. Gemma is already gearing up for next year. "Writing applications will give me an opportunity to look at how things are progressing and see if I've met my goals," she says. "Winning a prestigious competition is an excellent platform," concludes Paula. "It's a chance to showcase your talents – you never know who could be watching!"



Gemma's cute, colourful makes have helped her succeed

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Winter bakes

It's time to batten down the hatches and cosy up, offering customers your finest celebration bakes and comforting cakes. **By Jessica Sharp**



The winter season is here, so we've chosen heartwarming bakes to welcome shoppers in from the cold! There's a yule log with a salted caramel twist – a mouthwatering flavour with a hint of savoury saltiness. You can make a whole yule log to order, or slice it to sell in pieces! Our other bakes wouldn't be out of place at a Thanksgiving dinner. Try the warm and spicy eggnog cupcakes, and the sweet potato cake with marshmallow topping for something different. Sold in the warmth of a Christmas fair, you'll make a good profit, as these bakes use inexpensive, wholesome ingredients.



Salted caramel chocolate yule log

INGREDIENTS

For the cake:

- * 6 large eggs
- * 150g (5½oz) caster sugar
- * 50g (2oz) cocoa powder, sifted
- * 1 tsp vanilla extract

For the salted caramel buttercream:

- * 125g (4½oz) caster sugar
- * 75ml (2½ fl oz) double cream
- * ½ tsp table salt
- * 1 tsp vanilla extract
- * 175g (6oz) salted butter, softened
- * 200g (7oz) icing sugar

To decorate:

- * 100g (3½oz) dark chocolate
- * 100g (3½oz) white chocolate
- * Edible glitter (optional)

Specialist equipment:

- * 33 x 23cm (13 x 9in) swiss roll tin
- * 30cm (12in) square cake board

Time: 2 hours

Makes: One log

Skill level: Easy

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C, 160°C fan, gas mark 4. Grease the swiss roll tin and line with baking paper.

2 Prepare the chocolate 'bark' at least an hour, or up to two days, before making the cake. Melt the dark chocolate in one bowl and 50g (2oz) of the white chocolate in another. Line a baking sheet with baking paper and spread the dark chocolate over it in an even, thin layer. While the dark chocolate is still warm, dot teaspoonfuls of the white chocolate over it. Draw a knife or skewer backwards and forwards through the

white chocolate to create a marbled effect that looks like wood grain. Place the baking sheet in the fridge and chill the chocolate for at least an hour.

3 To make the cake, first separate the eggs, placing the whites in a grease-free bowl and the yolks in another. Using a clean, grease-free whisk, whisk the egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add 50g (2oz) of the sugar and whisk until firmer peaks form, ensuring the whites do not become too stiff and dry. Set aside. Add the rest of the sugar to the yolks, along with the vanilla extract, then whisk until pale and thick in texture. Add the cocoa to the yolks and mix in thoroughly.

4 Take a large spoonful of the egg whites and beat into the yolk mixture to loosen it. Using a large metal spoon, fold the rest of the whites into the yolk mixture in three batches. Ensure the whites are fully incorporated, but take care not to beat the air out of the batter. Gently pour the batter into the prepared swiss roll tin and bake for 20-25 mins, until the cake is risen and shrinking away from the sides of the tin slightly. Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin for a few minutes. Lay a sheet of baking paper on the work surface and dust with icing sugar. Turn the cake out onto this, and peel away the baking paper the cake was cooked in. Cover with a clean tea towel and leave to cool completely.

5 While the cake is cooking, make the salted caramel for the icing. Place the caster sugar in a saucepan with 4 tablespoons of water and bring to a boil over a high heat. Cook for four to five minutes, or until it has thickened slightly and turned a light golden colour. Remove the pan from the heat, then immediately add the cream and

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stir with a heatproof spoon. Take care as you do this, because the caramel could splutter when the cream is added. Stir in the vanilla and salt and leave to cool.

6 Using an electric hand-whisk or freestanding mixer, beat the butter until it is very soft. Gradually incorporate the icing sugar before beating in the cooled salted caramel. Using a spatula or similar, spread the cake board very thinly with buttercream. Take the remaining white chocolate and grate it all over the board so that it looks like snow-covered ground. Sprinkle with edible glitter if desired.

7 Use a sharp bread knife to gently trim the sides from the cake (keep the trimmings to one side for later). Using a palette knife, spread the surface of the cake with a thin layer of buttercream. Start to roll the cake up from the long edge – to get a professional finish, do this by holding and pulling the baking paper up and over the cake rather than handling the delicate sponge directly. Once the cake is rolled, cut off one of the ends at a slanted angle (this will later form the branch).

8 Place the swiss roll on the board and position the branch – you can use pieces of leftover cake trimmings to fill any gaps between the main log and the branch. Use a palette knife to cover the surface of the cake with buttercream, leaving the ends bare. Remove the chocolate from the fridge and break into large shards. Position these all over the cake to look like bark, pressing gently onto the buttercream. The finished log will keep for five days in an airtight container.





Sweet potato celebration cake

INGREDIENTS

For the cake:

- * 4-5 small sweet potatoes, approx. 500g (1 lb 1½ oz)
- * 200g (7oz) unsalted butter, softened
- * 400g (14oz) light brown muscovado sugar
- * 3 large eggs
- * 1 tsp vanilla extract
- * 150g (5½oz) pot natural yoghurt
- * 400g (14oz) plain flour
- * 1½ tsp baking powder
- * 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- * 1½ tsp ground cinnamon

For the icing:

- * 200g (7oz) unsalted butter, softened
- * 400g (14oz) icing sugar
- * 100g (3½oz) white mini marshmallows
- * 1 tsp vanilla extract
- * Gold pearls, balls and edible glitter

Special equipment:

- * Electric whisk
- * 2 x 20cm (8in) round sandwich tins
- * 25cm (10in) round gold cake board

Time: 2.5 hours

Makes: One cake

Skill level: Easy

1 Preheat the oven to 220°C, 200°C fan, gas mark 7. Rub the sweet potatoes all over with a little oil, place on a baking tray and roast for 35-40 mins or until tender. Leave the potatoes to cool, then peel away the skins and scoop the flesh into a bowl. Mash or whisk the potatoes to create a smooth puree, then set aside. Turn the oven temperature down to 180°C, 160°C fan, gas mark 4. Grease the two sandwich tins and line the base of each with baking paper.

2 Place the butter and brown sugar in a bowl and whisk using an electric whisk until pale in colour. Add the eggs one at a time, beating between each addition. Mix in the sweet potato puree and vanilla extract. Measure the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and cinnamon into a separate bowl. Add half the yoghurt to the sweet potato mixture and whisk in before incorporating half the flour mixture. Then add the rest of the yoghurt, followed by the rest of the dry ingredients.

3 Divide the cake batter between the two tins and bake for 30-40 mins, until the cakes are risen and a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tins for a few minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

4 To make the icing, place the marshmallows in a heatproof bowl and microwave in 15-second bursts until they are warm and starting to melt, but are not completely melted. Stir so there are no lumps, then set aside to cool a little. Place the butter in a bowl and beat until very soft, then gradually incorporate the icing sugar. Add the vanilla extract and beat the icing for a few minutes until it is fluffy. To this, add the melted marshmallows and beat until smooth. The icing is best used immediately, as it will firm up as it cools.

5 If necessary, trim the tops of the two cakes to make them level. Place one, cut side up, on the cake board and spread with icing. Top with the second cake and cover the entire surface of the sandwiched cakes with the icing. Sprinkle the top of the cake with a mixture of gold pearls, balls, and edible glitter. The cake will keep for around a week in an airtight container.





Eggnog and cinnamon cupcakes



INGREDIENTS

For the cupcakes:

- * 175g (6oz) unsalted butter, softened
- * 175g (6oz) caster sugar
- * 175g (6oz) self-raising flour
- * 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- * 1 tsp baking powder
- * 1 tsp vanilla extract
- * 1 tsp cinnamon
- * Quarter of a nutmeg, freshly grated
- * 1 tbsp brandy, plus 2 tbsp for brushing

For the brandy buttercream:

- * 175g (6oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- * 350g (12½oz) icing sugar
- * 1 tsp vanilla extract
- * 2½ tbsp brandy
- * 6 cinnamon sticks, snapped in half, to decorate

Special equipment:

- * Electric whisk
- * 12-hole muffin tin and cases

Time: 1½ hours

Makes: 12

Skill level: Easy

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C, 160°C fan, gas mark 4. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with festive paper or foil cases.

2 Place all the cupcake ingredients into a bowl. Using a freestanding mixer or electric hand-whisk, beat the ingredients for a couple of minutes until everything is combined. Divide the cake batter equally between the muffin cases and bake for 20-25 mins – the cakes should be risen and lightly browned when you take them out.

3 Remove from the oven and brush the hot cakes with brandy (optional), before placing them on a wire rack to cool completely. To make the buttercream icing, whisk the butter until very soft, then gradually incorporate the icing sugar. Add the vanilla extract and brandy to the mix, and whisk for a few minutes until light and fluffy.

4 Fit a piping bag with a star tip. Fill with buttercream and pipe swirls of icing on each cake. Finish with a grating of nutmeg and half a cinnamon stick. The cakes will keep in an airtight container for five days. 



Charity bakes

Heat things up in the kitchen with your baking this winter, and help to raise cash for good causes



Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY)

Get busy in the kitchen, and help to find a cure for sudden cardiac death in the young

Transform a regular craft club meeting into a Great Cake Bake, and you'll be doing your bit to help Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY). CRY aims to prevent tragic sudden cardiac death in young people by offering free screening to people aged 14-35, funding research into the condition, and providing support for those whose lives have been affected by cardiac arrest.

CRY's Great Cake Bake launched last year and raised £15,000 for the charity. This year, CRY wants to smash that target.

It couldn't be easier to help. Why not ask your craft group to bake cakes and spread the word to ensure a good turnout? As CRY

This year, CRY wants to smash the £15,000 target

helps young people, get them involved by running demos to teach them to sew, knit or bake! Look for opportunities to raise more cash by raffling off a sponge, or having a contest with a £1 entry fee.

The official The Great Cake Bake day is 29th November, but hold yours to suit you, and send the proceeds throughout the year.



Always take a few collection boxes to your charity sale



These pretty bakes would win our best-in-show rosette



How you can help

For information, visit c-r-y.org.uk/Great_Cake_Bake.htm. For an information pack, contact ben@c-r-y.org.uk or 01737 363 222

Wallace & Gromit's Children's party

The dynamic duo wants you to get cracking in the kitchen and bake up a storm!

Wallace & Gromit have a request – this month they're asking you to whip out your whisks to raise some dough for sick children. Every year across the UK, millions of children are treated in hospices and hospitals. Some suffer from common childhood illnesses while others face serious, life-changing conditions. Wallace & Gromit's Children's Charity provides state-of-the-art equipment, family facilities, plus art, music and play therapy to hundreds of thousands of children each year.

In order to keep up this vital work the charity needs your help, and holding a BIG Bake event is a great way



to get involved. This year's BIG Bake takes place from 2nd-8th December, so there's plenty of time to get organised.

Whether you bake cupcakes, cheesecakes, pies, pastries, brownies or bloomers, invite friends, colleagues and family to share a special spread – just charge £1 for each item. Register your event online and you'll receive a free fundraising pack, with everything you need for a successful event.



Get your bake on for kids in hospital and hospices across the UK

How you can help

For more information on Wallace & Gromit's Children's Charity, call 0117 925 2744 or visit wallaceandgromitfoundation.org/big-bake

AmnesTea

Cook for justice! Hold a delicious AmnesTea to raise cash for human rights work

Amnesty International is calling on crafters to raise a toast to freedom, with a good brew and a cake or two! The charity is a campaigning organisation that aims to protect people wherever justice, fairness, freedom and truth are denied. Hold an AmnesTea to raise vital funds. AmnesTeas are fundraising events of all shapes and sizes with some things in common – tea, cake, and the will to make a difference and stand together against human-rights abuses.

The Great British Bake Off's Mel Giedroyc is a supporter of Amnesty, and recently held her own AmnesTea: "I've always admired Amnesty's doggedness, their tirelessness and essential hope and optimism. They are impressive on so many levels and fight,



lobby, persuade and campaign all over the world. It's a great honour to be involved."

We can't think of a better reason to get baking! Whether you hold a small, fuss-free party at home or a big bake sale at school, work or in the community, every penny raised will make an important contribution to human-rights work around the world.



How you can help

To find out more about AmnesTea, call 020 7033 1682 or visit amnesty.org.uk



Birthday wishes

There are plenty of birthdays during the festive season, so be sure to stock cards for all occasions at this time of year. **By Wendy Massey**

INFORMATION

Materials

- * Two 15 x 15cm (6 x 6in) Kraft card blanks
- * Free *Craftseller* papers
- * Red card
- * White card
- * Scraps of felt in red and white
- * 35cm of 1cm wide ribbon
- * 25cm of pre-gathered lace
- * Black thread
- * Small bell
- * Red embroidery thread
- * Small pre-made bow
- * Dark yellow and pink marker pens
- * Black pen
- * Glue and scissors
- * Sticky pads

Size: 15 x 15cm (6 x 6in)

Skill level: Easy

Cards are a quick way to add some festive fun to your shop or stall, so make sure you take a look through our evergreen Christmas-themed papers and see what inspires you. Or, if you're stuck for ideas, then we have two fabulous designs for you to try. It's important to cater for everyone with your cards, so make sure the winter holidays don't distract you from birthdays with our sweet babushka doll card. Then turn to [page 59](#) to see how we've used the owl trend to wish you a Merry Christmas!

How to make the birthday card

- 1** Cut red card to 12.5 x 12.5cm (5 x 5in). Cut dotted paper to 12 x 12cm (4¾ x 4¾in). Cut holly paper to 4 x 12cm (1½ x 4¾in). Glue together as shown in picture. Cut 15cm (6in) each of ribbon and lace. Sew or glue the ribbon and lace along the join in the papers. Glue ends behind the card to neaten.
- 2** Use the templates on p102. Cut a Russian doll shape from red paper and another from red card. Glue together. Cut a face shape from white card and draw a simple face on. Glue onto the Russian doll. Glue ribbon and lace at waist level, securing raw ends behind the doll. Glue bow in place.



- 3** Stick the background onto the card blank using sticky pads. Stick the Russian doll in place using sticky pads.
- 4** Cut out the 'On Your Birthday' sentiment. Cut a rectangle of white paper slightly larger than the sentiment and draw faux stitching along the edges. Stick the sentiment on top of the white card using sticky pads, then glue in place on the card.

Festive Traditions

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Christmas Wishes

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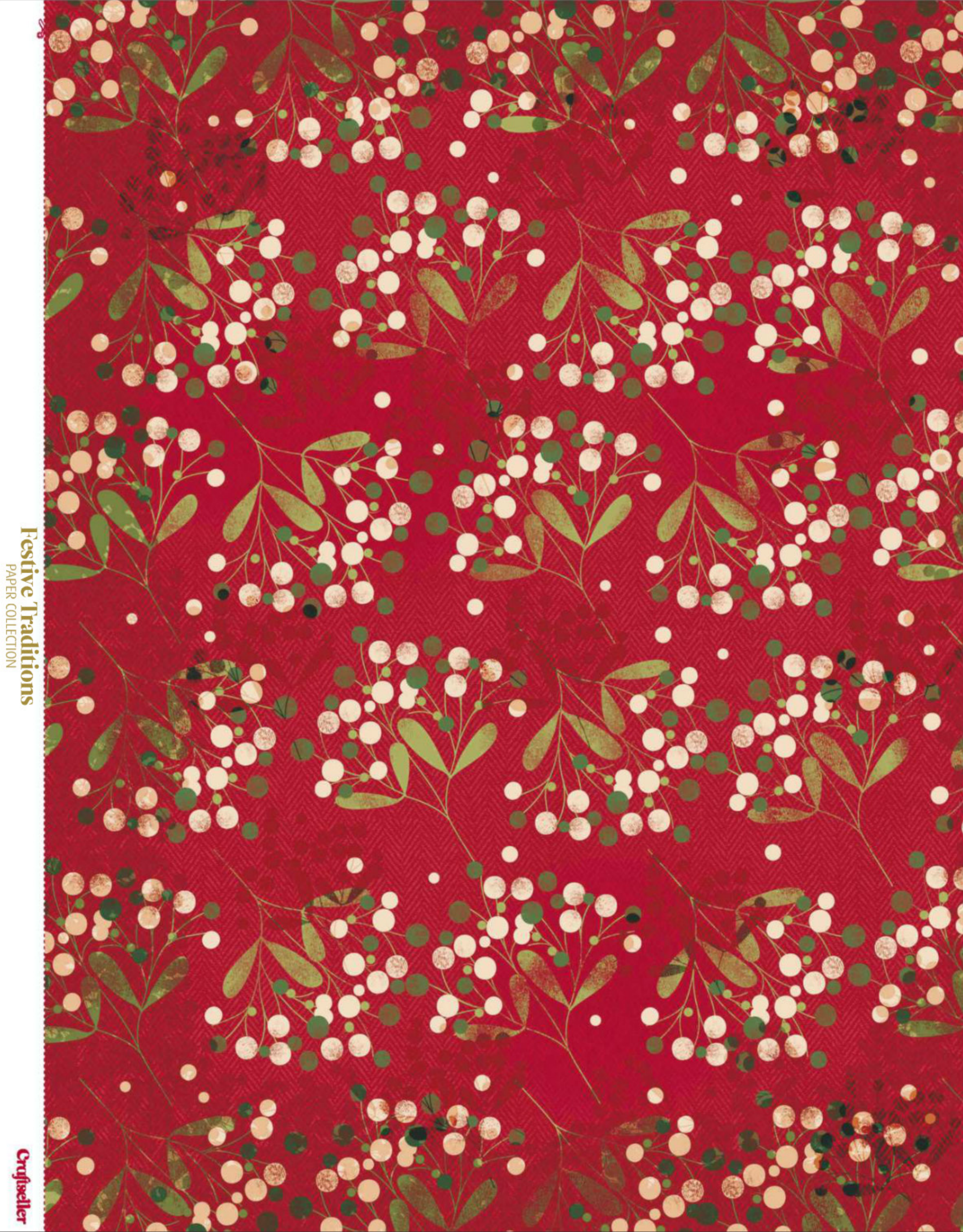
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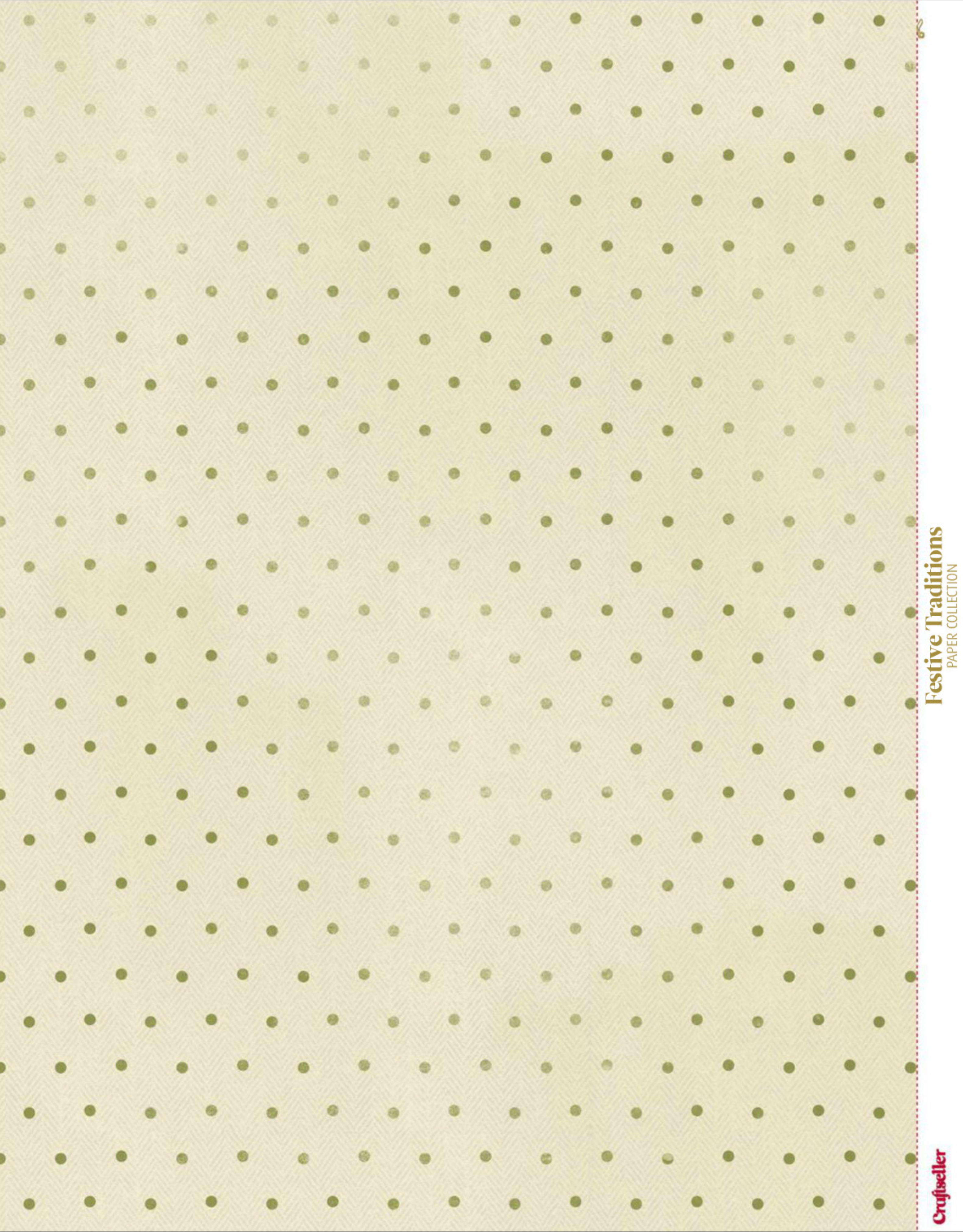
Craftseller













Christmas snooze

Cash in on the never-ending trend for owl-themed crafts with this sleeping beauty – you can whip it up in no time. **By Wendy Massey**



How to make the owl card

- 1** Cut red card to 13.5 x 13.5cm (5½ x 5½in). Cut poinsettia paper to 13 x 13cm (5¼ x 5¼in), snowflake paper to 3 x 13cm (1¼ x 5¼in), green star paper to 2.5 x 13cm (1 x 5¼in). Glue together as shown.
- 2** Use the templates on p102. Cut an owl from dotted paper and one, slightly larger, from red card. Glue together. Cut two wing shapes. Attach to owl with sticky pads.
- 3** Cut a beak and stick to face with a sticky pad. Draw two semi-circles to represent closed eyelids and add eyelashes.
- 4** Stick ribbon to back of owl. Tie at front to form a scarf. Fix ends with sticky pads.
- 5** Cut out a hat shape from red felt and red card. Cut a rectangle of white felt. Sew or glue together. Sew a bell to the hat with embroidery thread. Dangle as shown.
- 6** Cut out sentiment. Cut red card slightly larger. Stick together using sticky pads.
- 7** Stick the background to the card. Add the owl, slightly to the right. Add the hat and sentiment. Layer the sticky pads to keep the final layer level. 



Mummy makes

A hand-stitched Christmas stocking with a personalised matching tag will look right at home on any mantlepiece. **By Rhona Norrie**





INFORMATION

Materials

- * 2 packs Carolina linen aida (Sand), 38 x 45cm (15 x 17¾in) each
- * Threads and needle as listed in key
- * 50cm (20in) festive fabric
- * 1 fat quarter coordinating fabric
- * Matching thread
- * 20cm (8in) narrow ribbon

Size: Approx. 41.5cm (16¼in) long

Skill level: Moderate

Trends come and go, but nothing beats a traditional Christmas with all the trimmings – the cards, trees, pressies, and of course, those Christmas stockings. This holly cross stitch motif is really simple and won't take you long to finish. It looks right at home with the opulent fabric trim and the cool sandy background fabric of the stocking itself, or you could team it with a contemporary fabric and it would look just as festive. The name tag is another simple stitch that you can sell separately, or as a set with the stocking. To boost your profits, why not offer a made-to-order service with shoppers' names and different colourways?



How to make the stocking

- 1 Using the photograph as a guide for the placement of the design, stitch the design onto the aida, following the chart.
- 2 Using the template on p102, trim stitched fabric to stocking shape. Make a second stocking shape from unstitched aida. With right sides facing, pin and sew together with a 0.5cm (¼in) seam allowance, leaving an opening at top. Turn to the right side.
- 3 For the lining, cut two stocking shapes from festive fabric using the template. With right sides facing, pin and sew together with a 0.5cm (¼in) seam allowance, leaving an opening at the top.
- 4 Place the festive fabric stocking inside the aida stocking. Turn the top edges over the top of aida stocking, and sew.
- 5 For the stocking cuff, cut five strips of festive fabric measuring 4.8 x 24.5cm (2 x 9¾in); four strips of coordinating fabric the same size; and a strip of coordinating fabric measuring 5.8 x 24.5cm (2¼ x 9¾in).
- 6 Alternating the patterns, sew the strips together along the long edges using a 0.5cm (¼in) seam. Fold the strip in half with right sides facing, to make a strip approx. 12.5 x 43cm (5 x 17in). Sew along one long edge. Turn right-side out and press.
- 7 Slide cuff over the top edge of stocking and pin in place, with the opening of the cuff at the back of the stocking. Fold raw edges in and slide one edge over the other to complete the cuff. Pin together. Remove stocking and sew cuff together.
- 8 Slide completed cuff back onto stocking. Pin in place and carefully sew the cuff and stocking together.
- 9 For the loop, cut a strip of festive fabric 28 x 4cm (11 x 1½in). Fold edges in by 0.5cm (¼in) all around. Sew short edges. Fold in half with wrong sides together to form a strip. Sew along length of fabric.

- 10 Fold in half to create a loop, and sew the open ends to the inside lining at the back of the stocking.

For the fabric tag

- 1 Stitch the design according to chart, then stitch your chosen name using the ABC, keeping it central under the holly. Trim aida to three blocks around the edge of stitching.
- 2 Measure size of finished aida. Using the same festive fabric as for the stocking, measure and cut a piece of fabric twice the length of the aida plus 5cm (2in), and twice the height of the aida plus 3cm (1¼in).
- 3 Fold over edges of fabric by 0.5cm (¼in) all around, and pin. Fold fabric in half with wrong sides facing. Cut a strip of narrow ribbon and pin between the layers at the top left-hand corner of folded fabric. Sew around edges of fabric, making sure you catch the ribbon as you sew. Place the stitching centrally onto the fabric tag. Sew in place around the edge, and press. 

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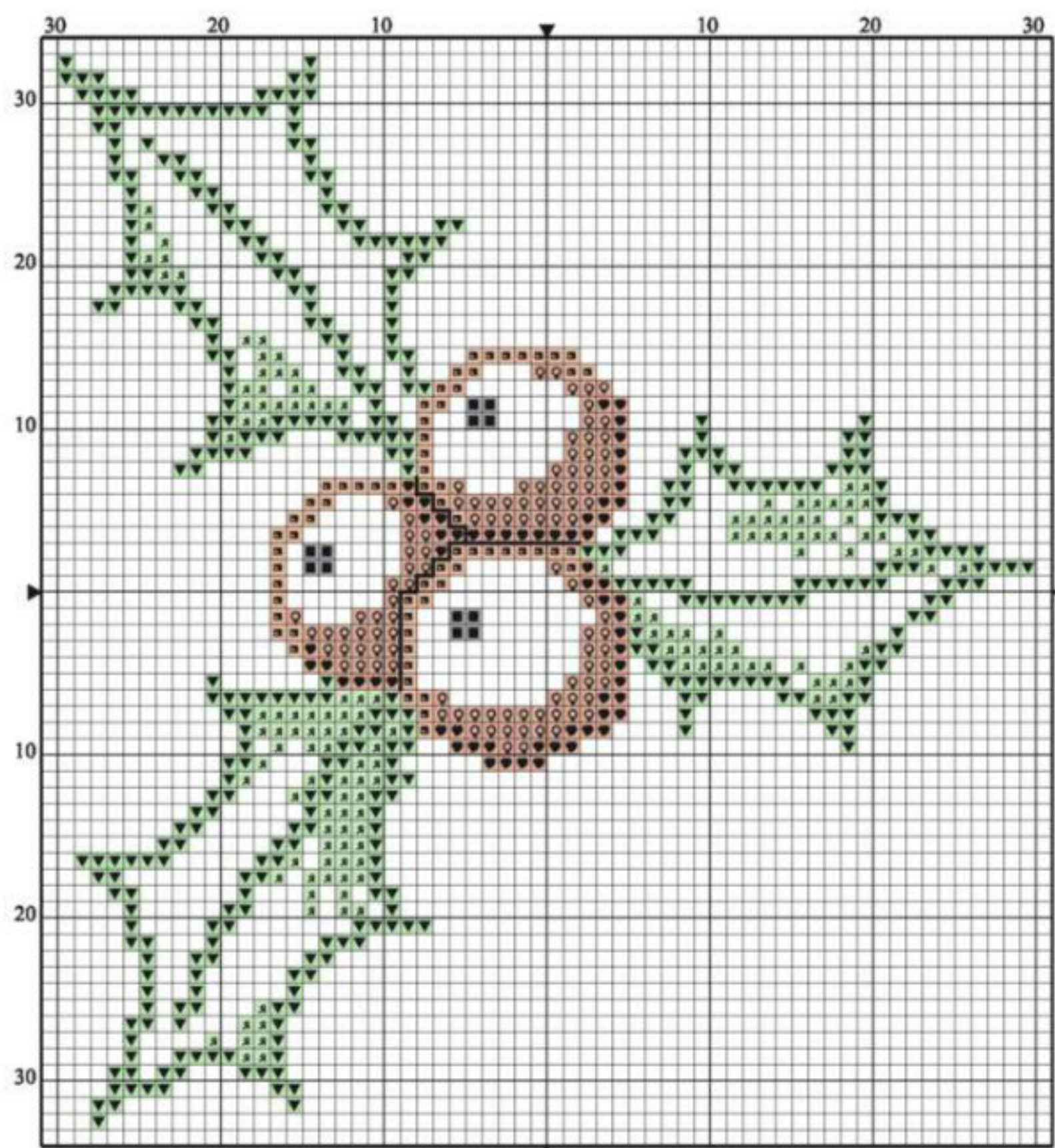
Etsy

Stocking by LudwigasLinen, £43



Etsy

Stocking by WISHsupplies, £11



STOCKING & TAG KEY

Cross stitch in two strands

	DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
■	310	403	2400	black
♥	321	9046	510	dark red
▼	700	229	1302	green
■	3801	1098	411	red

Half cross stitch in two strands

	DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
◊	321	9046	510	dark red
◊	700	229	1302	green

Backstitch in one strand

	DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
—	310	403	2400	black

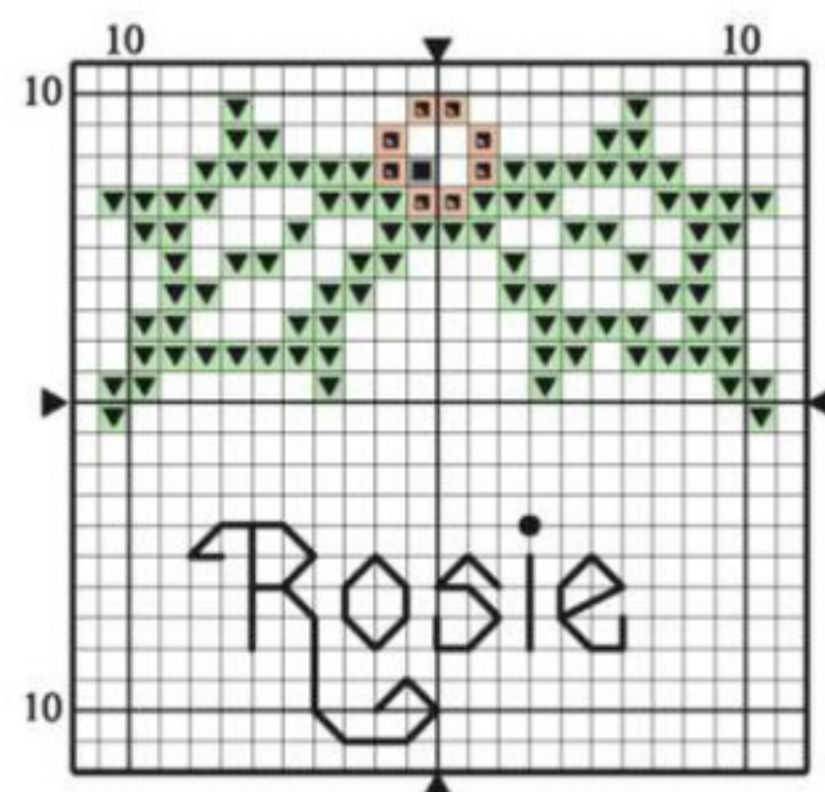
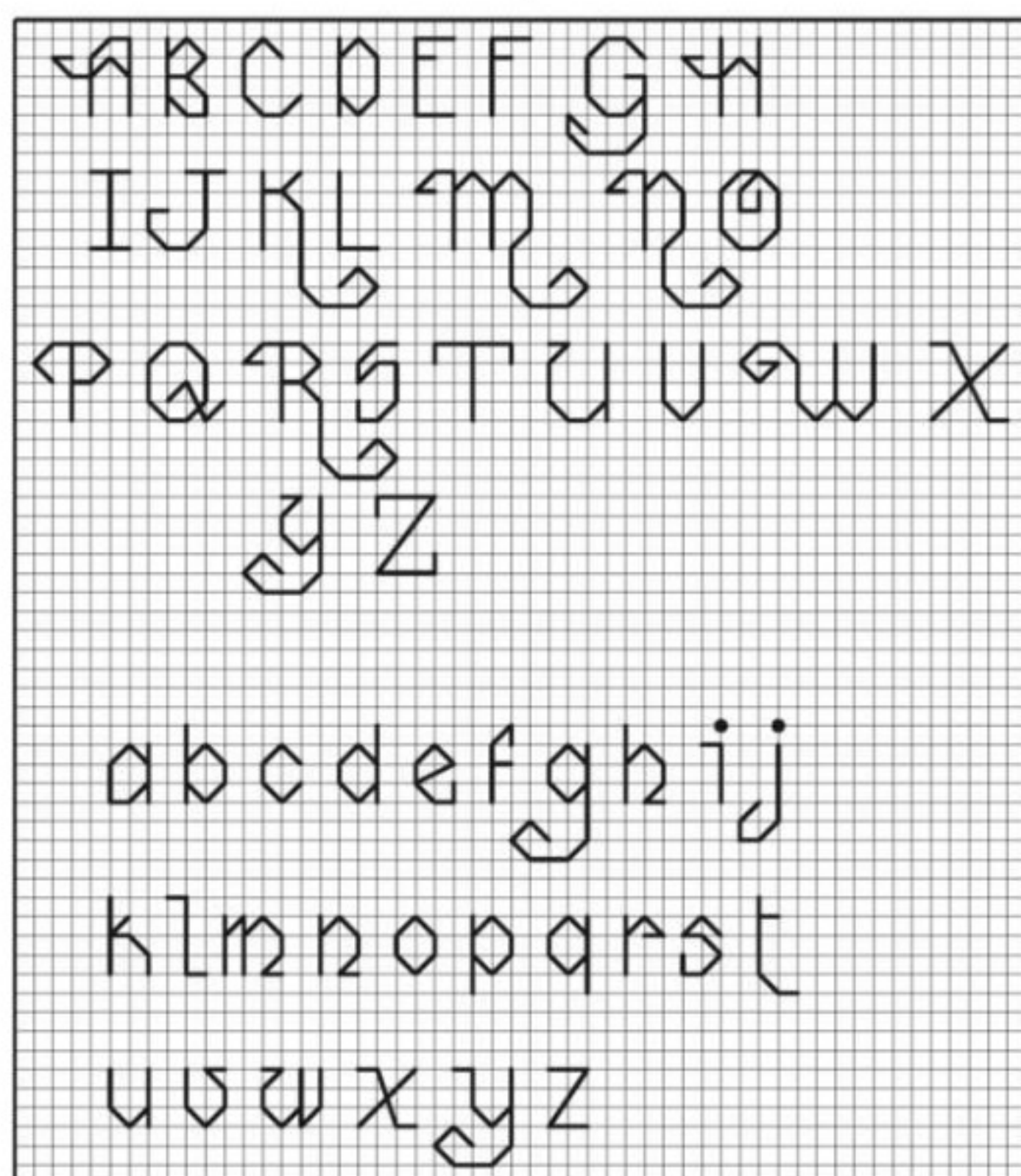
French knots in one strand

	DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
●	310	403	2400	black

Maximum stitch count 66 high x 60 wide

Design area 14 HPI (28-count evenweave) –
12 x 11cm (4¾ x 4½in)

These designs were stitched using DMC stranded cotton



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5



6



6



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7 GET CREATIVE

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8



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Diary of a craft selling mum

Every month, craft seller and mum of two, Erica Martyn, who makes toys for her business Odds & Soxlets, invites us into her world...



All about me

I am 34 years old, and mum to three-year-old Harry and baby girl, Lottie Rose! I have a husband called Martin and a naughty but very sweet 12-year-old Yorkshire Terrier called Mr Biggles. We live in Dorset and I began my business in May 2011. I'm still learning heaps, while at the same time juggling home life, finances, and the needs and demands of my growing family and my customers...

Erica ♥

THIS MONTH

- * Christmas crafty makes – 20
- * Website crashes – 1
- * Hours rebuilding website – 28
- * Hours spent suppressing fury at website crashing – 42
- * Sleepless nights (due to website crashing, not Lottie) – 5
- * New wrinkles formed – 7

Day 2

Some days you wake up and you think it's going to be a good day – the baby slept through, the sun is shining and your favourite song is on the radio. Then you take a call from a puzzled customer who can't get on your website. The baby starts crying, storm clouds roll in, the radio is full of bad news and you realise your website has crashed. Horrible, horrible, horrible – there's no other way to describe that sinking feeling. Today was not a good day.

Day 3

I've been snappy, tearful, angry, frustrated and downright miserable, but now it's roll-up-the-sleeves-and-get-on-with-it time. I use a WordPress site, run through a hosting company, so I contacted the hosts who said there was a bug in their system.

Day 7

Bug identified, but the back-up of my site that I was promised turned out to be just a blank page. I think you could hear the scream in China. Am trying to stay calm by counting to ten... and then some, 229071, 229072, 229073, 229074. Oh, and Lottie is teething....229075, 229076, 229077....

Day 8

My superhero husband did a bit of research and found web.archive.org. It captures websites from the entire internet at various intervals. It's like something out of *Doctor*



Harry enjoyed getting to know the dinosaurs at Wookey Hole



Erica has been working on some makes for Harry's Christmas fair



Erica's makes are inspired by her own toys, like Poppa Bob

Miss Tilly's Fabric Emporium, who cater for those who need compliant fabrics and trims.

Day 21

Since watching the film *Elf* last year, Harry's become an expert on all things Christmas and has asked if we can make some things for his school Christmas fair. I run my ideas past him first, and once we get over the 'YES!' to everything, he actually has a good eye! So the pair of us are putting together dolly decorations, stockings, hanging hearts, felt decorations and cards, which Lottie loves because of all the gemstones.

Day 28

Nearly completed my first Bearly Babygrow! I'm so excited. I have finally decided on a bear pattern I'm happy with and I've used Harry's newborn babygrow to dress him. This new project really inspires me – I own a teddy collection and my very favourite, from my parents for my 21st, is Poppa Bob (a Robin Rive collector's bear). I mentioned my bears to all my friends and they're trying to place orders as, like me, they all have precious newborn baby clothing.

Day 30

Spent the day in fits of giggles as Martin wrestled with a 1970s hostess trolley, making a transporter for my cumbersome t-shirt printer. I am so impressed – he really is the hostess with the mostest!



Harry's clothes fit Erica's first Bearly Babygrow



Harry chose dolly decorations to sell at his school fair



Cards are a great money-spinner at Christmas fairs

Who and it saved the day.

I found an old version of my site and was able to retrieve all the important info and the layout. Otherwise I'd have had to start from scratch. Now I'm feeling calm again, and I'm using this opportunity to update some of the features and sort out my own method of backing up my site.

Day 10

It's our first anniversary! I nearly forgot after the stresses of the last few days! We went as a family to Wookey Hole, where watching a happy Harry bond with the dinosaurs and gasp at the caves reminded me of my priorities. When you work for yourself it's so easy to let work get on top of you, because you can't leave it behind like you do in an office. But it does mean I get to see my children. In the evening, Martin made me brie-stuffed chicken with asparagus wrapped in Parma ham, and we toasted the future with champagne.

Day 18

All I want for Christmas is – more hours in the day! It's hit me that I may have to shelve a few ideas for next year. Even if I start to rush now I may not make the deadline, so I will have wasted the time. I made some hanging decorations, which I'm pleased with. Although these are exempt from CE-marking, if it can be considered a toy then it still requires testing. At times like this, when I'm under pressure, I'm really grateful to the CE support groups on Facebook, and to online shops such as Plush Addict and





From junk to funk

Upcycle an old picture frame into a shabby-chic blackboard – then just sit back and chalk up the takings! **By Claire Watkins**

INFORMATION

Materials

- An old frame
- Piece of plywood
- Chalkboard/blackboard paint
- White paint (Dulux Made by Me in Cool White Satin)
- Undercoat/primer paint
- Decorative moulded hardwood bead (from DIY store)
- Shabby Toulouse Rose Cluster Swag & Bow Drop, chicmouldings.com
- Panel pins
- No-nails glue
- Framer's tape
- Pencil

Size: Varies

Skill level: Easy

How to make the framed chalkboard

1 Measure the inside of the frame and cut a piece of plywood to fit inside the aperture (remember to get wood that is slightly thinner than the rebate inside). Measure across the width of the aperture – this will be the length of moulded bead you'll need. Use a small hacksaw to cut a length of the moulded hardwood bead to the correct measurement.

2 Apply an undercoat and primer to one side of the plywood, the moulded bead and the frame. Once dry, apply a second coat and then a third if required. After the primer has dried, work out the space required for the chalkboard by positioning and attaching your decorative mouldings. Mark the line of the bead to separate the chalkboard area from the decorative top section.

3 Paint the frame, bead and marked-off top of the ply in white paint. Paint the bottom part of the plywood in chalkboard paint. Wait for these to dry, sand down with sandpaper, then apply a second coat.



4 Assemble the board by putting the plywood into the frame and adding small panel pins around the edge, being careful not to split the plywood or the frame (only do this on wide frames – narrow ones will need to be glued into position). Now tape around the edge with framer's tape.

5 Glue the bead to cover where the chalkboard and white paint meet. Glue the decal in place as per the instructions.

Old picture frames make fantastic upcycling projects and can be easily found in junk shops, car boots and charity shops. Just add shabby-chic mouldings and some paint, for a quick transformation into practical, pretty homeware. Chalkboards are popular for kitchens, and you're looking at a profit of around £20 if you're careful with the outlay – so get painting today!



SHOW US ON FACEBOOK!

We'd love to see your upcycled projects on the *Craftseller* Facebook page



Shawl thing!

Add some sparkle with an easy crochet shawl – it's deceptively quick to make, and will go down a treat at Christmas parties. **By Liz Ward**





INFORMATION

Materials

- * 3 x 50g balls DMC Natura Just Cotton in Turquoise (N49)
- * Gutermann Sulky Holoshimmer thread (colour 6001)
- * 4mm (UK 8, US G/6) crochet hook
- * Wool needle
- * Safety pin

Size: 140 x 35cm (55 x 13³/₄in)

Skill level: Easy

Everyone loves a bit of sparkle, so this fabulous, flowery net crochet shawl will make the perfect addition to your Christmas range. We've used a DMC cotton yarn, but any 4ply will work if you add the secret ingredient – a skein of shimmery Holoshimmer thread! Just imagine these scarves racked up in a range of colours on your stand. If you don't fancy flowers, tiny butterflies would work well, too. In fact, it's a great pattern for spring or summertime, making it an excellent all-year-round project.

STITCH EXPLAINED

To create the 3dtr tog: *Wrap the yarn round the hook twice, insert the hook into the ring, pull a loop through, (wrap the yarn round the hook and pull through the first two loops on the hook) twice*. Repeat from * to * twice (4 loops on hook). Next, wrap the yarn around the hook and pull through all remaining loops on hook.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ch:** chain
dc: double crochet
dtr: double treble crochet
3dtr tog: 3 double trebles together
htr: half treble crochet
sl st: slip stitch
st(s): stitch(es)
tr: treble crochet



How to make the shawl

Note: Use both the yarn and metallic thread together throughout.

The body of the shawl is made in a simple net crochet stitch. Start at the long edge of the shawl and decrease every row to form a triangle shawl.

First, ch246.

Row 1: dc in the 10th ch from hook (ch5, skip next 3 ch sts, dc in next ch st); repeat to end. Turn.

Rows 2-32: ch6 (dc in the next 5ch space, ch5); repeat along the row, stopping in the 3rd to last ch space. Work one dc and turn. Cut yarn and pull through loop to secure.

EDGING

This is worked around the outside edge of the shawl.

Rejoin yarn to the right end of the foundation ch.

Ch2, 2tr in first 3ch space, (3tr in next 3ch space); repeat to the end of foundation ch. Then work (dc, 2tr, 3dtr, 2tr, dc) in every 5ch space along the shorter edges of the triangle.

Cut yarn and pull through loop to secure. Weave in and cut off any loose ends.

FOR THE SMALLER FLOWER DECORATIONS

Make eight, using the same yarn and thread combination used for the shawl.

Ch4, sl st to join and form a ring.

Work (ch3, 3dtr tog, ch3, dc) 5 times into the ring.

Cut yarn and pull through loop to secure. Sew in a random scatter pattern on the shawl.

Weave in and cut off any loose ends.

FOR THE LARGE FLOWER PIN

Use the same yarn and thread combination used for the shawl.

First, ch106.

Row 1: dc in the 10th ch from hook, (ch5, skip next 3 ch sts, dc in next ch st); repeat to end. Turn.

Row 2: (dc, 2tr, 3dtr, 2tr, dc) in every 5ch



space to the end.

Cut yarn, leaving a long tail, and pull through loop to secure.

Wind the long petal chain into a spiral. Sew together on the back to secure the design.

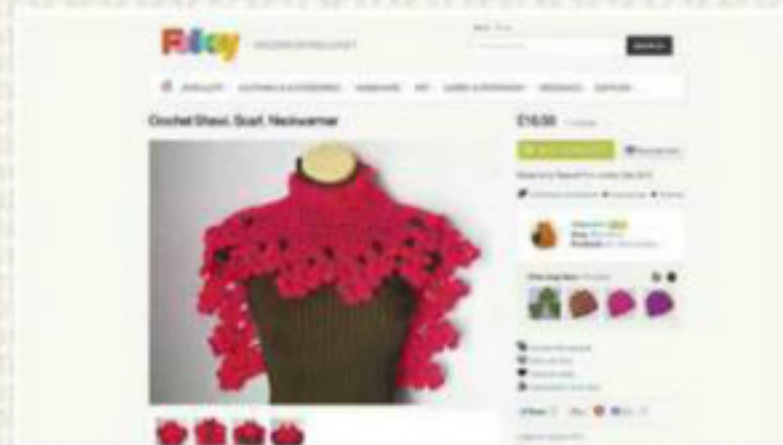
To Finish

Sew a brooch back or safety pin to the back of the flower, and attach it to the shawl. 

SELL MORE

Make sure you wear one of your shawls while you run your stall, to tempt shoppers to buy

NOW SELLING ON...



 **Folktsy**
Tatjana474 on [folktsy.com](https://www.folktsy.com)



 **NOTHS**
EKA on [noths.com](https://www.noths.com)



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If you've enjoyed making this shawl, post a photo on the [Craftseller Facebook page](#)



FOLLOW US ON TWITTER!

Tweet us your tips and advice, and follow our own tweets @[craftsellermag](#)



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Sell to last-minute Christmas shoppers

Make this December a boom time for your craft business, by being ready for all those late sales

By Holly Johnson



Every year, even the most organised Christmas shoppers find themselves with last-minute gifts to buy – whether that’s a few extra presents for the kids, a parcel for a friend who’s dropping by, or the Secret Santa that completely slipped your mind. An incredible 70% of people shop in the last ten days before Christmas – and they spend significantly more because of that. December 2012 saw a whopping 1.53 billion page views on Etsy and 6,001,420 sales, so if you can tap into the demand for handmade presents in a hurry, you can make Christmas one of your most lucrative times of the year.

Hot gifts

When people are buying in a rush, they want things to be as easy as possible. They don’t have time to get too personal – put simply, they want a nice gift that’s within their budget and aimed at their recipient in terms of age and gender. Ideal gifts for men include socks, ties, jumpers or t-shirts; accessories such as tie clips, keyrings or cufflinks; and gadget-related gifts like bottle openers and iPhone or iPad covers. For women, jewellery is always a winner, as is homeware like cushions, throws, kitchen products and foodstuffs (who doesn’t love homemade chutney?) and fashion items like cosy winter knitwear. Children are the easiest category to make for – from colourful scarves to jewellery boxes and teddy bears, almost anything will be gratefully received by little ones.

To further your success at festive selling, do some research. Cheryl Nicholson, who runs Nutmeg and Sage (nutmegandsage.co.uk), has done just that for her first year as an online seller. “Look at what sold well last year, and have plenty of that in this

Think scented gifts – like these organic lavender bags – for buyers in a hurry



Luxury beauty and bath gifts are an easy choice when relatives pay a last-minute visit

year. If you’re a new business and you’ve been marketing, you will know what’s selling well or creating interest, so get making and stocking those items.”

Once you’ve decided which items are going to be popular, get them ready for despatch. “I am preparing early,” says Cheryl. “I have a small collection, so I’m

“Guaranteed delivery dates are attractive – they can make or break a sale”

not spreading myself too thinly. I’ve lined up helpers during my busiest times, and will put in place a courier service for late buyers who are willing to outlay for the extra security and convenience.”

Deliver on your promises

As orders start to flood in, it’s important to stay on top of postage. Think about how to make your life easier. Post Office Drop and Go (postoffice.co.uk/drop-and-go-branch-service) is worth signing up for – you simply register at a local branch, top up your account, then drop parcels at the Fast Track counter when you have post to send.

Because last-minute customers are in a hurry, they want to know exactly when the gift can be delivered, so it’s a good idea to give them the option to pay for next-day delivery. “If you can

provide clear and concise information about the estimated time of arrival, and even offer rush delivery, you’ll help shoppers make gift-purchasing decisions,” says Amy Schroeder, who runs Etsy’s Seller Handbook blog. “Accelerated and guaranteed delivery dates are very attractive – they can make or break a sale.”

Shout loud

Speed of service isn’t much use if you’re not reaching those last-minute shoppers in the first place. Visibility is key – whether that’s online or at Christmas fairs. Kimm Alfonso, who manages the Etsy community team in the US, advises: “Tweak your existing listings to appeal to holiday shoppers. Market the products you currently offer as gifts in a way that offers solutions for busy shoppers.” If you sell via a site like Etsy, Folksy or Not on the High Street, tag existing items with key search terms, such as ‘gift’, ‘Christmas’ or ‘present’. If you run your own website, consider setting up a special ‘Christmas’ section organised by price or gender, which you can then promote on Facebook and Twitter. “Generally speaking, shoppers are looking for gifts by type, price, and recipient (and combinations of all three). So, it’s your job to demonstrate how this item is the perfect gift,” says Kimm.

If you sell at craft fairs, look into which events have the highest footfall and try to get a stand in a good position (close to the entrance, for example). Make your display as visually appealing as possible, and offer packages like hampers filled with a selection of your products that can be bought as a ready-made gift. Put up signs to shout about your perfect presents for kids, or items from just £5. Offering a gift-wrapping service is also a strong selling point and will save your customers time, so think about how you can quickly and easily wrap your items when you’re at a busy show. Could you enlist a helper to wrap on the day? Coloured tissue paper sealed with pretty sticky labels is low-cost, attractive, and takes little time to put together.

With plenty of preparation and our expert tactics, this Christmas could be one of your most profitable periods yet. And hopefully there will be a few more smiles as people open a gift that’s really special. 



SELL IT

Amy Schroeder's festive selling tips

1 REWARD SHOPPERS FOR CHOOSING YOU
People love being rewarded with little perks for spending their hard-earned cash on gifts.

2 CHOOSE YOUR OFFERS WISELY, AND PICK THOSE THAT SUIT YOUR SHOPPERS

Because you're probably pressed for time, it's important to decide on just a handful of simple, compelling promotions.

3 USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE

Clear messages will boost sales. For example: 'Gift ideas for less than £10' or 'Buy three or more gifts and we'll ship for free'.

4 MAKE SURE SHOPPERS RECEIVE THEIR PURCHASES ON TIME

Charge extra for buyers who need to rush their gifts with next-day or courier delivery.

5 GET STOCK READY FOR LAST-MINUTE BUYERS

Be prepared with plenty of stock, and tweak your listings for shoppers who are in a hurry.



4

1 Hobbycraft has lots of quick and easy gift-wrapping ideas that are perfect for shoppers buying last-minute gifts 2 This Nutmeg and Sage reversible cushion will appeal to the women's market 3 Cosy winter knits are always a good choice – we love this hot water bottle cover from Selvage on Folksy 4 Who could resist buying handmade jams in cute jars?



3

Your details (essential)

Title	Forename
-------	----------

Surname

Address _____

Postcode

Home Telephone Number _____

Mobile Telephone Number**

Email address**

I would like to send a gift to... (optional)

Title Forename

Surname

Address

Postcode

Home Telephone Number _____

Email address

I would like to send another gift to... (optional)

Title Forename

Surname

Address

Postcode

Home Telephone Number _____

Email address

Payment Details

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to Immediate Media Co. or

☐ Please debit the following amount from my credit/debit card: £ _____

Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Maestro ☐

Card Number

[illegible]

Valid from Expiry date

Signature _____ Date _____

To receive your free greetings card in time for Christmas, gift orders must be received by the 16th December 2013. This offer closes on the 31st December 2013.

This offer is valid for UK delivery addresses only. All savings are calculated as a percentage of the full shop price. For overseas rates visit www.buysubscriptions.com/christmas. All Christmas gift subscriptions will start with the first issue available in January 2014. Should the magazine ordered change in frequency, we will honour the number of issues and not the term of the subscription. Calls to 0844 numbers from a BT landline will cost no more than 5p per minute. Calls from mobiles and other providers may vary.

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Picture perfect

Customers will love making a style statement with this chic handbag, created using vintage photos and mixed fabrics. **By Wendy Massey**





How to make the bag

INFORMATION

Materials

- * Printable fabric: try craftycomputerpaper.co.uk
- * An old family photograph or copyright-free image
- * Small pieces of fabric for lining, main body of bag and details
- * 12cm (4½in) piece of webbing or grosgrain ribbon
- * Firm interfacing to line all main pieces of the bag
- * Heavy pelmet interfacing for the base
- * 60g (2oz) wadding
- * Magnetic snap closure
- * 2 swivel snap hooks, 4cm (1½in)
- * 2 x 2.5cm (1in) D-rings

Size: 27 x 20cm (10½ x 8in)

Skill level: Moderate

This beautiful photo-printed handbag really is one-of-a-kind – ours is made using a picture of Wendy's grandmother, but you can choose any vintage image you like! Create a totally unique product that customers will be happy to pay a premium for, simply by using old family photos, reproduced on photo-printable material. The bag itself is a breeze to make, using different scraps of fabric from your stash – then add freestyle black stitching on your seams to emphasise the contrasting colours. And don't forget to read our copyright advice on the opposite page, to ensure your photo-printed makes are hassle free!

1 Cut out the following from your fabric

From grey fabric (main bag):

- * Two rectangles measuring 29 x 22cm (11½ x 8¾in) (front and back of bag)
- * One rectangle measuring 29 x 13cm (11½ x 5in) (bottom of bag)
- * Two side pieces (see template on p102)
- * One rectangle measuring 117 x 10cm (46 x 4in) (strap)

From lining fabric:

- * Two rectangles measuring 29 x 22cm (11½ x 8¾in) (front and back of bag)
- * One rectangle measuring 29 x 13cm (11½ x 5in) (bottom of bag)
- * Two side pieces (see template on p102)

From pink fabric (bag flap and strap):

- * One rectangle measuring 34 x 29cm (13½ x 11½in)
- * One rectangle measuring 27 x 7cm (10½ x 2¾in)
- * Two tab pieces (see template on p102)

From various print fabrics:

- * Two rectangles measuring 27 x 6cm (10½ x 2¼in)
- * Two rectangles measuring 21 x 6cm (8¼ x 2¼in)
- * Two tab pieces (see template on p102)

From firm interfacing:

- * Two rectangles measuring 29 x 22cm

- (11½ x 8¾in) (front and back of bag)
- * Two side pieces (see template on p102)
- * One rectangle measuring 115 x 4cm (45¼ x 1½in) (strap)

From heavy (pelmet) interfacing:

- * One rectangle measuring 29 x 13cm (11½ x 5in) (base)

From 2oz wadding:

- * One rectangle measuring 27 x 25cm (10½ x 9¾in) (flap)

Make bag flap

2 *Seam allowances are 1cm (½in) throughout. Scan and digitally resize photograph so it measures approx. 15 x 21cm (6 x 8¼in). Print photo onto specialist fabric, following manufacturer's instructions. Trim the image, leaving 3cm (1¼in) of plain fabric all around, creating a piece of fabric 21 x 27cm (8¼ x 10½in) with the image in the centre.

3 Take the two pieces of patterned fabric measuring 27 x 6cm (10½ x 2¼in) and two measuring 21 x 6cm (8¼ x 2¼in). Fold each one in half lengthways, and press along the fold. Place the folded edges against the edge of the photographic image, covering all four white borders. Lay on top of wadding, leaving some spare wadding along the top edge – don't trim. Pin into place. Using a running stitch and embroidery thread, sew into place through all layers.

4 Take the smaller pink rectangle and press one long edge under by 1cm (½in) to neaten. Place this edge along the top edge of the photo, leaving 1cm (½in) of the patterned fabric still showing. Pin, then sew in place with running stitch along folded edge.

5 Place the stitched image centrally on top of the larger pink rectangle, with wrong sides together. Bring the bottom edge of the pink fabric forward to create a hem, folding twice to neaten. Stitch in place using running stitch through all layers. Repeat on each side. Be careful when tying off the thread ends to keep them hidden. Use a



matching thread to stitch neatly around all corners, hiding any folded or raw edges.

Make the lining

6 With right sides facing, sew both side pieces to the bottom piece. Sew the bottom and sides to the front and back to create a box shape, turning at each of the corners where the bottom side seams are. Measure the centre front and centre back of the bag lining, and mark 4cm (1½in) from the top edge of each.

7 Line the area behind each mark with a small square of interfacing to strengthen it. Insert magnetic closures on both marks.

Make the strap

8 Fold two 6cm (2¼in) pieces of webbing in half over two D rings. Place them inside two tab pieces, with the raw edges of

the webbing matching the top raw edges of the tabs, right sides of the tabs facing each other. Sew around three sides of each tab, leaving the bottom open. Turn through. Stitch around the three edges in a sketchy style.

9 Fold the 117 x 10cm (46 x 4in) grey rectangle in half lengthways. Insert the 115 x 4cm (45¼ x 1½in) interfacing. Fold the two long raw edges under, around the interfacing, and pin in place. Fold under both short raw edges. Stitch around all four edges in a sketchy style. Fold and pin each end of strap around a snap hook. Stitch to secure.

Make the main bag

10 Line each piece with the correct piece of interfacing. Sew sides to bottom along two short edges. Sew front of bag to sides and bottom. Sew back of bag to sides and bottom. Turn at the bottom corners, with

the needle down in the fabric.

11 Pin flap into place at the top edge of the bag, with raw edges together and right sides facing. Pin side tabs into place, with raw edges matching and right sides together, with flaps facing downwards on the outside of the bag. Turn lining inside out. Pin lining to main part of bag, with right sides facing and enclosing flap and side tabs.

12 Stitch around the top edge of the bag, leaving a gap of 12cm (4¾in) so you can turn it through. Turn the bag to the right side, press the top edge. Stitch all around the top edge in a sketchy style, enclosing the unstitched seam as you do so. 

TOP TIP

Ask elderly relatives to show you their photos – they'll enjoy reminiscing and you can make a day of it!

BE COPYRIGHT SAVVY

To be able to sell these bags, you'll need to own the copyright of your photo or use a copyright-free image. In the UK and Europe, copyright on a photo expires 70 years after the death of the photographer, but there is unlikely to be a problem with family photographs. There are a number of vintage images available online, but do check the copyright details of each individual photo you plan to use, as some have restrictions on their use.





You've made it, now sell it...

Read our tips and advice to get the most from your photo-printed bags



1 Consider your turnaround. Customers need to send in their photographs and you need to return them, so factor this into your service time and costs!



2 Create add-on products such as purses, wallets, cushion covers and shopping totes in the same fabrics. They'll make great gift sets.

3 Set up a separate web shop for your photo-printed items. It will look more professional and will rank better on Google for specific searches.

4 Theme colours to the photo's era – try browns, mustards and burgundys for 1920s pics, pastel pinks, baby blues and minty greens for 1950s, and sleek monochrome for 1960s.

5 Add a copyright disclaimer – it looks professional to inform the customer, plus it'll keep you out of hot water!

6 Create an Instagram page for your insta-bags, then tweet, pin and Facebook the link to garner interest.

7 Offer a wedding gift service and use photo-editing software to create retro-style prints of the happy couple.

8 Think like Hallmark – sew purses and makeup bags for Mother's Day, wallets and ipad covers for Father's Day.

9 Don't skimp on the details. Most of the fabric can come from your stash, so finish off with quality findings.

10 Don't forget the kids! Photo-printed bunting, PE and lunch bags would all make cute gifts. 

NOW SELLING ON...



DaWanda: Vintage Postcards Tablet Case by Microbio, £30.20



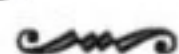
DaWanda: Maharani Toiletry Bag by Rougemadras, £16.80



Etsy: Personalised Unique Gift Wine Present Bag by Szenarioservices, £5

Ask us

Our panel of experts is on hand to answer all your crafting and selling questions



Alderney Armchair, Rabbits and Cabbages in Grey, sofa.com, £840

Enlighten me

Q I want to use inspirational quotes from Buddha and Confucius in my crafts. Would I be in breach of copyright if I use their words?

TRUDIE SHEPHERD, BY EMAIL

A Once you have established that the quotes are definitely from these sources, then you are safe to use them. The duration of copyright in literary work lasts for the life of the author, and for 70 years from the end of the calendar year in which the author dies. If you wanted to use a quote not covered by this, then you may need to get permission from the current copyright owner. If you want to find more information about the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, go to ipo.gov.uk. Good luck developing your designs. To quote Buddha: "An idea that is developed and put into action is more important than an idea that exists only as an idea."



Enlightened Buddha
Copper Resin Art,
arthouse.com, £30

Armchair thriller

Q I would like to crochet some armchair covers, but I can't find a pattern anywhere online. Can you tell me where I should look?

TRACY EMSLEY, BY EMAIL

A Designer Tracey Todhunter says: "Search for Filet Crochet on ravelry.com to see if anything catches your eye, but do take note of the readers' comments before buying. The American site Annie's Attic (123stitch.com/crochet_by_annies_attic) also has a great choice. You can purchase the books from Hobbycraft and Amazon, and some are available as digital downloads."

MY TOP
TEN TIPS

EMMA JONES is the owner of Made by Mrs Jones on folksy.com, where she sells handmade beaded jewellery and stylish fabric gift items.

- 1 Always include the cost of your time!
- 2 Get your friends together and ask for honest feedback.
- 3 Choose a name with the freedom to switch products!
- 4 Find out about things like Textile Labelling Regulations.
- 5 Always carry order books, as you never know when you might find business.
- 6 Make products available well in advance of big events like Christmas.
- 7 Use the correct machine needle for the type of fabric.
- 8 Iron your work at every stage for a professional finish.
- 9 Only use your best product photos.
- 10 Keep sight of your goals.



We've got simple tricks to help you work at home

Working overtime

Q After reading about all the successful crafters in your wonderful mag, I now work from home. But I'm hopeless at organising my time. Help!
NATIA MRUK, PETERBOROUGH

A Firstly, well done! Secondly, don't be hard on yourself. Even the most experienced at-home workers will find themselves in the same position. The trick is to identify particular time-stealers and stay on top of them. There are the obvious distractions like friends ringing for a natter, letting household chores take over and watching cute kitten clips. To stay focused, start the day with a to-do list and finish one task at a time – don't pretend you're multi-tasking. Finish the day by rewriting your list. Check and deal with emails once after you've finished the first task, and once at the end of the day. Your newfound flexibility means you can structure your work to the quietest parts of the day. This period can be extremely productive, and just an extra 15 minutes a day gains you seven hours a month.

Frame work

Q I've made a whole load of festive pictures ready to sell, which I've put into wooden frames. But the plain wood lets the images down – they're just not Christmassy enough.

FATHIMA MATHER, BY EMAIL

A We love texture paste at times like this. It's a simple but effective way to add dimensional

Planning your time can be tricky when you work from home



This month our top Facebook question is...

Q Can I sell the cards that I've designed using Cuttlebug motifs, magic motifs, punched shapes and stamps?
JILL

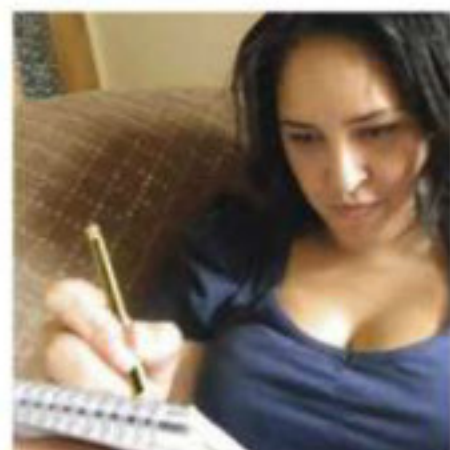
A When making craft items to sell using tools which feature someone else's design work, it is very likely most of the designs in question are copyrighted. However, it is worth checking with the manufacturers and the designers, as each may have a different policy for commercial use.



Texture Paste from creative-expressions.uk.com, priced £7.49

pattern to your crafts. Simply slap a layer onto your frame, and don't be tempted to smooth it down. Leave it to one side and before you know it (because this stuff dries really quickly) you'll have a snowy-effect frame. If you really want to get into the festive frame fever, mix in a little glitter before you paste it on, or use its adhesive quality while it's still wet to add small snowflake embellishments or gold flakes.

ESSENTIAL CRAFT TOOL



NAME: Amanda Taylor
SHOP: TaylorTwo
WEBSITE: taylorstwo.co.uk
TYPE: Stationery, accessories and mugs
TOOL: Pencil
AVAILABLE FROM: Stationers and craft stores

"My essential tool is as humble as they come and, in my opinion, much underrated – the pencil! Without one I'd have no products, as everything originates from it – from late-night sketches to early-morning strokes of genius and everything in between. I don't care if it's an HB, 2B, 9H – any will do. I have them all over, ready for when the muse strikes. But even though I prize them highly I don't

look after them – as well as brand new, sharp ones by my workspace, you'll find pencils down the sofa, resting in tea cups, not to mention snapped in two at the bottom of my bag. Yet despite my poor treatment of my tool, I am eternally grateful to it. The pencil has opened up a world where I can be myself, let my imagination run free and even make a living from it. Thanks pencil – I owe you one!"



GUEST EXPERT



GREG SIMPSON has been a journalist, a marketing director of a £30m turnover business, worked in two large PR agencies, and written *The Small Business Guide to PR* (harriman-house.com, £5)

Why bother with PR? Why not just buy an advert?

Contrary to popular opinion, advertising and PR are not the same thing. PR is often less expensive and so it is really suited to start-ups or any business with smaller budgets. I like to see it like this: Advertising makes you aware of a message. PR helps you to buy into the message.

It is the third-party testimony that editorial provides which makes the advertising, or wider marketing campaign surrounding it, easier to digest. For example, if you hear about a company in the press and the reports were positive, then you see an advert urging you to buy, you would be more likely spend your money with them. However, if you saw a glossy ad for a business but had heard negative things about it in the press, it is unlikely you would start reaching for your wallet. That's why it is so important to add your PR campaign into your wider marketing efforts.

Lots of people want to see their stories and products in a large national newspaper. However, while this is essential for some, all too often it is irrelevant or ill-advised for others. Before you start your PR campaign, take a step back and use these seven example questions to work out: Who needs to see your message?

- * Who needs to know, for example, that you have a new fabric toy that is twice as strong as any of the others on the market?
- * Who needs to know, for example, that you are committed to ethically sourced products?
- * From that you can then establish: Who are your customers?
- * Where are they?
- * What do they do?
- * What do they need to know?
- * Where do they find out their information, i.e. what do they read/listen to/watch and how do your competitors get their message to them?

In no time, your PR goals will start taking shape...

Tree tops

Q The children want to decorate their own Christmas tree. I'm a bit resistant to them tinselling the life out of our main tree (I know, bah-humbug!) but their bedroom is too small for their own tree. Please help restore peace on earth!
CONNIE JAMES, WINDSOR

A Ask Father Christmas to sort out delivery of this ingenious Decorate It Yourself Christmas Tree Poster (betsybenn.co.uk, £10) and let the kids go crazy. They can use old Christmas cards, bits of wrapping paper, tinsel, stickers, glitter pens, photographs of the family, press-on gems, fuzzy felt shapes, homemade paper chains, and add their own drawings. Hang it in their room and there'll be no needles, mess, or floor space taken up – but best of all, your glass baubles live to survive another season.



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Dear *Craftseller*, 9th Floor, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN

MAKE IT





Make a crafty tenner

Cash in on the tradition of Christmas door wreaths, with our lush decoration that promises a warm welcome. **By Marie Parry**

INFORMATION

Materials

- 30cm (12in) floral foam ring (e.g. Oasis)
- Mixed foliage (we used a mixed wrap of winter foliage)
- Wide ribbon
- Florist's wire
- Pearl pins
- Wired pine cones
- Wired, dried oranges
- Hypericum (red berries)

Size: 30cm (12in)

Skill level: Easy



Door wreaths are one of our favourite Christmas decorations – they look and smell great, and really get you in the festive spirit. The trick is to make your wreath beautiful using greenery, then add flowers, fruit and embellishments as finishing touches. We used pine cones, red berries and dried oranges for a traditional feel, but you could add white roses, sage and eucalyptus for a more modern approach. Kept outside, your wreath should last through to January.

How to make the Christmas wreath

1 Round off the inside and outside edges of the foam wreath with a sharp knife, or by rubbing it with your fingers – this gives you a larger surface area to work with. Drop the foam ring into a sink or bucket of water and allow it to soak thoroughly. Do not push the foam ring into the water as this will create air pockets inside the material, which will prevent some stems from getting water.

2 Pin a length of ribbon around the inside and outside edges of the ring, (not the part you stick your stems in). Decide where you want the top of the wreath to be, and wrap florist's wire around the ring to hang. Leave a tail for tying later.

3 Find the foliage with the largest leaves and begin attaching this to the foam ring base. Cut it to the length required and insert into the foam at a natural angle. Insert your first two stems into the top of the foam so that they make a wide V shape (with around 1cm (1/4in) between each leg of the V), then insert a shorter piece in the middle of the V. Build up the foliage this way, making sure you always insert each stem in the same direction to create a good flow. Remember to add foliage to the inside of the wreath as you go along.

4 Once you have achieved an even coverage with your first type of foliage, add the next and then the next, using the largest leaves first. Turn your wreath each time you add a stem, to ensure an even coverage. Stop when the foam is covered.

5 Once all the foliage is arranged, create five groups of embellishments, each containing a pine cone, a clump of hypericum and a slice of dried orange. You can add each individual item separately to the foam, but cluster the items to achieve a nice balance. If you want to wire the pine cones and oranges yourself, simply wrap florist's wire around the bottom and twist to secure, then trim the wire so you have a tail of about 4cm left to stick into the foam. 



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More ways than one...

Make a statement and show off your print-matching skills, with this beautiful vintage patchwork throw and cushions set. **By Jane Tooze**





INFORMATION

Materials

- * 25cm (10in) turquoise fabric
- * 25cm (10in) pink fabric
- * 25cm (10in) pink spot fabric
- * 25cm (10in) butterfly fabric
- * 1.5m (60in) linen/hessian mix fabric
- * 1.5m (60in) cerise pink sheeting fabric
- * 1.5m (60in) vintage red floral fabric
- * Pink sewing thread
- * 2 x 40cm (16in) square cushions
- * Sewing needle
- * Sewing machine
- * Tape measure
- * Scissors
- * Pins

Size: Cushion cover: Approx. 42 x 42cm (16½ x 16½in)

Throw: Approx. 151 x 143cm (60 x 56in)

Skill level: Moderate



This matching cushion and throw set combines vintage fabrics with modern prints and on-trend linen. We love the mix of old and new fabrics – the main body of the throw is made from a brilliant-red vintage fabric sourced from an antiques fair, set alongside quirky, modern polka-dot and butterfly prints. Use your skills to mix and match great fabrics to stand out. If you're selling at a craft fair, find out about the shoppers and choose your prints accordingly – remember, a city centre flea market and a country craft fair will attract different crowds!

How to make the patchwork cushion and throw

How to make the patchwork cushion

- 1** Cut out twelve 11 x 11cm (4½ x 4½in) squares in a variety of fabrics. Pin two squares right sides together. Sew along one edge (use a 2cm (¾in) seam allowance throughout). Repeat to create a strip of six squares. Make another strip, then sew the strips together along the long edge. Press.
- 2** Cut linen to 93 x 46cm (36½ x 18in). Pin and sew one long edge of the patchwork to one short edge of the linen. Press seam. Cut out the pink lining to 107 x 46cm (42 x 18in). With right sides facing, pin the lining to the patchwork/linen cushion cover and sew at one end. Turn through and press. Hem the other end, leaving sides open.
- 3** Place fabric patchwork-side down. Fold hemmed edge into middle, then fold patchwork edge over this to create a square. The folded edges create a flap to insert the cushion pad. Pin together at the flap edge, then turn inside out. Pin and sew along the

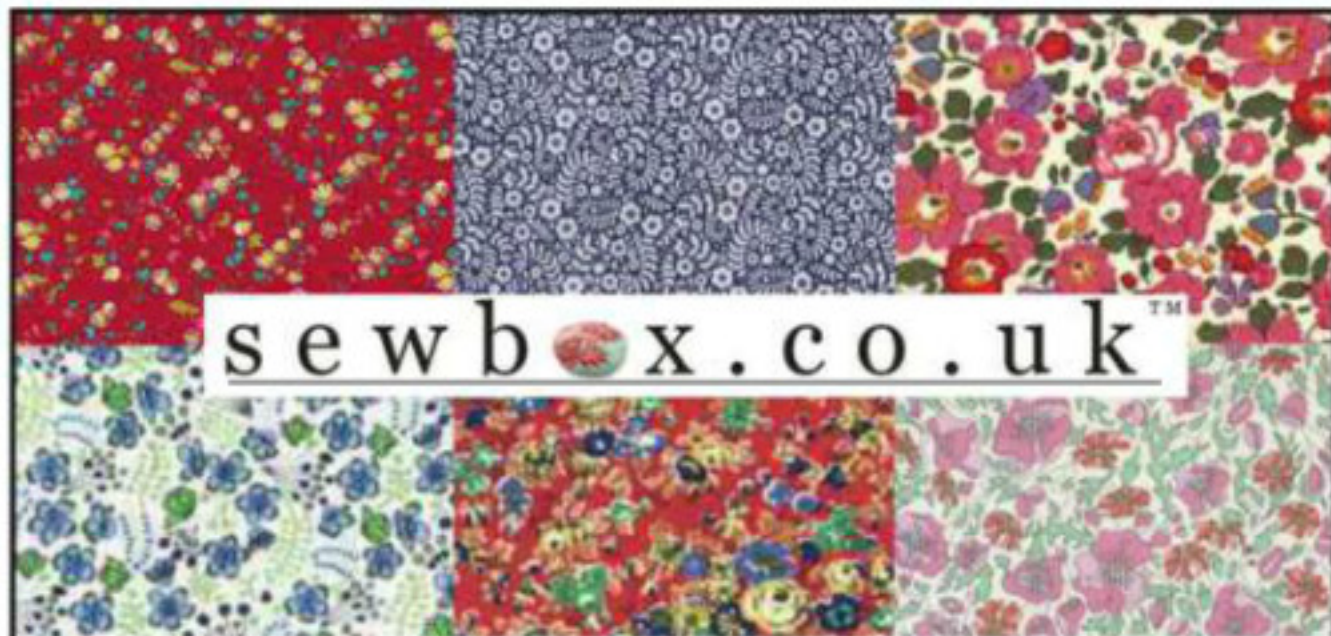
sides. Zig-zag the raw edges. Turn the cushion cover through and insert cushion.

How to make the throw

- 1** Cut out 39 squares measuring 15 x 15cm (6 x 6in) in a mix of fabrics. Choose three, pin and sew together to create one long strip. Press. Repeat another 12 times.
- 2** Sew the strips together to make a panel 13 squares long, three wide. Cut a piece of linen measuring 35 x 147cm (13¾ x 58in). Pin and sew one long edge of the patchwork to one long edge of the linen. Press seam. Cut a piece of red floral fabric measuring 91 x 147cm (36 x 58in). Pin and sew this fabric to the other patchwork edge. Press seam.
- 3** Cut lining fabric to 155 x 147cm (61 x 58in). Pin and sew the lining and throw pieces together, with right sides facing. Leave a small gap, turn through and slip-stitch the opening closed. Top-stitch all the way around the throw and press again. 

SELL MORE

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My craft shop

Meet a trio of craft sellers who share the moneymaking secrets behind their success



The website owner



RACHEL THOMPSON
from Cambridge

WEBSITE
rachelthompsondesign.co.uk

Rachel's inspired by the quirky, intriguing architecture around her native Cambridge

"I create bespoke illustrations of cherished houses and wedding venues. My illustrations of local landmarks can be found on a number of handmade items including notebooks and greetings cards, and they are also available to buy as framed prints.

"Living in Cambridge is a perfect fit for my craft, because I'm inspired by architecture old and new. My illustrations draw out the spirit and character of beautiful, quirky buildings I see around me. I've always loved unusual buildings, and when I was studying for my degree in Theatre Design I used to love building scale models and set designs. I also like the simple application of drawing in pen, and I'm especially influenced by two wonderful illustrators – Arthur Rackham, who illustrated books such as *Peter Pan*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Gulliver's Travels*; and Raymond Briggs who was a cartoonist, graphic novelist and author, as well as an illustrator.

"I asked the lovely Karen Jinks (karenjinks.co.uk) to build my website for me. I wanted to involve a web designer so that my site looked professional. Karen is founder of the Cambridge Creative Network, a group that seeks to connect local artists with each other and with creative opportunities – you can find out more at cambridgecreativenetwork.co.uk. I'm sure my website will evolve over time – I would like to add a shop to it at some stage, and have a more detailed section on my wedding stationery range – but for now it does everything I need it to and I love how it reflects the style of my work."



Rachel loves the simplicity of working in ink

TOP TIP

When you're starting your creative venture, think how you can best use your skills

"My illustrations draw out the character of beautiful buildings"

Be on-trend with unique stationery



The online marketplace



**CHRISTINE
SCRETON**
from Manchester

WEBSITE
Search Bobblelicious on
creativestores.co.uk



Christine creates
her designs with
children in mind



TOP TIP
Research the various
online marketplaces
and try to find an
outlet that suits your
particular style



Felt and fabrics have sent Christine on a thousand creative journeys, exploring her imagination

"I make children's hair accessories, keyrings, bag charms, brooches – any item that can be made out of felt or fabric! I started out using felt because of its versatility – it doesn't fray, comes in wonderful colours, and is an inexpensive way to create fabulous items. Now, I also use fabric and leatherette, with endless possibilities for making something unique."

"When my children grew up, I had the time to try online selling. My first sale was thrilling, and I've never looked back. "I sell on creativestores.co.uk, a brilliant online shop. It's helped me to reach a wider audience, it's very easy to use, and the technical support is always at hand."

"I'm inspired by children's fashion – if I see a great outfit, I start thinking of the perfect accessory. I'm also inspired by my gorgeous granddaughter, who has a clip and bobble made to match her wardrobe."

The stallholder

Jacqueline finds larger craft fairs effective as both sales and marketing opportunities

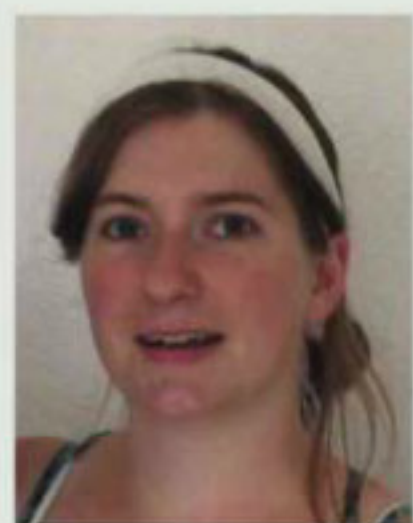
"Like most crafters, I make far too many things. At college I studied fine art and textiles, and I began by selling jewellery, but my passion was for sewing."

"When I started selling at craft fairs I realised that, although smaller fairs can be hit-and-miss in terms of sales, it's a great way to network and get your name out there. Shoppers like putting a face to the name, and the personal connection counts when they buy."

"Larger fairs, although more expensive, are much more profitable in terms of sales and getting noticed. I attend fairs at The Winter Gardens in Blackpool, which has over 100 stalls and is very well advertised."

"Selling online is a good back-up, but it has its own difficulties. It's easy to disappear, and shoppers rely on photos to choose their makes."

"I also sell my wares in a shop. Brick-and-mortar shops are great because, in most cases, there are no up-front costs – you just pay a percentage on what you sell, which is usually around 30 per cent."



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"Larger fairs are expensive, but much more profitable"



TOP TIP
Make conversation
– even if someone
doesn't buy from
you, they may
recommend you

Crafty courses

Why not add a new craft to your skill set? Here are some of our top courses for you to try this month

See what you can do with old jumpers



Get creative with gorgeous trimmings



Janet surrounds learners with inspiration

Alison loves versatile and wants to work with all her skills

Heart Space Studios

“My favourite class is ‘What To Do With The Shrunk Jumper’, where we make ravaged woollies into accessories,” reveals founder Janet Haigh.

At a thriving venue in the Bristol suburbs, Heart Space Studios offers classes for beginners in crochet, knitting, hand embroidery, sewing, and felt-making. More specialist courses cover skills such as beading with thread, and fastenings for necklaces, bracelets and earrings.

Experienced learners and career crafters can attend Heart Space’s Master Classes – specialist workshops by professionals in textile design, basket-weaving, jewellery and more. Janet explains, “These sessions are experimental, and we often introduce

unusual materials so that people get to play with a fresh ingredient.”

The learning approach is relaxed, but focused. “We try to be as accessible as possible – but we want people to learn as well as have a good time, so the studio is very quiet when we all start to concentrate. Generally the workshops are design-led, with each learner interpreting the skill – no kits or copying the tutor! We have a wall of colour-coordinated boxes of fabrics and threads that everyone is free to dip into.”

Janet and her fellow tutors aim to spread the textile gospel. “Textiles are at the centre of our world – we are wrapped in them from our first day to our last – and anyone can make personal things to keep or give.”

INFORMATION

* Classes are offered in bead work, stitching, felting, knitting, dyeing, embroidery, quilting and more. Day courses are typically 9.30am – 3.30pm, £55 (includes lunch); half-day classes 10am–1pm or 1–4pm, £30. Receive 10% off if you book at least a month in advance.

* For more info contact Janet on 0117 923 2391, email info@heartspacestudios.co.uk or visit heartspacestudios.co.uk

DT Craft & Design

Eager crafters as young as six can learn the delightful arts of hand-dyeing, wet-felting, knitting and crochet from author and tutor Debbie Tomkies, at venues all around the country. A member of her local Guild of Spinners, Weavers and Dyers, Debbie teaches nationwide.

"My students range from teenagers to retirees, and I also work with youngsters in schools and community groups," she explains. "Many students are absolute beginners; others are returning to broaden or refresh their skills." For those after in-

"My classes are friendly and lively. I like lots of buzz"

depth teaching, Debbie runs workshops for experienced crafters, teachers, designers and textile students, too.

"My classes are always friendly and lively," Debbie reveals. "I like lots of buzz

and laughter! Learning should be fun and informal, with lots of opportunity for personal creativity." Venues vary from state-of-the-art colleges to outdoor fetes – and Debbie will soon be releasing a series of video workshops for distance learners.

And what does Debbie like learners to take away from her class? "A smile! If I've boosted their confidence or inspired them, or if they've simply had a brilliant day making, any of those are good outcomes."

INFORMATION

* Debbie teaches a range of workshops on dyeing, felting, knitting and crochet and can travel to your group, Guild, school or college. Class sizes 4 to 15; bookings for half day, full day, weekend or longer.

* For more information contact Debbie on 0161 718 3818, email info@dtcrafts.co.uk or visit dtcrafts.co.uk/news/workshops

WHY NOT TRY...

Other great craft courses taking place around the country

Spoilt Rotten Beads

This Cambridgeshire bead-shop-cum-workshop can host your party, led by experienced jewellery makers. Up to 18 learners per session. Prices from £25 per head, including materials and refreshments.

Visit spoiltrottenbeads.co.uk

The School of Jewellery and Craft

Masses of jewellery workshops (resin clay, metal clay, keepsake jewellery, working with textiles...) at this studio near Reading. Other crafts taught include candle-making, glass painting and sugarcraft.

Visit theschoolofjewelleryandcraft.co.uk

Bill Robson

Artist Bill Robson teaches glass jewellery and design from his studio in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Weekend courses, maximum of four students. Learn design, glass-cutting, assembly, kiln-fusing and slumping, plus important health and safety.

Visit creativebreaks.co.uk

Sabine Little

Glass artist and teacher Sabine will teach you the basics of glass-bead-making and sculptural glass-making from her studio in Bolsterstone, near the Peak District. Beginners learn glass-bead-making; improvers make roses, butterflies and more.

Visit sabinelittle.com

SilverHub Studios

Learn the art of silversmithing with jeweller and tutor Lisa Arnott, at her open-plan studios in Leith, near Edinburgh. Beginners and improvers welcome. Courses include Introduction to Metal Jewellery Design (10 weeks, 10am-1pm, £195) and Make Your Own Silver Ring (10am-5pm, £95).

Visit silverhubstudios.com



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Templates

Use these templates to make the polar bear on [page 28](#), cards on [page 50](#), Christmas stocking on [page 60](#), and the vintage photo bag on [page 84](#)

**RUSSIAN DOLL
FACE**

**RUSSIAN DOLL
BODY**

CARDS
(ACTUAL SIZE)

OWL BODY

**OWL
WING**

**OWL
WING**

OWL HAT

POLAR BEAR
(ACTUAL SIZE)

NOSE

Cut 1 in black felt

BERET STALK
Cut 1 in purple felt

CHEEK

Cut 2 in baby pink felt

EAR

Cut 2 in white felt

BODY

Cut 2 in white felt

BERET

Cut 2 in purple felt

INNER LEGS

Cut 2 in white felt

PHOTO BAG
(ACTUAL SIZE)

SIDE TAB

Cut 2 from pink fabric
Cut 2 from print fabric

STOCKING
(ACTUAL SIZE)

SIDES

Main fabric and lining
Cut 2 from grey fabric
Cut 2 from lining fabric
Cut 2 from interfacing

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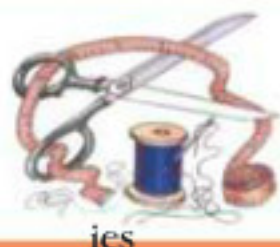
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Craftseller 105

Online loves

Here are just some of our favourite makes from the exciting designers and crafters we've discovered this month



Sweet

- * Fresh apples pale in comparison to these stunning fondant fancies – delicious!
- * **Sugar Fondant Apples by GreenCaligo**, £10 for eight on [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com)



Accessories

- * We'll be adding a subtle bit of geek chic to our everyday hairstyles this month.
- * **Pixels Bobby Pins by urBunny**, £9.54 for four on [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com)



Cute

- * Woodland creatures are a hot trend – check out this brood of rainbow bunnies.
- * **Set of Pure Wool Felted Bunnies by TextilePlatypus**, £66.54 on [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com)



Fashion

- * We love easy winter style pieces, like this striking knit with power shoulders!
- * **Electric Chic Monaco Blue Sweater by AlisaDesign**, £117.65 on [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com)



Winter warmer

- * Grab a pair of traditional Nordic gloves for a winter-wonderland look!
- * **Traditional Scandinavian Snowflake Mittens by BirdaKnits**, £28 on [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com)



Home

- * If you don't want to wear a festive jumper, dress your home in winter knits instead.
- * **Merino & Cashmere Cushion by Nutmeg and Sage**, £78 on [wowthankyou.co.uk](https://www.wowthankyou.co.uk)

Wear this cosy winter trend for frosty, festive fun

WowThankYou - a UK handmade-only online marketplace growing incredibly quickly in size and reputation. Winner of a Mumpreneur Gold Award (July 2013). 1,200 makers currently selling on WowThankYou, reaching an audience of 39,000 unique visitors every week. Why not join us and get the most out of the online festive shopping frenzy this Christmas?

WowThankYou has excelled over and above every competitor in getting our products seen and promoted. *Garreth, ScENT*

The support I have received from Tracey is second to none. *Brenda, Groovy Bags 'N' Things by Brenda*

I'm over the moon that I'm selling on WowThankYou! *Laura, Kozmic Dreams*

WowThankYou has given me the platform to showcase my handmade products so I can grow my little business acorn into a giant oak tree! *Amanda, Baked 4 U*

I have never had such fantastic and personal support as now with WowThankYou. *Vikki, Snappy Crocodile*

You have not experienced UK crafting at its best until you have visited WowThankYou. *Jane, Craftyneedles*

WowThankYou is one of the best sites to sell your work through. *Ley, Vintagebeadery*

The website is superb! It is well advertised, easy to use and has generated some wonderful business for us. *Sam, Hill Farm Crafts*



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*The current joining promotion (when joining at full price) gives the new storeholder a choice between free membership of the PCG or a free stall at the next available CRAFTfest virtual craft fair.

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J & P Sewing Machines, Warrington – 01925 633 831
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Elegance, Derby – 01332 382292
Ilkeston Sewing & Janome Centre, Ilkeston – 0115 9307 664
Exeter Sewing Machines, Exeter – 01392 275 660
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C & A Supply Co. Ltd. Cranleigh – 01483 267777
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