

- Researched and wrote story and instructions

Crafty Baskets

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“As a kid, I always collected bits and pieces wherever I walked – to school or through the woods,” says grown-up Leslie Ashton, who made these baskets. “Adults would chide me to ‘stop looking at the ground,’ but they never could cure me of this.”

If you're like Leslie – and most kids – you're probably a scavenger, too. Use some of your finds in these crafts.

Papier-Mâché Fruit Basket

YOU NEED:

Wooden-handled cardboard basket

Torn strips of newspaper, 1.3 to 5 cm (½- to 2-in) wide

Decorations such as acorns, beads, buttons, feathers, pebbles, pinecones, raffia, ribbon, shells, twigs and twine

White craft glue

Plastic bowl

Hole punch

Acrylic paint and paintbrushes

Large sheet of plastic

TO MAKE:

NOTES

- Cover work surface with plastic sheet.
- Ask an adult to punch even number of holes around basket below rim, before you apply papier-mâché.

1 In bowl, mix glue and water 1:1. Dip strips, one at a time, into mixture, squeeze off excess between fingers, then smooth over basket and around rim and handle, to coat entire inside and outside with 3 layers (don't cover holes).

2 Let dry for 24 hours – in sunshine during daytime, then indoors overnight – or until it no longer feels cool to the touch.

3 Paint as desired, letting dry after each colour (if you paint with white, first, colours on top will be brighter).

4 Glue on desired decorations, then weave raffia, ribbon or twine, in and out holes, threading through beads, if you like, as you go.

Woven Berry Basket

YOU NEED:

Plastic-mesh basket

45 cm (17¾-in) lengths of dried grasses, raffia, ribbon, plastic-wrapped telecom wire, pliable twigs, twine or yarn, and strips of birch bark (peel bark from fallen logs only, never from live trees!), paper, foil, felt or synthetic fleece, cut 1 or 2 cm (¾- or ¾-in) wide, for weaving

Decorations such as beads, buttons, feathers, dried flowers and leaves

Tapestry needle (optional)

Tacky glue (optional)

TO MAKE:

NOTE

- If birch bark strips are stiff, soak in water to soften before weaving.

1 Beginning at 1 bottom corner, weave each length or strip in and out and all around bottom edge of basket, using tapestry needle to thread on buttons or beads, as you go, if you like, then tie, twist or glue ends together to secure.

2 Moving 1 row up each time, continue weaving until basket side is completely filled in.

3 Tuck decorations into the weaving, if you like. ●

