



Pencil Pot

Have you found that the pens, pencils and brushes you're using in these different activities often roll off the table or slip under books so you can't find them?

Why not make your own decorated pencil pot to keep all these items in?

Some of the materials you need are quite expensive if you have to buy them, so check the equipment you need before starting.



Equipment

1. A washed, empty food tin (use one of the tins with a ringpull lid so it doesn't have dangerous sharp edges).
2. A sheet of wrapping paper that has pictures on it.
3. A small piece of thick cardboard (to fit on the bottom of the tin).
4. A small piece of felt (the same size as the cardboard).
5. Scissors, paper glue and a pencil.
6. A small pot of clear varnish (you can buy this from any paint shop).

Safety Stuff

Check with an adult before you begin, as you might need their help at some stage. Working with items such as scissors can be dangerous, so be very careful when you use them, and make sure that you never leave them open or lying around where smaller children can reach them.

Before starting to make the containers, cover the work surface you're going to use with some newspaper or an old cloth and make sure that you are wearing an apron or some old clothes, particularly when working with papier-mâché (which can be very messy!).

Gather together all the items you'll need before you begin. That way you don't end up hunting around whilst you're covered in glue and bits of newspaper! Most of the things you'll need can probably be found by hunting around the house, but make sure that you check with an adult before you take anything. Even that old newspaper might have been saved by somebody for a reason!

When you've finished, don't forget to tidy everything away. Wash any paint brushes you have used and remember to put the tops back on pens, paint and glue pots.

Steps

Step One

First, decorate your tin. Take the wrapping paper and cut a piece that will fit around the side of the tin, with a small overlap. Glue the wrapping paper to the tin, making sure there are no air bubbles trapped under the pieces of paper. When the glue is dry, trim the edges.

You could add some other decorations as well. Choose the pictures you want to use as decorations and carefully cut each picture. Spread glue over the back of each one, making sure you go right up to the edges to stop the sides from curling up.

Stick the pictures onto the tin, arranging them evenly all around the sides.

Step Two

When the glue is dry, add a coat of clear varnish to give your pot a shine and protect it. Let the varnish dry.

Stand the tin on the piece of thick cardboard and draw around it with a pencil. Cut out the circle just inside the line so it will fit into the base of the tin. Draw a circle on the felt in the same way, but this time cut it out just outside the line.

Stick the piece of felt to the cardboard circle and then glue the cardboard to the bottom of the pencil pot.



Other Uses

Your decorated pot is now ready to hold and organise all your pencils.

Tins like this are very good for making containers of all sorts as they are very strong.

Can you think of any other uses for empty food containers?

