

Holiday Arrangements 101

Holiday decorating need not be time-consuming, elaborate, or expensive. Take a quick inventory of things around the home that can provide the basis for creative design. Think about a clear glass trifle dish, a cake stand to elevate an arrangement, or a soup tureen. When purchasing additional materials, Peg recommended Crafts 2000 and Hobby Lobby because of their great selection and pricing.

Unusual items can be used in simple, yet eye-catching designs. Napco figurines are available in a variety of characters and sizes (Santa Claus, angel, mouse, etc.), and make a statement even without adding any embellishments. Starting with a soup tureen, Peg used double-sided tape to hold the lid on at an angle. She filled the opening with red Christmas balls in various textures and sizes and surrounded the base with long-needled pine boughs. To match the seafood motif of the tureen, she added starfish painted to look like Santas and snowmen, a red crab, fish in Christmas colors, and a whimsical red lobster with a Santa hat.



Bronze, copper, and green were popular colors this year, and many items can be coated with a metal powder (Metal Leaf

Flake) to fit in with this color scheme. Candles and artificial fruit look especially elegant when combined with pinecones and greenery. 3 candles on pedestals of different heights make an especially pleasing grouping.

Flameless candles, available with or without a timer, are a safe and attractive substitute for the real thing. They can be placed anywhere in the house without worrying about excessive heat or fire. Many produce flickering effects and some are scented.



To create a charming centerpiece or table-top arrangement, Peg layered peppermint candies and small Christmas ball ornaments with cotton batting in a clear glass trifle dish. She hooked candy canes around the rim and tucked a candle in the center. Instant holiday!

Get ready to hear the oohs and aahs when you follow Peg's instructions for making this party conversation piece. Fill a clay or ceramic pot with oasis, then gather round ornaments in your choice of colors and designs. For ornaments without floral picks attached, wind wire around the loop at the top of the ornament to a floral pick. Starting

at the base of the pot, insert the pick portion of the ornament into the oasis so only the rounded part shows. Use the largest ornaments first and fill in gaps with medium and small balls. For a totally different look using the same construction technique, create a fresh fruit arrangement. Cover fruit with edible pearl dust (available at craft stores



or on the internet) before assembling the final project. Pearl dust and sparkle dust come in a variety of colors and are safe to eat. Plastic fruit touched with translucent, pearlized paint would also be effective.

A centerpiece for angel lovers: Choose a lovely tray or flat plate, and position an angel figurine in the center. Fill mini-flower pots or votive candle holders with tiny ornaments. Arrange the “planters” around the base of the angel and sprinkle cranberries between the planters.

Feather wreath arrangements can be expensive to buy, but easy to make. Begin with a basic straw or Styrofoam wreath and your choice of feathers, both of which are available at craft stores. Insert feathers at an angle around the outside of the wreath, and work toward the inside of the wreath, making sure to overlap the feathers and cover the wreath base. Use a pencil or stylus to create a hole if the feathers do not push in easily. Feathers can also be glued in. Depending on the color of feathers chosen and the type of base used, additional ornaments may be added, although a plain feather wreath is beautiful without any other decoration.



Peg turned a feather wreath into a table-top arrangement by threading battery-operated lights through the wreath and adding a nest of pine needles and 2 partridges in the center. She placed several gold, red, and copper ornaments asymmetrically on the feathers. She suggested replacing the partridges with a small nativity scene or a hurricane lamp chimney to create an entirely different look.

Peg had many other quick ideas. For example, place a grapevine wreath on a table top and insert peacock feathers through the wreath. Build a pyramid of ornaments in the center.

Turn a glass bell jar upside down and fill with ornaments of different sizes or textures. Cover the base with a plate and flip right-side up. Dried hydrangea can also be used for a simple, but elegant, design.

Nestle a small, lighted church figurine, a Christmas tree, and a deer figurine on cotton batting on a round plate. Hide the battery under the batting if necessary. Cover with a glass bell jar.

With a little imagination and a visit to a craft store, anyone can decorate for the holidays without spending a lot of time or money. Best of all, the majority of Peg's designs can be easily disassembled and used in different ways for future holidays. Thanks, Peg, for sharing some great ideas!