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## Easy Activities for Kids on Winter Break

by [Patti Roth](#)



Star of David made from recycled jigsaw pieces by students at Kentwood Preparatory.

If you want to add some fresh pop to your holiday décor (or give your children something to keep them busy during the holiday vacation), skip the busy stores and shop right in your own recycling bin.

A group of festive folks in South Florida proved that items like plastic water bottles and butter tub lids work quite nicely as seasonal ornaments: All it takes is a bit of ingenuity. And perhaps some scissors and glue.

Dozens of youngsters and adults devised an array of intriguing items for a green-themed event hosted by the town of Davie, which is near Fort Lauderdale. Participants embellished trees, menorahs and other holiday decorations by re-purposing disposable items from their homes, schools and offices.

We snagged a few of their impressive ideas and techniques. So if you're itching for some homemade holiday flair, get ready to rifle through your recycling bin.

### Mosaic Star & Cereal Box Garland

Kids at Kentwood Preparatory School used pieces from old jigsaw puzzles to create a colorful mosaic-like pattern for a Jewish Star of David. The pieces, taken from puzzles with missing sections, were glued onto a base made by cutting scrap wood into two triangles.

The students also cut cereal boxes into strips then made a chain by interlocking the colorful loops.

## Puffy Flowers



A member of the Parents of Multiples Club used plastic red-and-white Target bags to make blossoms that adorned the Christmas tree. Using a technique similar to crepe paper flowers, she cut the bags into squares, then manipulated the layers to form the flowers.

## Painted Bulbs

Various groups added glass ornaments to their trees, using painted light bulbs. Some painted simple designs, such as smiley faces, while others created intricate portraits of snowmen and penguins. Some added extra glamour with glitter and jewels.

## Jolly Snowmen and Ornaments

The students at Flamingo Elementary School transformed the shorter, squatter styles of plastic water bottles from the school cafeteria into snowmen. They poured white paint into the bottle to coat the inside. Then, they tied a piece of ribbon, to serve as the scarf, about two-thirds up from the base. Faces were created with buttons and markers, and used felt pieces made the bottle cap into a hat. .

Third-graders at the school decorated plastic tops from butter tubs to create round ornaments. They embellished the edges with glitter and yarn.

## See-through Snowflakes

The bottoms of plastic water bottles worked nicely as snowflakes for the group at Kentwood Preparatory School who decorated a Hanukkah menorah. They cut the plastic bottles about an inch or two from the bottom. Then they sliced slits into the vertical section and folded each flap down to form a snowflake. A bead was glued into the middle. To hang the ornament, you can poke holes in a discreet section.

## Un-traditional Tree Skirts

Bags from corn and potato chips and other snack foods make a great base for a tree skirt. Students cut the packaging into colorful squares and stapled the pieces together to form an interesting pattern for a tree skirt. For some glitz, they turned over some squares and used the shiny silver side. Kentwood Preparatory School also devised a personalized tree skirt with the clean side of used printer paper. They printed out photos of different students and decoupled them to a recycled cardboard base.

## Patti Roth

Patti Roth is a freelance writer, vegetarian and dog enthusiast based in South Florida. She incorporates green tips and practices in her lifestyle -as well as in her articles. [More articles by Patti](#)