

Kids Korner



Try your hands at popcorn sculpting. The Christmas tree, wreath, and snowman can be displayed or eaten for holiday fun.

Popcorn Sculpting

Popcorn is a universal snack. Everyone loves it, and why not! It's good for you, inexpensive, and easy to make.

In between snacking on popped corn, try your hand at popcorn sculpting. The Christmas tree, wreath, and snowman are proven pleasers. They're fun to make, and the finished sculptures can be eaten or displayed for holiday entertainment.

Or, string popcorn for the trees outside your house. It gives your yard a decorative flair and the birds and squirrels will like it too.

Here are some directions.

BASIC SCULPTING RECIPE (For Wreaths and Snowmen)

- 2 quarts popped corn
- No-stick cooking spray
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon green food color (for wreath only)

Spray a large baking sheet with cooking spray; set aside. In saucepan, over medium heat, combine sugar, corn syrup, salt, and food color. Cook, stirring constantly, until sugar melts and mixture comes to a full boil. Immediately pour over popcorn. Working carefully and quickly, toss popcorn with wooded spoon until well coated. Use greased hands when shaping into sculptures.

To Decorate Wreaths

- Basic Sculpting Recipe
- Red Licorice
- Fruit by the Foot (optional)
- Red hot

Divide basic sculpting mixture in half. Shape each half into a wreath. Wrap licorice around wreath about every 2 to 3 inches. Decorate wreath with Red Hot. Form licorice or Fruit by the Foot into a ribbon and press into wreath.

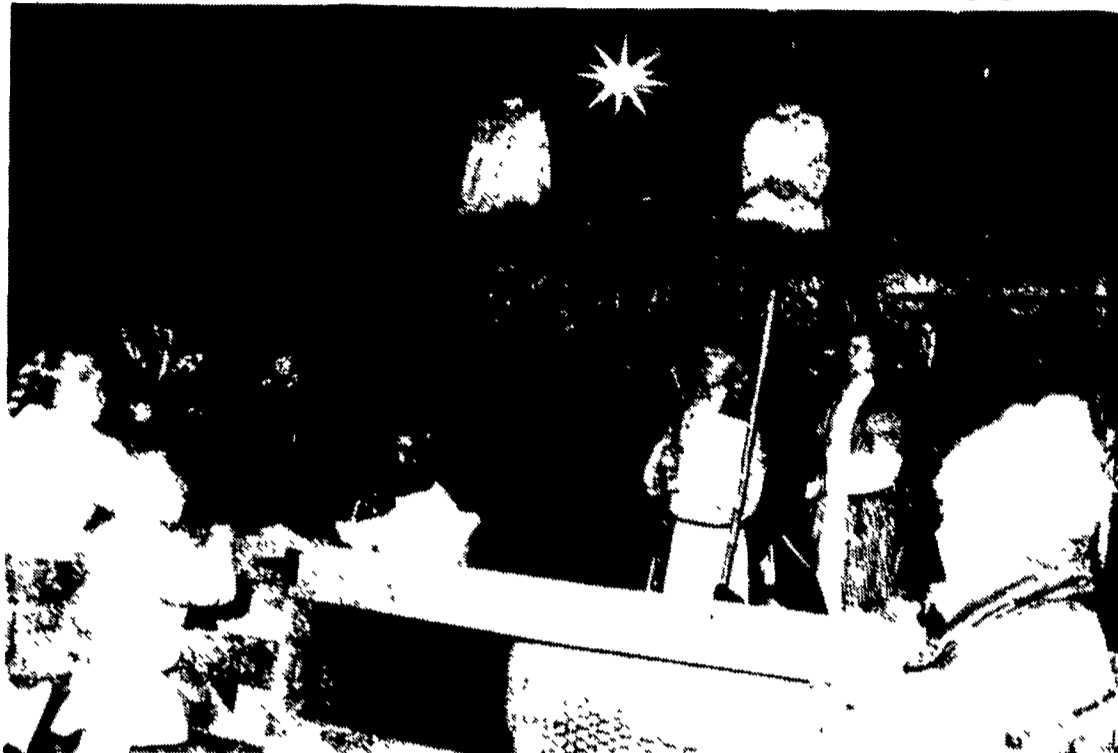
- To Decorate Snowmen
- Basic Sculpting Recipe
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
- Water
- Thin wafer cookies OR thin mint cookies
- Ho Ho
- Gumdrops, cut in fourths
- Candy Corn
- Fruit by the Foot
- M&M's

Shape basic sculpting mixture into balls to create snowmen (finished size approximately 7 inches high). Mix powdered sugar with enough water to form a thick paste. Use paste to attach candies and cookie to snowmen. Place chocolate cookie on top of snowman's head as brim of hat. Cut one end of Ho Ho to the desired height of top hat; attach to center of chocolate cookie. Cut gumdrops into fourths; attach as eyes. Paste candy corn on as a nose. Cut Fruit by the Foot in half lengthwise to desired length for scarf. Use kitchen shears to fringe the ends of the scarf. Attach M&M's to body of snowman as buttons. Cut Fruit by the Foot into a small band to be used around the top hat. Secure with paste mixture.

O POPCORN TREE

- 8 quarts popped corn
 - No-stick cooking spray
 - 2 cups sugar
 - 2 cups light corn syrup
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon green food color
 - 1 empty paper towel roll
 - Assorted gumballs or small jar breakers
 - 1 package tiny, candy-coated, multi-colored gum
 - 12-piece box fruit flavored, candy-coated, multi-colored gum
 - 4.25-ounce tube white decorating icing
 - Silver dragees (round silver candies)
 - Star (purchased at a craft store)
- Measure 8 quarts popped corn and divide into two large bowls; set aside. Spray a large baking

Remember The First Christmas



Children try to get an upclose view of what the first Christmas might have been like when Jesus was born in a stable. If you have the opportunity, attend a reenactment of the Christmas story shown in your area.



This friendly camel accompanied by a "wise man" delighted the audience at the reenactment of the Christmas story held in the barn of the Fred Heller farm in Lititz.

Grow Holiday Gifts

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Young and thrifty alike don't have to look any further than the kitchen for thoughtful, living holiday gifts.

Leftovers - including food and trash - are easy to make into attractive houseplants, said Marianne Riofrio, an Ohio State University horticulturist. Children can experience the thrill of watching

something grow, then sharing it as a gift, while adults who are in a money crunch can also appreciate the low costs. Plants grown from foods usually don't bear fruit indoors. However, they do have unusual foliage. The following tips should help you get started on some of the easier plants.

- Avocados. Remove the seed, rinse off skin in warm water, and insert three toothpicks at equal distance around the midsection. Suspend the seed with the pointed end up over a glass or jar of water. Make sure water covers the seed's bottom third. If a slimy coating appears on the seed or in the water, just rinse it off and replace the water. Place the container in bright, indirect sunlight until the seed splits and roots, and one or more shoots appear. When a shoot reaches 3 inches, transplant the seed to a 6-inch pot filled with potting soil, leaving half or more of the seed exposed. Keep the plant in bright light, feed it with a balanced, water-soluble houseplant fertilizer, and pinch it to keep it bushy and attractive.

sheet with cooking spray; set aside. In saucepan, over medium heat, combine sugar, corn syrup, salt, and food color. Cook, stirring constantly, until sugar melts and mixture comes to full boil. Immediately pour equal amounts of syrup over popcorn in each bowl. Working carefully and quickly; toss popcorn with wooded spoon until well coated. With greased hands, press all popcorn firmly around an empty paper towel roll making a tree shape. Once the desired shape is achieved, decorate tree with gum and candies, firmly pressing into tree. Squeeze icing onto tree to simulate snow and press silver dragees into snow. Place star on top of tree. Makes one 10-inch tree.

• Sweet potatoes. Choose a plump sweet potato without deep scars. Insert three toothpicks around the sweet potato and place it with the pointed end down in a jar or glass of water so the bottom half stays wet. Place in a sunny location. When shoots reach 8 inches, transplant the sweet potato into a pot at least 50 percent deeper than the tuber's length. Bury the entire sweet potato in well-drained potting soil. Provide the plant with bright light and water it frequently for a beautiful vine of heart-shaped foliage.

• Terrariums. These encased gardens are ideal planters for small areas such as offices. They can be a little more costly than avocados or sweet potatoes, only because you have to supply the plants. Use your imagination to find a container. Consider mason jars, mayonnaise jars, recycled clear plastic liter bottles or salad trays. If a container lacks a cover, use a piece of glass or plastic wrap. Leaves or snippets of houseplants that grow well in terrariums

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