

TOPP

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ENCHANTING *Romantic* Decorations

50 Creative
Nature-Inspired Ideas
for Every Season

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Foreword



Imagine bringing home a treasure trove of natural wonders from your walks! The beauty of this is that it costs you nothing, making it a fantastic opportunity for creating stunning decorations and unique pieces of art that reflect your personal style. The joy of combining these materials is a delightful experience, often leading to surprising results that can feel like true miracles. Each item has its own charm, and the best part is that you don't always need a vivid imagination to work with them. Nature offers an abundance of inspiration – everywhere you look, you can discover fruits, grasses, bark, roots, and pebbles just waiting to be transformed. Whether you choose to arrange these finds in a vase or simply place them on your windowsill, it's an accessible project for anyone. I encourage you to explore the ideas in this book and gain the confidence to try more intricate creations.

Believe me, even the simplest items can be turned into captivating decorations that showcase your unique touch.

So, take a moment to look around you. In the wood shed, you might find some logs; under the birch tree in your garden, there could be twigs; by the stream, you'll discover willow branches; and in the forest, you might come across soft moss. Autumn is particularly generous, offering a bounty of materials that can leave you wondering what to choose first.

Nature's riches are plentiful and available in any quantity – it truly feels like a dream! All it takes is a willingness to explore, an open mind, and sometimes a little adventure – whether that means crawling through the underbrush, tilting your head back to admire the trees, or bending down to see what's hidden at ground level.

With all these treasures at your fingertips, how can you not create something wonderful?

So go ahead – create, experiment, and invent! Don't let anyone tell you that something won't work.

And if your first attempt doesn't go as planned, don't be disheartened; there are endless natural materials all around you to try again. Plus, they're free, and we should celebrate that – they're truly priceless!

Wishing you joyful moments of creativity with this book and lots of courage as you embark on your artistic journey!

Lucy D.L.

MATERIALS

and basic guidelines

Natural materials are easily accessible, can be practically gathered at any time, and offer almost endless possibilities for use. Through them, one can express creativity, and if you don't know how, this book will help you.

The following pages provide initial answers: They contain general information and techniques used that are often repeated in the book.



PREPARING NATURAL MATERIALS BEFORE USE

Some natural materials are used immediately after gathering, in their fresh state, while others need to be dried. However, never work with natural products when they are wet.

In general, natural materials that we will bend while creating (e.g., vines when making wreaths) should be processed as soon as possible to avoid breaking the material.

All fresh natural materials for decorations should be attached with wire; otherwise, they may come loose later as they dry out.

The dry ones are better glued with a hot glue gun – it's quick, easy, and the bond holds very well.



DRYING NATURAL MATERIALS

There are various methods for drying natural materials, which depend on their type.

Flowers (such as lavender), as well as ornamental grasses and plants, should be dried in places with good airflow and at a constant temperature.

Tie them together with twine, wire, or a rubber band, and then dry them.

Bark and hay should be left in the sun, while citrus fruit slices can be dried in the oven.

Petals of roses and other small natural materials must dry evenly.

The simplest way is to place them in a sieve to allow air to circulate from below as well.

All natural materials must be checked during the drying process and rotated as needed to prevent mould from forming.



COATING NATURAL MATERIALS

You can quickly paint natural materials with acrylic paints.

This will give them a new look...

However, it's better to wait until they are at least slightly dry. Only then will the paint hold well.



WORKING WITH WOOD

If you are dealing with thicker twigs, branches, or logs, it's easier to work with them when they are fresh and not dried. They will be easier to cut or split. Cut small wooden circles with a saw.

Use garden shears to cut only fresh twigs.

When selecting wood, make sure it's not infested with pests.



WREATHS – COVERING THE SURFACE

Finished wreaths, that is, the frames, are available ready-made and in various sizes. They can be found made of materials such as polystyrene, straw, wicker, etc.

Covering the surface of the frame is done using wire or a hot glue gun, to which the natural materials are attached.

You can also make the frame with your own hands – it's very easy.

Use vines from creeper, hops, wisteria, or willow branches. Simply weave the material into a circular shape, and if necessary, secure it with wire, although this is not always necessary.



MAKING A WREATH

- 1** Using garden shears, cut the longest vines or branches possible.
- 2** Make the wreath base. To start, take a vine or a branch in your hands and form a circle of any size. Then, wrap the other end around it in the opposite direction. At this stage, choose the front side of your future wreath and begin to shape it.
- 3** Gradually, start winding additional vines or branches around this base, alternating the directions as you go. Not only should you wrap from right to left, but also from the inside out and from the outside in. This technique ensures that the frame looks beautiful and that the wreath is evenly intertwined. As you work, tuck the ends of the vines or branches between the others as needed to secure them in place.



INCORPORATING GRASS, GRAIN, AND TWIGS

You can also enhance your wreath's base using grass, grain, or thin twigs from any trees, shrubs, or conifers.

1 Start by holding a few branches together and wrapping them with thin wire. Gradually add more branches, securing each new branch to the previous ones with the wire. This will create a longer bundle. The larger the bundles of branches we use, the more robust the wreath will be.

2 Once we have a bundle that is long enough, we form it into a circle and securely fasten the ends together with wire. The initial shape of the base may not be perfectly round; shape it by further wrapping with wire.

3 Once satisfied with the base, tuck the thicker ends of the branches into the bottom part of the future wreath so they are not visible. Use pliers to tighten the wire where needed, shaping the wreath to achieve the final look.







Spring Feelings



Winter is ending... Outside, the last traces of ice and snow are melting, and nature begins to turn green once more. The first flowers start to bloom, birds return from the south, and the natural world slowly awakens to new life and light. It's the perfect time to bring this freshness and vitality into your own home!

FLOWER pots

SIZE

approx. 10 cm

YOU WILL NEED

cans
hot glue gun
birch branches
pruning shears
smaller pliers
thin binding wire
acrylic paint
brush
ribbons, strings, laces
or trims
various decorations
(I used wooden flowers)

1 Prepare two cans, removing any paper labels (I used one smaller and one larger).

2 Use pruning shears to cut branches to a length roughly matching the height of the cans. For variety, some branches can be 1–2 cm longer. Start by selecting the thicker branches.

3 For the smaller can, attach only the thicker branches, placing them as close together as possible. Once the first layer is done, fill any gaps with a second row.

4 For the larger can, begin by gluing the thicker branches as well, but leave about a centimetre of space between them.

5 Then, gather any leftover thinner branches. Group them together, trim the bottoms with shears to make them even, and use them to fill the gaps on the second can.

6 Next, start adding greenery. Attach sections of evergreen branches, securing them with wire as shown in the image, until the entire surface is covered. Finally, wrap the wire evenly around the can a few times, secure it, and snip off the excess.

7 Use pliers to adjust any branches that may have shifted up or down during the wrapping process.

8 If the wire needs to be tightened in certain spots, grab it with pliers and gently twist to the side, as shown in the picture.

9 Once the can is fully covered, stand it upright and trim the tops of the branches. Paint the branch-covered cans with acrylic paint, but only lightly so that the natural colour of the branches still shows through. Finally, decorate the flower pots with ribbons, lace, twine, or wooden flowers, adding your personal touch to each one.

