

Valentine Party Crackers

Materials:

Lightweight wrapping paper
Cardstock (60-70# weight works great)
Cardboard tubes (2" x 4")*
Cracker snaps*
Cracker contents (paper crowns*, sweets, trinkets, etc.)
Curling ribbon
Tinsel (optional)
Crepe paper
Scissors
Hot glue gun with glue
Heart paper punch (optional)

Directions:

- 1) Begin by cutting your lightweight wrapping paper into 7.5" x 12" pieces. You'll need one piece for each party cracker.
- 2) Position a piece of the wrapping paper horizontally and place one cardboard tube also horizontally in the center. Center a cracker snap underneath the cardboard tube. Roll the wrapping paper around to make certain the edge align and then open back up. To prevent the paper from rolling back on itself while you apply glue weigh it down temporarily with a second cardboard tube. Apply a thin bead of hot glue about ¼" along one edge of the wrapping paper piece. Remove the second cardboard tube and roll the paper around sealing both sides together. Run your finger along the seam to insure contact, but be cautious not to burn yourself on the hot glue!

- 3) Cut the card stock into 2.25" x 7" piece to create stiffener cuffs for each end of the cracker. You'll need two pieces for each party cracker. Roll a stiffener cuff into smaller diameter than the cracker tube and tuck into one end of the cracker -- position to align with edge of the wrapping paper. Be certain that the end of the cracker snap is inside the stiffener cuff and not sandwiched between the stiffener cuff and the wrapping paper. Spread the stiffener cuff along the inside wall of the cracker and secure in place with hot glue. Repeat this process, inserting a stiffener cuff in the opposite end of the cracker as well.
- 4) Using your fingers crimp and gather the paper on one end of the cracker between the cardboard tube and the stiffener cuff. Cut a length of curling ribbon (about 10") and tie around the gathered paper, double knot and cut ribbon ends.
- 5) Place cracker contents onto the open end. Traditional party crackers contain a toy or trinket, a sweet, a paper hat and a riddle or joke. Once your cracker is filled, repeat the previous step, gathering and tying off the open end.
- 6) There are many ways to decorate your party cracker! Consider tying leftover holiday tinsel around the ribbon ties or add additional curling ribbon leaving long tails to curl with the edge of your scissors. You can create a band to wrap around the center of the cracker -- in the video I cut a 3.25" x 7" piece of crepe paper, wrapped it and secured with hot glue. Finish off your band with a punched or hand cut paper heart!

Helpful Tips:

If you decorate your party cracker with holiday tinsel, know that you can strip a couple of inches of the tinsel at each end to reveal the wire -- this make it easier to tie!

While I used crepe paper to create the center band, know that you can use any type of decorative paper -- construction paper, newsprint, scrapbooking paper, etc.

While traditional party crackers contain a joke or riddle, consider writing out a little love note or note of appreciation to include in your Valentine Party Cracker.

Rather than purchase pre-cut 2" x 4" cardboard tubes you can also cut down a large 2" diameter mailing tube. You might also consider cutting down toilet paper or paper towel tube and adjusting the size of the wrapping paper accordingly.

Thank you to Old English Crackers for originally showing me how to construct crackers! See their tutorial here: <http://www.oldenglishcrackers.com/mak...>