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Tying Up Christmas

by Ann Robel

HAVE you ever had a Christmas package so lovely that you looked at it again and again before your curiosity finally won and you had to open it? Or have yours all been the red-and-green tissue paper variety, with bulging corners? No matter what you've received, why not make the ones you send the lovely kind?

A gift wrapping is not merely something to cover up the gift until December 25. Each package is an art project in itself. Here is an opportunity to practice the principles that you learned in first quarter art. For example, don't run ribbons diagonally across the corners; keep them parallel to the sides of the box.

Your Christmas package will become famous if you experiment with color. If you must have red and green, be

A turquoise shade may be had for the mere duo-wrapping of light green and light blue paper.

Similar effects can be turned out from a colored box and only one color of transparent paper. A red box may be converted into a luscious shade of magenta by the addition of a violet wrapping, or a yellow box plus a light blue film can be a rich Araby green.

Such richness can be intensified by an unusual design of two colors such as a package two-thirds dubonnet and one-third amber. After being completely wrapped in amber, the box is partially covered by violet. Five or six pleats are laid down crossways on the box.

If you wish to be wise, beware of

treatments you may make around the bothering bulge.

Now, some suggestions for "those special people." Little brother and sister are easy to please. They love red and green and Santa Claus, and, most of all, what's underneath; but just watch their eyes shine at an animal cracker parade marching briskly across the top of a box. Cover the box in the new, shiny, opaque paper. About one inch from the top, wrap a two inch band of white. Glue the crackers, which have been tinted with water colors, onto this band.

For your roommate, who lives for dances, wrap in dull finished or shiny black paper. Then cut animated stick figures from shiny white paper and glue them onto the black. For a journalistic friend, try substituting strips of headlines for ribbon over a shiny red wrapping.

If she's a sailing enthusiast, what could be more appropriate than marine blue, bound with clothesline rope and tied with a sailor's knot. If you've a musical friend, wrap the box in white tissue paper. Paste across the top the five black bars of the staff, mark off measures, and print upon each note a letter of the name. As an added "Christmasy" touch, you may have the notes form the first bar of a well known carol.

On the tag, instead of the conventional "to 'Susie' from 'Joe,'" use small faces of each clipped from snapshots. This gift card may be kept in a scrapbook long after the present has been forgotten.

For father, one suggestion is the popular opaque paper in brown, with the only decoration the word "Dad" stenciled in creme in lower case letters in the lower right hand corner.

Make Mother's the same as Father's, changing the color to violet-red, with silver or blue letters.

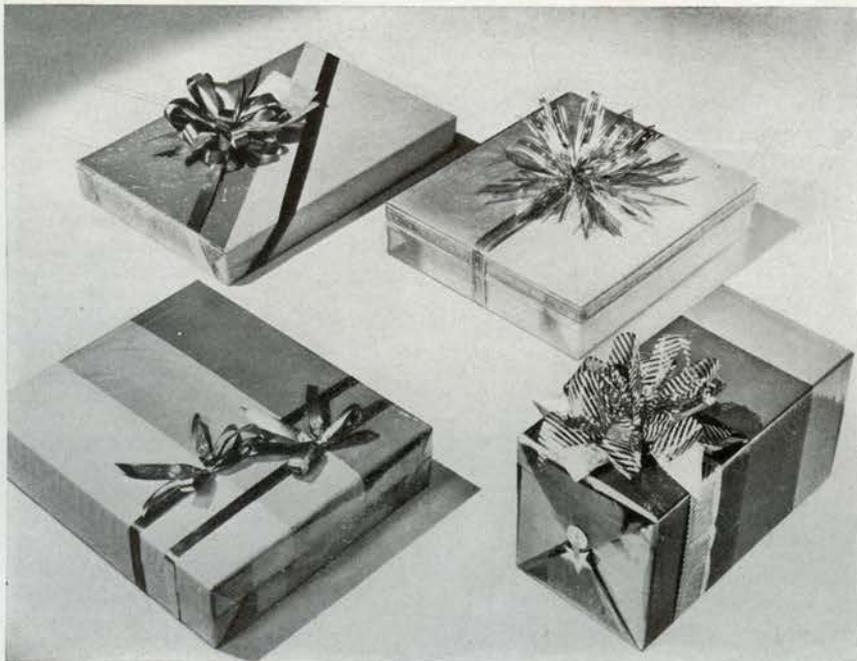
Here are some hints on simple construction.

1. Place the box upside down on the sheet of paper so that the face of the gift will have a uniform surface. See that seams or "joints" come on the bottom or sides of the package—never the top.

2. Before cutting the paper from the roll, measure the length required, allowing about one inch overlap in the middle and a little over half the depth of the box on the ends.

3. Cellulose film should always be wrapped loosely to allow for shrinkage. Do not pull it tightly across the package. Do not let it hug corners tightly.

4. Blowing on this transparent ribbon when tying it will give a tighter knot.



subtle about it—blue-green cellophane with a red-violet ribbon perhaps. If you will break away from tradition, so much the better. Try a red-violet, blue-violet combination with silver ribbon to top it off. Be different with dubonnet and blue, or black and gold. Steer shy of pale, delicate colors, unless it's for baby's first Christmas.

Transparent wrappings of red, green or blue are not the only available colors for one with ingenuity. Off-tones such as lemon yellow and dubonnet are easily attainable.

Lemon yellow is attained by overlaying a light green film of transparent paper with amber, and dubonnet is the simple combination of amber on violet.

flimsy ribbons and poorly gummed stickers. Stress simplicity in your designs; avoid too many intricacies.

If your patience and talent are above average, consider designing your own paper. You may stencil or block print, using either all-over patterns or individual designs.

Of course there are always those gifts with bulges, points or curves that will not take a smooth finish. This problem may be solved by the use of crushed paper. Crumple tissue paper between your hands. Stretch the piece out, and then re-crumple. Repeat this several times, and then wrap. Not only is the effect a pleasing one, the finish of the paper will tend to minimize any clumsy