

# stocking

## Standouts

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Give your home festive flair with these easy-to-make Christmas favorites.

*Christmas stockings* celebrate tradition while adding color, texture, and contrast to holiday decor. You can fashion them from a variety of materials, such as velvet, felt, satin, and linen, and in styles ranging from the clean lines of modern-day design to classic Scandinavian country.

Choose stockings that match your skill level and lifestyle. Gussying up store-bought stockings with buttons, beads, or simple stitching takes little time and can fit any budget. Glitter and sequins brighten even the most ordinary fabric.

For more adventure, try a material, technique, or style that is new to you. Go beyond traditional red and green in color choices, and consider snow figures, Santas, or angels. Stockings that reflect the interests and personalities of family members add thoughtful touches. Your budding rock star will love a stocking embellished with guitars and records. For the sailing buff, craft a nautical theme.

If your home doesn't have a fireplace, there are plenty of other places Santa will find, including

bedposts, doorknobs, clothing hooks, and stairway banisters. You also can display stockings from freestanding holders placed on a bookshelf or table edge.

Wherever you hang your stockings with care this Christmas, you'll join in a centuries-old tradition. One legend claims the custom began in the 16th century when Dutch children placed their wooden clogs by the hearth in hopes that "Sinterklaas" would fill them with treats. Another tale says that Saint Nicholas dropped gold coins down the chimney of the home of three poor sisters in England. The coins landed in stockings left to dry by the fire, giving the sisters a dowry, thus the means to marry.

Remember to follow proper safety measures when hanging your stockings. Make sure they won't catch fire dangling from the mantel. Avoid heavy freestanding holders if you have small children who might pull on a stocking, causing the holder to fall and possibly injure the child.

Quick-to-decorate felt stockings, above, are perfect for the time-strapped crafter. A tree and stars reflect tradition, and sequins add a cheery touch. Instructions begin on page 108.

## Promise of Spring

Tulips lend an unexpected air and hint at spring to come. Cluster six or seven tulips together, twisting rubber bands around the stems. Wrap the bouquet ends with a plisse ribbon as shown, *below middle*; hot-glue the loose end in place. Wire the bouquet onto the wreath, and hot-glue twigs and berries into place for additional color and texture, *below*. Using real flowers adds texture (place the stems in florist's vials of water), but silks will last longer.



## Here's How

TO MAKE THIS BOW

- You'll need 4 yards of a 3- to 5-inch-wide wire-edge ribbon. Make a 5-inch loop 20 inches from one end (this will become one of the tails). Make another 5-inch loop to form a figure 8.
- Repeat to make three loops on each side, stacking and pinching them in the center, as shown, *lower left*.
- Cut the ribbon to form a second tail the same length as the first.
- Wrap the bow center with florist's wire, catching a small ribbon loop in with the wire to form a knot to cover the wire.
- Fluff the loops; fold the tails lengthwise and cut a V in the ends.



### *Fun with Chenille*

Prequilted white cotton stockings showcase elegant red chenille trim and contemporary styling. Fluff the chenille with a stiff bristle brush; threads will fly when you begin to work, but don't worry—it's part of the process, and your chenille will turn out beautifully. Instructions begin on page 108.



## *Sew Easy*

Dress up store-bought stockings with antique lace, green felt leaves, a trio of berrylike beads, and simple stitching. Instructions begin on page 108.





### *Knit a Bit*

A knit stocking provides ample space for goodies. Green and red stripes help create a classic look. For instructions view [www.bhg.com/knittedstocking](http://www.bhg.com/knittedstocking).