

Let's Make Decorated Journals!

By Cindy Rushton

Ready for a fun project? Fun gifts? Maybe a special treat just for ministering to others? Or, how about a special touch for a new Prayer Journal of YOUR OWN??? You MUST try decorating your own journals! When you see how EASY they are to make, you will be hooked!



Go Shopping!

First step is a blast! **Go shopping!** Or...you can dig out goodies that are all around your house. ☺ What you will love is that this project can use all of the scraps and extra goodies around your house! Ready for a shopping list? Here are some of our suggestions:



Quick Shopping List...

⇒ **Inexpensive Journal!** We found very inexpensive journals at the Dollar Store. Since we were re-covering the journals anyway, our only consideration was the quality of paper and any printing on the inside—we wanted for that to match and be the best quality that we could have. We found some adorable journals for only one dollar at **Dollar Tree** in our area. We took off the stickers and extra goodies that were on them already. They were ready to go!

⇒ **Paper...** Choose paper to cover the journal. Find colors that coordinate for the theme that you want. You can use any type of paper you would like to use. We tried several. Our favorites are using wallpaper, velvet paper (find it with the poster boards at Hobby Lobby), and mulberry paper. We use cardstock paper for the insides (I will share more about it in a bit). We used a wide variety of papers for mounting pictures and Bible Verses for the



Lucia's journal is covered with Velvet Paper. Then, she added a decorative sticker to the front. She finished both of hers with beauti-

ful embellishments which were from the YARN section of the fabric store! Buy these neat yarns by the skein and save! They go far!

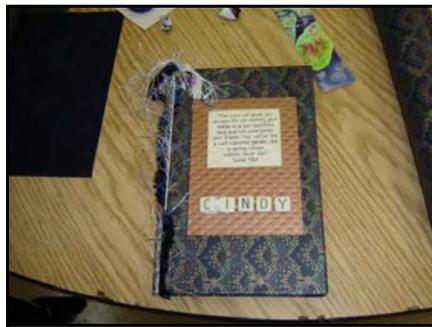


Jane used Velvet Paper to cover her book, then Mulberry to add texture on her cover. Her picture was hand-drawn! Can you guess that she LOVES horses? Another perk of making journals: you can add what YOU love to the journals!

covers—everything from gold to mulberry paper to simple cardstock. It always amazes me how different the books look with just different choices of paper!



Can you believe that this journal was a \$1 journal from **Dollar Tree** that was covered with scraps from wallpaper BORDER left over from a kitchen project! FOR REAL! The little journal was covered, then all we did was add the yarns tied on the side, then we added a Bible verse, that had been printed on cardstock and mounted on Mulberry Paper. Humm...investment of \$1 plus SCRAPs! ☺



My journal is covered with wallpaper, then I used a gold, textured paper to mount my Bible verse (which was printed from my computer onto marbled beige paper). Don't you LOVE paper???



Talk about GORGEOUS!!! This journal was decorated using Velvet Paper. Make you want to go buy-out your local hobby shop???. It was further decorated with one of Melissa's art prints—she painted it then made copies to use on projects like this and her cards. She mounted the print with a beautiful contrasting color of cardstock. Then, she used another piece for her lettering. Sooo Nice!!

⇒ **Adhesives...** We used several adhesives, some worked better than others. We found that *Spray Adhesive* was the best for attaching wallpaper, cardstock and other papers. It was a bit messy and best used outside—just spray the paper on the back, then attach to your book. Be sure to begin on one side so you can smooth it on without bubbles or wrinkles. We used the *Spray Adhesive* for our titles/Bible verses too. We held the small pieces like that with tweezers while spraying—less messy! We also used *Gel Medium* for gluing on tiles and other bulky embellishments, since *Gel Medium* dries slower. We also used *Hot Glue* for some of the bulky embellishments. You probably already have some adhesives on hand that will do a good job on your journals. If not, you can find these for a minimum investment and they will go far! I found my *Spray Adhesive* at Walmart in the paint department. I bought the non-brand. It has done great! I found the *Gel Medium* at Hobby Lobby in



In this picture, Sherry is using *Gel Medium* (see the tub). She is applying it with a paint brush. This is great for almost any of your supplies. It dries clear.



the art/paint section. Just ask any employee if you need help finding it. It is a bit costly, but it goes VERY far! We used it at home for about 10 journals before bringing it to our support group class and it was still barely used after the class! It works on so many of the supplies that we want to use. It is WORTH every penny!

⇒ **Embellishments!** Saw that word a few times already? Wonder what I am talking about? This is where it all gets FUN! Let me give you some ideas of some of the things we used to embellish our journals...



Yarn!!! Beaded Ribbons!



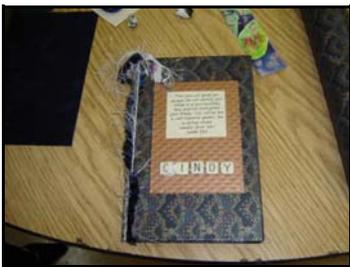
Stickers...Gel Pens..Filly Edgings!



Rubber Stamping!



Strands of Pearls—just FOUR inches! And...more yarns.



Letter Tiles...Printed Bible Verses (On Cardstock)...Filly Yarns...Gold Cardstock



Copies of Art Prints



Buttons (just cut off the shanks and hot glue on)...Bible verses printed on marbled cardstock... mulberry paper...and frilly yarns.



Simple Stickers! Especially with Rhinestones



Rhinestones...Filly Yarns!

Does that excite you? That is all you need!

- ⇒ Journal of your choice
- ⇒ Materials for covering your journal
- ⇒ Adhesives
- ⇒ Embellishments

Let's Decorate Your Journal!

Ready? Let me walk you through the process! It is EASY!

1. **Gather your materials.** Make sure that you have everything you will need. In fact, one thing that you may want to do is to make a few. These make SUPER gifts. After you make the first one, you are going to be HOOKED!



2. **Prepare Your Journal.** If your journal has pieces that need to be removed, this is the time to take them off and get your journal ready to decorate. Here are some pictures with examples of pieces that we removed. We took stickers off of the front of the journal (with all of the adhesives that were used for them). We took off all of the other decorations. We did save the pieces that could be used for other projects (you





NEVER know when something can be used for another project!). But, we prepared our journals to be used for this project. For this project, you will need a completely plain journal.

3. Prepare Your Journal Cover. Now, you will need to prepare the cover for your journal. We used several different papers for our covers. You can use *Velvet Paper* (found at your local craft store by the Poster Boards). You can also use Wall-

paper—this is probably the least expensive option. Here below, Lucia is measuring and cutting covers from *wallpaper*. You can also use *fabric*. Lucia cut the fabric and ironed Wonder-Under on the back. Then, she applied that to the books. They looked adorable! Choose the material that you prefer for your cover. Then, measure your journal. Add 1/2 inch to all four sides of your measurements. Cut one



piece that size. For example, if your journal measures 9 X 11. Cut your piece 10X 12. If you have a spiral journal, you will need to cut three pieces. Cut one piece that can wrap around the spiral and extend 1 1/2 inches on each side. See this picture: You will need to add 1/2 inch in the length so you can fold the piece under and create a nice edge for the top and bottom of the journal. Then, measure the front. You will cut two pieces (for the front and the back) that add 1/2 inch to three sides (top, bottom, and side that the journal opens. This will fold over and be covered



with paper inside. Cut your pieces and set them aside. Next will be putting it all together!



- 4. Spray Your Cover with Spray Adhesive.** Take your cover pieces outside (you will know why when you see how sticky Spray Adhesive can be!). Hold your pieces with tweezers (you DO NOT want Spray Adhesive on your hands). Spray the pieces with a light, but thorough mist of Spray Adhesive. Be sure that it is completely covered, but not with globs of spray. You will have time to work. So just stay relaxed and take your time.



- 5. Smooth Onto Your Journal.** Begin on one side and smooth the cover onto the journal so you don't have bubbles. Work from one side to the other, smoothing and pressing firmly so there are no bubbles or wrinkles. Remember to fold down the top and bottom of the spine first. If you have a spiral journal, you will first cover the spine/spiral—be sure to extend on each side. Open and close the journal to be sure that it will not have any hindrances to opening and closing. For both types, press the cover firmly to the journal, being sure to smooth on without any bubbles or wrinkles.

After the book cover is smoothed on the outside, it will be time to work on the inside.



6. **Press Down Corners.** Lay the book flat and open to the inside. Press down corners toward the inside of the journal. Be sure that it is pressed on the very corner of the journal.



7. **Next Press Down the Outside Edges.** Begin with side edges. Then, press down the top and bottom edges of the journal. Remember the spine needs to be cut and tucked in to make a neat edge when finished.





8. **Glue Piece of Coordinating Paper to Inside Cover.** We choose to glue a piece of coordinating *Cardstock Paper* to our inside edge. Measure first to be sure that it covers the edges that have been tucked inside. Stop just shy of the fold of the cover. See these illustrations below:



Lucia glued a cute sticker inside to personalize her journal for her daughter. She also used a cute stamp with a Bible verse that just reminds us ALL of Katie! ☺

9. **Finally, Add Special Touches!** This is what makes each journal so precious! You can let your imagination go here!



Add copies of art prints!

Melissa's journal includes a copy of one of her art prints (isn't it gorgeous???!). Melissa is a local artist in our church. This print is one of my personal favorites. And...it is so fun to see all that Melissa does with her art prints: making copies into gift cards, stationery, bookmarks, and ALSO

clips for her decorated journals. In this journal, Melissa mounted her print on coordinating cardstock paper, then glued it to the cover. She also used the coordinating cardstock as a nice touch for her lettering of "Journal" for the cover. The colors are stunning! You can use art prints for your covers too! See here even more cute samples of her prints added to her journal covers, they are gorgeous!



Rhinestones and Shiny Stuff!!!

Oh! This is another fun idea! On Lucia's journal, she added a beautiful sticker that had rhinestones in the design of a flower. It added the PERFECT touch to her journal. Take a look at it at the picture on your left below. Also, you can buy rhinestones in packages for even better prices. They are SO much fun to glue onto journals. Mix them with a bit of textures and you have a beautiful decorated journal!



Stamps! Oh yeah! Stamps are also a great way to adorn your decorated journals. On this journal, Lucia used a stamp with a Bible verse that reminded her of Katie (who is a COMPLETE joy!) It was a perfect touch inside of the journal

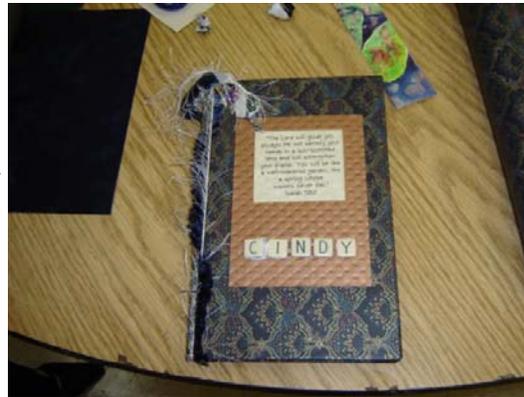


Another precious touch! STICKERS!

Stickers are great for lettering... borders...illustrations...and just a special touch. This one matches perfectly!

A Bit of EVERYTHING!

Letter Tiles...Printed Bible Verses (On Cardstock)...Frilly Yarns...Gold Cardstock. My journal is covered with wallpaper, then I used a gold, textured paper to mount my Bible verse (which was printed from my computer onto marbled beige paper). I finished off the decorations with letter tiles and frilly yarns. This was simple and fun!



Sketches! Mulberry Paper! And..Frilly Yarns! Jane made her journal a complete reflection of her personal interests. She hand-sketched a picture of a horse. Then, she decorated the journal to coordinate with her sketch. It turned out completely original and absolutely darling!

Simple, But Elegant!

Sherry covered her journal with a gorgeous marbled wallpaper. She wanted for her journal to be simple, but as she added several touches, it made her journal very elegant. She added gold cardstock as a mat for a Bible verse that was also matted with red cardstock. She then added frilly yarns with coordinating colors. It turned out gorgeous! In the inside, she added a gorgeous stamp for the final touch! Adorable!



Buttons, Stickers, Lettering, and Frilly Edgings! OK! Briana used a bit of everything! This small journal is perfect for the teenage journal! Every touch made this journal fun and simply adorable!



Yarns! Frilly Yarns!

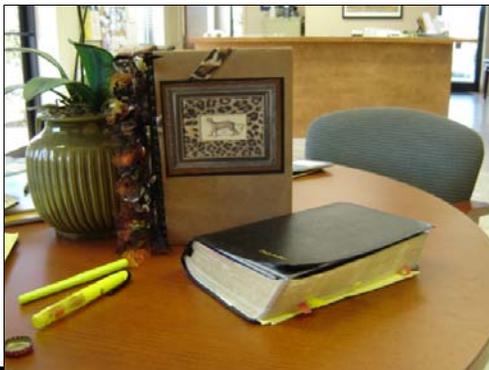
These journals are simply beautiful with just the touch of decorative yarns. We bought these in the YARN section of our hobby shop! You can buy huge skeins of yarn that will make hundreds of products. They add such a nice texture to your projects. Just look at these cute journals! Too nice!

Wallpaper, Yarn, and Scrapbooking Supplies! These mini-journals are so precious! We used leftover wallpaper border paper for their covers. Then, we used frilly yarns tied on the sides—with a short strand of imitation pearls. It was just perfect once we added the Bible verse with coordinating matting and nice hot-glued buttons.



Not Just For Girls!

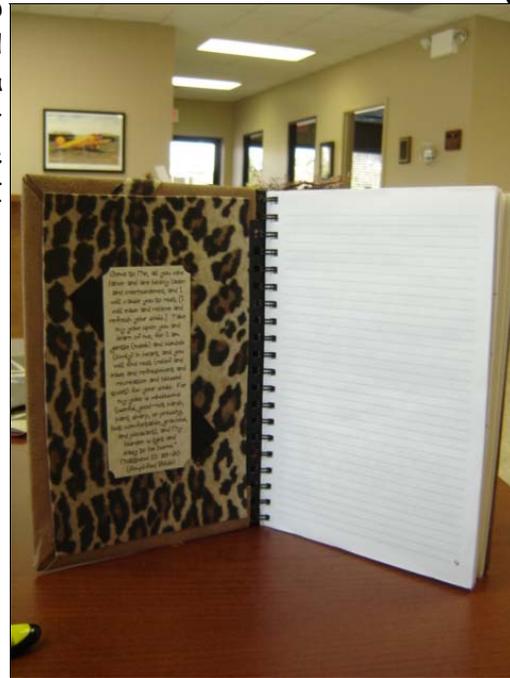
This journal is just perfect for the guys! It is covered in a beautiful wallpaper that looks almost like leather once on the journal. The inside is covered with black cardstock paper. Then, Lucia added a Bible verse mounted on black cardstock paper. The corners are snipped for a nice effect. It is sooo nice! And...perfect for the guys!



Use it ALL!

Now, on this journal, the cover is made with the same wallpaper as Lucia's journal above. See how different they look with different accents? Amazing! We left the spiral open on this journal and I threaded yarns, ribbons and even buttons (tied with ribbons)

onto the spirals. Lucia had a beautiful scrap from a wallpaper border that we cut out and matted with a beautiful suede fabric and a piece of black cardstock. The look is just really, really neat! She helped me trim the inside with "cheetah" fabric! Grrr! When I use this journal, I always think of Lucia!



So...Ready?

Wondering what on earth is the big deal? Journaling is priceless! The words of my dear friend Drewe Llyn best describe it when she says it is a way to "touch the future." Sure, we can go out and buy a simple notebook, but there is something FUN about making and using a very special decorated journal!

My first simply gorgeous decorated journal was sent to me from a dear friend who is living in Korea right now. (Hi Heather!) Heather will never know on this side of heaven how much she ministered to my heart through her thoughtfulness. Maybe my first journal entry can express my heart while it also expresses the need for making a decorated journal (TODAY!!)...

"...Another thing that this gift does is convict me about journaling! Do you think Heather knew that there is SO much on my heart and I just NEEDED to pour it into a good friend? My 1st response was SO wrong—"Oh! It's too pretty to use with what I THINK and FEEL." HELLO! Yep! I am a writer—80+ books—100's of articles and yet can it be that I do not value my own heart cries? My own exhilaration? My own walk

with You? Well, this journal is just too beautiful and too dear to NOT write in! To not record these precious days! Goodness, my life is pivoting on the edge right now—I am walking into a great big place! You beloved journal, get to be my friend and host of all that desperately needs to be poured forth! Ready? Meet ya soon! Love, Cindy"

Yes, beloved friends, you have great things that are right around you too! Capture them in a precious journal! Take an afternoon to decorate a beloved journal and prepare it for your heart cries. Make it gorgeous! Then, pour your heart out!

These days are fleeting. These days will be gone before we know it. May we get back to the simple disciplines that have been passed from generation to generation. What do ya think? Why not touch the future?

Happy journaling!

