

Making Ripples

Upcycling Toilet Paper Rolls for Valentine's Day

by Amanda Bancroft

Broke for Valentine's Day? Don't worry, you can make a toilet paper roll look like a store-bought candy box! Yes, really. It's a bit tricky, but infinite variations are possible, and this craft project is a fantastic way to upcycle some of the billions of toilet paper rolls produced annually.

1. You'll need a toilet paper roll, scissors, glue, and decorative paper. For my project, I used a Seventh Generation brand toilet paper roll, origami paper, mod podge, super glue, and a red sparkly ribbon (but you could use large stickers, masking tape, glue sticks, glitter, and any other crafty items you have around).
2. Place the toilet paper roll on the decorative paper (origami paper turned out to be too thin, use something with a medium thickness, but not rigid) and mark how much paper you'll need to cover the roll. Cut out the strip of paper.
3. Using hot glue, mod podge, super glue, or a glue stick, apply paper to the roll and let it dry. For mod podge, it takes a second coat over the top of the paper to make it glossy.
4. Here's the hard part: fold one end of the toilet paper roll so you end up pressing two half moon shapes together, making two points on that end. Hold it in place with your fingers or glue.
5. Stuff the roll with goodies like chocolates, candy hearts, or love notes. For mine, I saved funny and romantic comic strips that I knew would make my significant other laugh.
6. Fold the second end the way you did the first.
7. Now decorate! You can use glitter, stickers, pipe cleaners, construction paper...anything you like. I used a shiny red ribbon for Valentine's Day, recycled from an old gift bag, and some stickers, using the largest sticker to hold the ribbon in place.

Everything from wire or cord organizers to advent calendars can be made from toilet paper rolls, so I'm eager to start saving this valuable resource and turn it into nifty inventions to make life easier while saving money. And who knows, maybe a toilet paper roll (cleverly disguised) will catch your valentine's eye!

Ripples is a blog connecting people to resources on sustainable living while chronicling their off-grid journey and supporting the work of non-profit organizations. Read more on this topic and others at www.RipplesBlog.org