

Use this guide to create homemade plastic-free gifts for your friends, family, and teachers.

BY ELLA SCHWARTZ

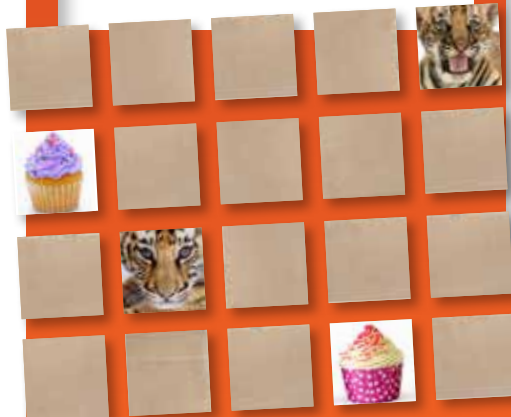


1 PICTURE FRAME

- Arrange 8 wooden craft sticks in an overlapping square with 2 sticks on each side. Glue the sticks together at each corner. Decorate the sticks with paint, fabric, pom-pom puffs, or other trinkets from your house.
- Print out a favorite photo and trim the picture so it's the same size as the frame. (Just make sure that the main part of the picture is visible inside the frame!)
- Glue the photo to a square of cardboard from a cereal box, then cut the cardboard to match the size of the photo.
- Turn the frame over and glue the photograph you prepared to the back of the frame.

2 MEMORY GAME

- Cut 20 squares of cardboard from cereal boxes. Each square should be about 2 inches by 2 inches.
- Look through old magazines to find 20 pictures. Search for images that go together in pairs, like two photos of tigers or cakes. (To make the game harder, look for pairs like a pencil and paper, or a bee and honey.)
- Cut these pictures out from the magazine in squares, and glue them to the printed side of the cardboard tiles.
- To play, lay the tiles facedown and take turns flipping two tiles to find a match.



3 HERB PLANTER

- Ask your parents to purchase a small terracotta pot, soil, and seeds or herbs from a garden store.
- Decorate your pot. You could wrap it with a ribbon, create stencil patterns from tape to paint over, or attach small knickknacks to the side with glue.
- Fill the planter with potting soil. If you're using seeds, sprinkle 10 seeds on top, then cover them with a thin layer of soil.
- If you're using a plant, make a hole in the soil and slip the roots inside. Press the soil around the plant, and water the soil.
- Place the pot in a sunny spot until you're ready to give it away, and water it when the soil gets dry.