

The Wrap-Up

by Steven James

In 1917, the Kansas City-based Hall brothers (founders of Hallmark) reused French envelope linings to encase customer gifts. In that spirit, we offer a few suggestions for reinventing the wrap every time you've got something to give.

Stogie Wrap 1

The embossed, gilded finish of cigar boxes makes for classy presentation. Use a book of matches as the card.

Wash-n-Fold

The familiar blue paper packaging is a good, clean finish for hand-knit gifts.

Map Wrap 2

Mailing presents back home? Prepare them for the cross-country journey with wrap made of recycled maps. Use pushpins and geographical postcard cutouts for the card.

Bubble Wrap

Paper's plastic cousin makes its way outside the box. Cover the gift directly so a hint of it shows through and use double-sided tape for a clean seal.

Scrabble Board & Letter Tiles 3

Make a color photocopy of the game board and individual tiles onto sheets of 8½" x 14" paper. Glue on your message using cut-out, copied letter tiles.

Can It

No scissors, no tape. Coffee and tea tins, cookie canisters, and unused paint cans offer no-fuss alternatives.

Bazooka Joe

Blow up Bazooka Joe onto a sheet of 11" x 17" paper—the perfect size to wrap CDs and books.

Sheet Music

Piano lessons never quite worked out? Put those clefs and sharps to good use.

Tabloids 4

Nothing turns heads like a three-headed alien baby fathered by Elvis.

Japanese Manga

Doe-eyed schoolgirls are gifts in themselves.

Cement Wrap

Show 'em you care with cash, Jimmy Hoffa-style. Place greenbacks in a small Ziploc bag, squeeze the excess air out, and seal. Use a small tray as your mold—a disposable tinfoil pan or clean Styrofoam tray from pre-packaged meat works well. Mix Pour-Stone Anchoring Cement or similar brand and fill tray halfway. Insert bag-o-cash and allow to dry for about 15 minutes. Then prepare another batch of Pour-Stone and completely cover the bag. Allow it to harden, then let loved ones have a crack at it.

