



Wise Craft: Turning Thrift Store Finds, Fabric Scraps, and Natural Objects Into Stuff You Love

Blair Stocker

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Wise Craft is a guide to the homemade life, turning old things into special new objects that enhance the home. Based on the popular blog of the same name, this guide focuses on creating a homemade atmosphere that reflects your family, without spending a fortune. Instead of throwing away old shirts and boring dishes, or passing up thrift store finds that aren't quite right, author Blair Stocker teaches how to remake, adding special touches to make them work for her home—and yours. The book is divided into four seasonal chapters, with designs that reflect different holidays and the changing seasons, allowing you to update your home according to the weather outside. Many projects are portable or perfect to do during a family movie night, making the *Wise Craft* lifestyle an easy one to attain.

Sixty projects include May Day cones and recycled floral mirror frames—perfect for a teenager's room—plus throw pillow updates, a picnic blanket made from a pile of men's shirts, spooky Halloween dishes, advent calendars, and recycled gift jars. Beautiful photography and illustrations make each project a snap, no matter your crafting background.

Wise Craft: Turning Thrift Store Finds, Fabric Scraps, and Natural Objects Into Stuff You Love Details

Date : Published March 11th 2014 by Running Press Adult (first published January 1st 2014)

ISBN : 9780762449699

Author : Blair Stocker

Format : Paperback 184 pages

Genre : Art, Crafts, Nonfiction, Quilting

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From Reader Review Wise Craft: Turning Thrift Store Finds, Fabric Scraps, and Natural Objects Into Stuff You Love for online ebook

Wendy says

There were a number of cute projects in this book, though it does assume a fair amount of previous knowledge (how to crochet, for example). It *might* just get me to learn to use my sewing machine, though...

Autumn says

Uneven collection of craft projects from a blogger who has a nice cohesive sense of design. Some of the projects are very simple -- spray paint thrift store barbies white and redraw their eyes! spray paint dollar store figurines with chalk paint and put a jewel in their eyes! -- while others are ridiculously hard. Build your own frame loom and use it to make some ruff looking placemats out of jeans you have laboriously shredded, f'rinstance.

Still her design sense is generally cool and very Anthropologie-looking. She emphasizes project that are made of small, portable elements that mommies can do while waiting for their kids to complete various activities. I like that the projects are organized by the season of the year and that she admits binge-watching/listening while crafting. But this one is definitely for experienced multi-platform crafters who can fill in the blanks in the instructions on their own.

Audrey says

I'll be honest, when it comes to craft books like this, I mostly buy them so I can look at the pretty pictures. Even with how-to books, I'm all about the pictures. I rarely try any of the projects. That's why I was so surprised by this book. I picked it up because I read Blair's blog, and it was sitting so prettily on my library's new releases shelf. I was absolutely surprised by my urge to make so many of these projects, even on the first flip-through. I think it's probably because my style is quite similar to Stocker's, so many of her projects "fit" my own taste. In particular, I really love the cane-back chair she featured, as well as a few other projects. I love how the book is divided into seasons, and how the projects for each season all feature a similar color scheme. The projects are photographed beautifully, and overall I think this book was just so well-done. I'll be looking to pick up my own copy of it soon.

Erica says

it's one that i want to own so that if i need a fun craft project i can just find one in there and make it.

Tracy Canuck says

I was looking forward to this book and really wish it had more ideas I could use. Mostly 'cutesy' stuff kids may like to make. I can't imagine wasting my time making many of these things. Really seemed to lack imagination and flair...had the look & feel of a book from the 70's. Only a couple of things could be useful.

Cheryl says

Eclectic. Some projects create something useful from things that I've been throwing away. Some I've already been doing. Some make useless projects, some require purchases, some require extra skills. But there's probably something for everyone, so I do recommend you take a look at your library's copy (maybe even encourage them to buy it if they haven't).

I particularly like the Hot Plate Novels (I'd use an old poetry book) and the Pillow Jackets (less fabric, less sewing, more charm). And I like the instructions for felting wool to cover rocks... if I could ever want a felt-covered rock....

Instructions and photos are clear and inviting.

(I don't know exactly why this, of all the craft books I've read, particularly charms me. Maybe it is better because of more emphasis on real upcycling. Maybe not. You decide.)

Nancy says

Some of my favorite projects from this book are the leather coasters cut in the shape of silhouettes, sewing little pot handle covers, the recycled flower mirror which gives directions on cutting out little felt flowers, the summer sherbet picnic blanket which is squares cut from men's striped shirts and sewn into a quilt top which can be knotted to a lightweight blanket underneath. I also liked the idea of drawing spooky silhouettes for Halloween, the hottie rice pillow made with flannel in the shape of a hot water bottle, and lastly the flannel covered cones made to look like winter trees in cool shades of white and blue and grey. Cozy!

Kelly H. (Maybedog) says

I've mentioned before that I've liked an author's style and that's increased my enjoyment of a book. This is the opposite of that: I don't like this author's style at all. A plaid pillow embellished with a complicated and weird leather appliqué? It made me dizzy. It even has dogs as what looked like might be a family crest on a tartan--dogs and my Scottish heritage and I still don't like it. I'm usually easy to please in those areas.

Dip dyed toile dishes? Another busy busy and confusing project, basically just taking a cup or saucer and putting it in the dye at an angle so it kind of looks like it's stained from a spill. The technique brings up interesting possibilities but the execution, the choice of mug (rather than a plain one) and the placement of the dye are just weird.

The zombie barbies are a funny idea but they're basically spray painted white with wide-eyed markings.

They're naked. They don't resemble zombies at all. Maybe ghosts...

Don't get me started on the faux taxidermy, or the use of de-covered books as hot plates.

There are projects I like such as the table top garden, imitation glass fishing floats (although these are clear white and the ones I've seen are milky blue and green) and the idea of weaving into a rattan chair back (although again, not the execution), and the conversation tablecloth.

More weirdness: pillow jackets, leather covers rocks, and flower specimen jars.

The instructions are mostly text and the few instructional illustrations aren't at all helpful.

The few good things include a photo table of contents for each project chapter, the wide use of recycling objects, and the large variety of projects and techniques. I also like the design of the book itself. The way the pages are laid out and organized makes it easy to use and visually pleasing.

This is a very disappointing book.

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Erin says

This is a strange books with many odd "recycling" crafts. Who really needs or wants leather covered rocks?

Candy says

I decided I could just enjoy looking at the projects and how they came to be. I didn't make myself read step by step of something I won't be doing right now. But I like having the ideas added to my creative brain database.

Mckinley says

Projects divided in seasons. (Not sure that really makes sense - seems arbitrary.)

Kinsley says

Just not my idea of repurposed stuff. It doesn't give purposeful and useful suggestions, more whimsical and random.

Leslie says

A beautiful book to inspire numerous creative projects. The layout is lovely with colored photos and explicit directions. Projects added to my DIY list include: gathering bunting (p. 125), up cycled gift jars (p. 137), and knitted swatch blanket (p. 167). I also loved the Zombie Barbies and Spooky Silhouettes for Halloween.

Tracy says

I love Thrift Stores. I love making crafts (although I'm not very crafty). This book has lots of great ideas (with pictures) showing what you can do with your thrift store finds. My favorites are the Pot Handle Covers made from scrap pieces quilt batting -- no more hot pan handles! I may try the Vintage Decals on plain wooden cutting boards for wedding or housewarming gifts. I loved the Zombie Barbie Dolls!

Jenn says

There were a few interesting ideas in here, such as the quotes tablecloth. However, most were either similar to other books' ideas or just plain tacky. Leather-covered rocks? Tie-dyed Toile dishes that looked partially dropped in paint? Maybe it's because I love blue-on-white dishes, but that looked like a waste.
