

Hand-made Christmas Crackers.

Supplies

Crepe paper or tissue paper in two (or three) colors.

Paper ribbon

Pencil

Scissors

Scotch tape

The inside roll of a paper towel roll

Method

Cut the paper roll to around six inches in length. This is the inside of the cracker.

Lay two sheets of tissue paper together, one on top of the other.

Place the roll in the center of the long edge nearest to you.

Make a pencil mark on the tissue paper at each short edge of the roll.

To determine how much tissue paper to use for the cracker, roll the paper roll with the tissue paper until the tissue paper fully covers the paper roll and overlaps a little. Cut the tissue paper lengthways just beyond this point.

Unroll the paper again and put the paper roll to one side. Turn the tissue paper stack around so the short end faces you. Fold the two layers over together, about $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Turn the stack over and make another fold. Repeat, turn, and fold until you are close to the pencil mark where the end of the paper roll was earlier. Do the same on the opposite short side. The folds should be like concertina shapes. Make cuts across the paper folds on each side with the scissors, $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1" apart.

Stop cutting before you reach the pencil line.

Place the paper roll in the middle of the long edge, where you had it earlier. Start rolling it along with the tissue paper until you reach the end. Secure with a piece of scotch tape.

Hold the cracker in the middle and shake it to loosen the concertina paper folds.

Cut two lengths of paper ribbon, each about 12" long, and place one near the end of one side of the roll. Tie the end off; be careful not to break the tissue paper.

You can use the edge of the scissors to curl the ribbon. Place the scissors at a 45-degree angle against the paper ribbon near the knot and pull the scissors toward the end of the ribbon to make it curl.

If you use fabric ribbon, tie it off with a nice bow.

At the other end of the cracker, place a nice little gift or pieces of candy into the opening before tying it off in the same way as the first side.

To decorate further, add some stick-on stars or other festive shapes.