

FASHION IN THE LIBRARY?!

Stylish, Recycled Tee Shirt Crafts

Lately, upcycling (taking something and making it into something new), DIYing (that stands for Do It Yourself projects) and thrift shopping are all the rage, thanks in part to a recovering economy, a bigger concentration on sustainability and even last summer's Billboard Top 100 hit by R&B artist Macklemore, aptly titled "Thrift Shop." With dozens of tutorials popping up on Pinterest every few hours, entire shows dedicated to making clothes and jewelry out of recycled materials and the vintage look refusing to fade from the runways, inspiration is everywhere. Try out a few of these show-stopping tee shirt makeover ideas for your next teen programming session.

Tee Shirt Stenciling

Difficulty Level: ✂

Materials needed: Spray paint, a sheet of plastic, cardboard, scratch paper, an Exacto® knife, a marker, design inspiration or pictures, spray adhesive, tee shirts, a well ventilated area to spray paint and dry your creations

Step 1: Select your stencil designs. Trace or draw them out on a piece of plastic and then place your cardboard down so you can cut them out with your Exacto® knife. Chances are you'll want a few different designs for your patrons to choose from, along with a variety of sizes.

Step 2: You're ready to invite your patrons to start creating once you have your stencils. Slide a piece of scratch paper inside of each shirt, so the front and back do not stick together once they spray paint them.

Step 3: Next, spray the back of the chosen stencils with adhesive, and lay the adhesive sprayed side down on their tee shirts. Make sure to tell your patrons to press down on their stencils so they stick to their shirts.

Step 4: Protect the rest of the shirt by placing additional scratch paper around the edges of the stencil. This step is optional!

Step 5: Spray the stencil with a light first coat. Give it a few minutes to dry.

Step 6: Now, spray a heavier coat. The paint will stick better to the light first coat than the fabric. Give this a few more minutes to dry.

Step 7: You're done! Take off the paper, carefully remove the stencil, and wear your shirt with pride.



Cut-Out Tee

Difficulty Level: ✂✂✂

Materials needed: Plain cotton tee or tank, a fabric razor blade, measuring tape, a wood cutting board or hard ironing board

Step 1: Select your shirt. You'll want to choose a top that has a flattering fit. Keep in mind that plain tees and tanks often let your creativity shine through more than an embellished or graphic shirt.

Step 2: Have a design in mind. Before you start slicing, think critically about your design and how it will hold up once you start cutting. Envision what you want the end result to look like and plan accordingly.

Step 3: Slide your tee or tank onto the cutting or ironing board so that it's sandwiched between the front and back of the tee. Place the front side of the shirt face down, so you'll be cutting the back. Measure and mark about half an inch down from neckline to where you want to make your first cut. Then measure and mark a halfway point across the neckline. This point will mark the vertical "spine" of your shirt. Cut an identical line about 1/4 of an inch to an inch below the first cut, depending on how big you want your "ribs" to be.

Brass Ring Bracelets

Difficulty Level: ✂✂

Materials needed: 3 Tee shirts, brass rings or washers, necklace clasps, scissors, tape

Step 1: Cut your three tee shirts into long strips. They should be around 12" length.

Step 2: Use tape to create a "needle" on one end of your tee shirt strip. Loop your first washer through the lace, followed by a second one.

Step 3: Pull your tee shirt strip over the top of the second washer and weave it through the first washer.

Step 4: Pull your strip all the way through, then weave it back through your second washer. Pull it tight!

Step 5: Repeat with all of your washers and you'll see a pattern forming. Fasten your bracelet by tying the ends around your wrist.

Step 4: Keep cutting. Continue to make "ribs" all the way down to the bottom of the tee on each side of the "spine." Remember you're only slicing the material, so there shouldn't be any scraps of material coming off of your shirt.

Step 5: Slip on your shirt. It's ready to wear!

