Make Prize-Filled Party Crackers with Cobrina

Chapter 1 - Make Prize-Filled Party Crackers

Overview

- 3, 2, 1 (snap) Party crackers are an exciting accessory for any cheery occasion. They make a fun snapping sound when you pull them apart, and typically they contain a small toy and a joke and a paper crown. Traditionally, Christmas crackers are a festive, British table decoration, but why just enjoy them in December? I'm Cobrina, a producer and artist coach here at Creativebug and with a British mum, I've snapped many a cracker as a child, and I love continuing the tradition as I get to be an adult. In this class, I'll show you how to make three kinds: a single-use, recyclable cracker out of decorative paper, a reusable fabric cracker that you can fill over and over again, and a super-quick tissue paper version for last-minute celebrations. We'll also make some fun, handmade prizes to include inside. These unique favors bring so much glee and can be personalized for any party you throw.

Materials

- This will look like a lot of materials, but that's because I'm gonna show you a couple of different ways to make this cracker. The first will be made with wrapping paper. I've also got some colorful tissue paper here, and this is a wonderful opportunity to use some of the painted papers that you've maybe made here on Creativebug. I've got orizomegami from Jody Alexander, and also some marbled paper from Mercedes Rex. You could also use things like old maps, anything that you think will fit your theme. The tools we'll need are a glue stick and washi tape for both the foundation and as decoration. I'll be using a couple of clips. I love using quilting clips, but you can also use paper clips. Scissors, a craft knife, and a cutting mat, and a pencil or marking tool of any kind. And some rulers. I love using my seam gauge, so if you have that on hand, you're welcome to use that as well. I'll also be showing you how to make a fabric cracker that is reusable. I recommend using mid-weight to lightweight fabrics that are dark in nature, or at least patterned because we will be gluing them onto the roll, and I've found that with lighter fabrics, the glue tends to shine through. For your glue, I'm gonna use mod podge, but any PVA will work or fabric glue. I have a glue brush and a gluing surface here for our fabric cracker. We'll also be using an iron and an ironing surface. For both crackers, we're gonna need some ribbon to tie up the ends. I've got a satin and some gift ribbon, some raffia, some yarn. That is up to you for your decoration. For the center of our cracker, we'll be using toilet rolls, but you can also use kitchen rolls and cut them down. Don't worry if your roll's a different size than the one that you're seeing. I've got some that are shorter, some that are thinner, some that are thicker. I'm gonna show you a tip for how to work with all of those. Lastly, we'll be filling our party cracker with lots of fun prizes. I'll show you how to make a paper crown, fill it with candy and some jokes, and online you can find these cracker snaps, which give it that fabulous pop.

Paper cracker

- For our recyclable paper cracker, we'll be needing to add some cuts into the edges of it so that it pulls apart nice and easily. I've seen templates online for this, but I don't think that it actually makes the process easier because you still have to cut out all the tiny little triangles. I'm gonna show you how I've done this and hopefully you'll find it easy as well. I've cut a piece of wrapping paper down

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to six inches by 12 inches and on the back I want to make some marks. I'm gonna start by doing a fold and you don't need to fold it all the way down, just make a little point at the top and a little point at the bottom can go in with your pencil if you'd like to, but we don't need that mark as much as we need the other sides. We're gonna take our roll. So whatever size roll yours is, this is my standard toilet roll. It's about four inches and I wanna place it so that it's centered on that center mark. It's just an eyeball measurement. It doesn't need to be totally precise. And then I'm gonna make marks on either side of my role do that on the top and the bottom. We can then connect those marks with a light line. And then the next step is to measure in two and three quarters inches in from this side. So there's my two and three quarters. Bring that mark down to the bottom as well and draw a line. Repeat on the other side. Two and three quarters from the edge, make a mark, connect those two together. From here we're gonna find the marks in between these two marks, so you're welcome to add another eyeballed center, but you can also do it by folding back those two pieces together and lining up our two lines. And that should fall right on the mark that we made and ensure that your paper is totally straight as you go across here. And then we can crease this all the way down. So I can see that my middle mark didn't land exactly at my crease, but I know that this is straight at the top and the bottom, so I'm happy. We're gonna repeat on the other side, find the middle of the two lines that we created here by matching up those two pencil marks and then ensuring that it is straight and crease. That one was much better placed. Then we're gonna make kind of a funny shape, which is gonna look something like this, like a a bird flying. And this is where I like to use my quilting clips just to hold everything in place. So you can use a paper clip. Usually binder clips are too big for this unless you have a really little one, but I'm just gonna clip these in place. We do this so that we cut both sides at the same time and don't have to repeat twice. So your shape should look something like this. And we're gonna add quarter inch marks to the bottom of this. So this is six inches wide and every quarter inch I wanna just make a little mark. This is just a cutting guide. Doesn't need to be super precise. Just every quarter inch all the way down. Okay, with our scissors, we're going to cut from our first little tick mark a quarter of an inch in up to that line that we've drawn. I like to cut right to that line. I don't want to go short of that and move forward one quarter of an inch and repeat up to that line. And you're just making little triangle cuts. You can do this with more than one piece of paper at a time as well if you're making multiples, which usually we are. And I'm gonna work my way across. But I do know that if I go evenly across that when I end, my cut will be going at an angle and I don't want that. So I'm actually gonna start at the other end and work my way in knowing that I'm gonna have to kind of fudge a little bit in the center. So cut in from both sides until we meet in the middle. Yeah, so here we have three marks, but we couldn't get them evenly in there, so I'm just going to make a little bit more narrow of a diamond and fit two more of them in there. Okay, you can take off our clips and we now have our cracker wrapper from here. We start to build the roll inside. I'm gonna take my toilet roll and tape my cracker snap inside of it. You wanna do this first thing before you tape in your roll because it's very hard to get back in there. And this will slide all over the place. So I usually just take a little piece of washi tape. This is not sort of for the functionality of the cracker, it is much more just to make sure that it doesn't move around on you while we're building the rest of the cracker. Put your little piece of washi tape just right in the end just to hold it secure while we glue. I'm gonna bring in a little bit of scratch paper here because we are gonna work right on the edges with our glue stick. And I like to put the flat part of the cracker snap at the very edge because this will be our seam and that kind of ensures that it naturally, see if I can do it, it naturally stays there. It stays upright, so it will keep your seam on the bottom if you put the cracker snap flat at the top. I want to glue just

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along this middle edge. I'm not hitting these edges quite yet, so just a little bit of glue stick. Add your snap and again, you're lining yourself up within those lines on both sides. 'cause that we determined is the center and kind of push it back, picks that up. And then from here we can just roll it right up. But I found that using the support of some extra toilet rolls will really make these stay nice and crisp looking. So I'm just gonna add these to the end with that cracker snap in the middle of them. And then I can continue to roll. And when I get here, I want to now glue all the way along this edge and make sure you get all the way to the very, very tip. We want that to be nice and clean looking. And as taut as you can kind of hold everything together, roll until those glue pieces meat. The nice thing about glue stick also is it's a little bit fudgeable, right, is that these pieces of paper are not perfectly lined up, but the glue stick allows me to move it a little bit to get that much straighter. This end looks pretty good. So from here you can just let this dry, but I've also found that it's kind of a fun decorative element to add some washi tape at this point. Maybe I'll use, maybe I'll use this one and just cut a piece that goes over the seam. You can cut perfect lengths if you'd like to, but I'm just eyeballing a piece to go in the center here. It just covers up. that seam. Can add a couple to the edges also, if you'd like. This is totally optional. The glue stick will hold it, but I found that I sort of thought it looked cool. Okay, now if we pull our support rolls out, we can start to see what we want our cracker to do. That action is allowing us to tie this without crinkling the paper. Add some ribbon there. I'll use this white ribbon. I've found that 10 to 12 inches is a pretty good length unless you wanna tie a bow, in which case you wanna cut maybe 15 to 16 inches, but 12 inches give me what I want. Just cut two pieces while we're at it. And again, with the seam on the bottom, it should be naturally sitting on the bottom, but you want to make sure that as you're tying it up, that it is also tied from the bottom. Do an overhand knot and pull really gently. The paper will fold, but we definitely don't want it to tear, not quite yet. So just keep pulling until it's taut. And then you can actually check the aperture on the inside and see that the hole is tight enough. That's actually a little bit big. I don't think I'm gonna have tiny, tiny little treats inside of it, but I do wanna go a little bit further. So just making that a little bit tighter. Closing that hole just a little bit more. Make a second knot. And I think to finish my ribbon ends, I would like to do a little forked tongue. So I'm just going to fold the ribbon over in half and cut at an angle. Whoop, inverted. Whoops. Do that again. Cut from the bottom up. Okay, now before we tie up the other end, we definitely want to fill this with fun treats. This is again where the supports come into play because I can now stand this up and have a nice little tube going straight down. And I'm not worried about balancing on the delicate edge of this paper. So in here, you can then take your candy and your joke and your crown and make a little package out of them just like that. And deliver it into your snap. Should fall right down. If you, sometimes the hat will stick on the edge. You can just use your pencil or utensil just to push it down just a little bit and then just check that it went low enough by pulling your support out. Now from here again, we can kind of get that paper doing what we want it to do. Every once in a while, something like this will happen where you'll have one that is sticking out. So just make sure they're all indented and we can tie our other side. Seam down, tie it up, check and make sure that it's closed enough that none of your treats are gonna fall out. Maybe make it a little bit tighter. Tie your bow and trim your ribbons. I like to leave it like this for transport. Again, it ensures the edges don't get crushed, but of course before you serve it, you'll want to remove those. And you'll probably even wanna trim down your cracker snap tails. So just a little bit. But the nice thing about those large tails is that it means you can make your cracker even larger than this if you'd like to. And there's our paper cracker snap that looks just as good, if not better than store bought.

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Tissue paper cracker

- If you're feeling like, wow, that's pretty cool, but way too much work for me, I get it. And I wanna show you a super quick tissue paper version that basically eliminates the measuring and all the cutting. My piece of tissue paper is again, six by 12 inches. And this is metallic, so it's not double-sided. I wanna flip it over and I wanna find the center again. So fold it in half and just make that top and bottom crease. And I can make a little mark there if I want to. We're gonna take our roll and add our snap, just like we did for the other one. A little piece of tape, pretty well centered just to hold everything down in place. Then I want to line up my roll with the snap down and the center of my role at the center of my paper. You can also add your glue onto the roll if you'd like to. Don't find that this is super accurate, but if it feels useful to you, 'cause then you can kind of put your head over it and start to roll until you pick up that paper. I missed the glue a little bit, so that's why I like to put the glue on the paper. And before we roll it up here, I wanna use my support rolls again because if you don't do that, when you end up tying it up, the edges get really, really crumply and crispy. And so if I put this in on both sides and continue my roll, I'm gonna keep this tube nice and solid. And from here again, glue all the way along the lengths, especially to the edges. Whoop, ooh, stuck. It's okay just to recenter, realign everything and roll until you get to the bottom, catch the paper and then glue it all the way across. You do wanna make sure that you didn't get any glue on your support rolls. I can feel that I did, so I'm just going to loosen them from the paper. Oh, this one got really glued. I got too much on that. It's okay. I can just twist it, line it back up again and smooth that out. Take that roll out. I think I need to add a little tiny bit of glue. I think I didn't go quite to the edge of my paper, is my problem. Can see that there's an edge there. Having trouble with this one 'cause it's covered with glue, you can just swap it out for another, line it up and get it in there. Okay, now I just wanna let this dry and I can do the same thing I did before, which is essentially encourage the paper to crease in the place that I want it to so I can do some twists on both sides. Still keeping these edges nice. Take a piece of ribbon, seam down, and tie it up slowly. Again, you don't wanna tear the tissue paper, just nice and slowly as you go. And check that aperture, go a little tighter, tie it up. From here you can of course fill all your goodies and tie up the other end, finish the ribbons any way you'd like and you end up with something that's actually pretty close to the cracker that we designed before because we've got these nice tidy ends. Can trim the snap and you've got a quick, easy way to make another paper cracker.

Fabric cracker

- If you know you'd like to enjoy party crackers year after year, an alternative is to make reusable ones out of fabric. I have two pieces here cut to seven by eight and I want to iron some hems onto them. About a half inch hem along the top edge and a half inch hem along one side. It's okay. We're gonna glue that down on the other piece. I want to also do the top edge at a half inch and I wanna make sure that the other hem that I make is a mirror to the one that I already did. So it will be on this side While these two pieces cool, we want to cut down our tube. Essentially we're gonna have two halves, right? So it's reusable and it breaks apart in the center. And if you use two of these it's gonna be very long, so we're gonna cut 'em down a little bit. I want this one to be three inches. You can use your ruler, I love using this seam gauge 'cause it sits right on the edge there and just make a mark at three all the way around and can connect those lines if you want to. And then on the second roll we're gonna make it two and a half. So change my seam gauge to two and a half and draw those lines and I'm gonna am connect those. Now we're gonna cut them down with our craft knife holding the larger side. Just get the point in there and use the weight going down and turn the

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roll. Get rid of that side, keep that side. That's the two and a half. Here's the three. It's gonna get covered with fabric. Little rough edges is fine. There's our two halves. On the shorter half, I'm going to make one inch cuts on three places on this round. So just measure one inch and go about a third of the way. Do another inch and the middle of those two is about there. You'll see where I'm going with this in a second. Then I'm just gonna cut these down. You can use your scissors for this if you're more comfortable. And from here we're gonna start to push them together to overlap a little bit so that this can fit inside of here. We're gonna need some tape definitely to help us in that. Just pull a little bit of washi tape. You can use any craft tape, masking tape here. That would be fine. I actually find that if you put the tape on the top piece, you can kind of squeeze with your fingers and move that other piece of tape over. We'll repeat on the next side, just pretty even. So I don't know, that's an eighth of an inch or so. And on the last side, make that nice and tight and ensure that it fits into the end of the other roll. That looks pretty nice. It has some good overlap and it's going in smoothly. So we'll also be covering this with fabric so there will be an extra layer from here. We're gonna go back to our fabric, but I'm gonna be gluing, so I'm going to put some glue scratch paper down. I'm using Mod Podge. Like I said before, any PVA glue will work just fine. And I wanna just glue these seams down. You're also welcome to sew them down if you'd like, but we're gonna be gluing anyway so just get out your glue. Don't have to be too fussy with it. You don't wanna oversaturate, like I said, the glue will go through to the other side, but I found that these darker colors and patterned fabrics don't show as much glue. One side down and then the other. Okay, that looks pretty secured down and I'm gonna repeat on the other side. Going to fold my paper down to get rid of that glue and set up your two pieces so that you have your hems on the outside. And I'm gonna take my ruler and measure four inches in from the hem. Just gonna use a pencil here. You can make a a couple marks if you'd like. And then just draw a line. This is just a gluing guide, not doing anything too intensive with it. Repeat on the other side, making sure that you are working from the hem four inches in and connect those lines. Now I want to put glue on the inside. Half of this piece of fabric can kind of use a lot and put a lot on my brush and then try to move it quickly so it's not getting too wet. This will include the hem. So go all the way up to the top and stop at that line. Not super important that you get every last bit covered. This fabric is definitely going to stick to the roll. The places where it really matters are along the hem and along the edges. We're also going to want to glue up the rest of this top hem, not the side hem, just the top. Try if you can to not get too much on the fabric below. Then we'll take our roll. Doesn't matter which one, they're both gonna be built the same way. We're gonna start at the bottom, the part that's not the hem and line the flat edge of our roll up with the line that we drew. Get that and roll it up. I like to also add the support rolls at this point into my fabric cracker. So just tuck that in there. This will help when you're trying to glue down this hem to have some surface to connect to do any sort of zhuzhing you need to do to get those edges straight and push. This is the tapered one, so there will be a little bit more overlap towards the top. Make sure that's sticking down well. And we're gonna fold this inside, but to move some of that fabric around, I just wanna add a couple of cuts into the fabric and add a little bit more glue into the roll. We have glue on the fabric, but this is just a little extra glue to ensure it sticks. I have this nice little stand for it as well with a support tube. And just start to tuck those edges in. I usually start on the far side and leave the hem part for last so then you can get that nice and smoothed out and push that down. Make sure everything is sticking and set this aside to dry while we work on the other side. For this one, again, we are going to glue the inside half of our fabric, including the hem, right down that pencil mark I made. And again, along this top hem. Alright, the other half of our roll is the same on both sides, so you can put either end up to that line

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on the side that doesn't have the hem and start to roll it up. Ooh, I can see that I'm a little crooked so I'm gonna straighten that out right away. And once I get going, add my support roll in there as well. Keep rolling and tucking. And you can kind of zhuzh the fabric a little bit to make your ends line up. Fabric is very forgiving so you can move things around. You can take it apart, reglue it, no problem. Okay. And make sure that it's really well glued down to the roll but not to your support roll. And we're gonna repeat tucking here. I have a lot less fabric on this side. Theoretically these pieces of fabric could be different sizes, but I thought it was easiest to use seven by eight for both and it doesn't really matter. We're just gonna get a little of this fabric over the edge. But again, put a little extra glue inside the tube starting away from the hem. I want this one to be really secure and tight and smooth because the other one is going inside of this one. So it will catch if some of this fabric is not glued down properly. That looks nice. Seems like my hem could use just a little more glue there. Set these aside to completely dry. If you'd like to use clips on the ends, you're welcome to do that. Here are my two halves already dry. I want to put them together and make sure they fit. I like to put the two seams matching up. That looks pretty good. I can take my clips off the ends and like we did with the paper and the tissue can pull the supports out a little bit and see where those soft bits of fabric where we're gonna use our ribbon are gonna be. So let's just do this one. This is the shorter inner tube first. Got a couple of pieces of ribbon here, cut seam down. And I wanna tie a bow, making sure it's as centered as possible. You can do it where you tie kind of high or low. Try to get that ribbon right in the center. I'm gonna check that aperture. Still big enough because I do wanna get my snap in there as well. So you can feed your snap through that hole and then tie this even tighter. Give it a double bow. And from here I can put all of my little goodies as well. You're welcome to make these little bags if you'd like rather than loose, if that would be more helpful. But I have a little candy and a joke and my crown. Just gonna fold them up and put them inside of here all the way down to the bottom as best possible. I think, I think that's all I've got, which is great. Now on the other side, I wanna feed both of those things through, line up my seams, push that together and then I can tie this ribbon, give it a little twist. Tie it as tight as you can, and also as close to the inner roll as you can. I can see that I'm tying it a little far out, so I wanna come back out with my loop right up to that edge. Ideally you'll have something flat-looking on the inner tube. Tie that up. Looks like it rolled a little bit. So get my bow back up to the top. We can remove our supports, even out the cracker snap or cutoff ends if need be. I'll demonstrate how to celebrate with these party crackers next. But essentially this fabric, one cracks in the middle so that you can enjoy it over and over again.

Crown and prizes

- Now that you know three ways to make a party cracker, I wanna share with you some fun prizes that you can include inside. Traditionally a British Christmas cracker would include a joke or a riddle, a small toy or trinket, and a paper crown. I wanna show you how to make the paper crown from scratch. I have a piece of gold tissue paper on its backside laid out. Here it is 24 inches long by four and a half inches tall. This size is derived from the size of an average human head, which is 23 inches with one inch for gluing. If you're making it for a child, usually 19 inches with one inch for gluing being 20 inches would be an appropriate size. You can make them, of course, as small or as large as you would like. I know people could put these crowns on their puppies. We're gonna take a little bit of glue stick and just put about an inch of glue on the end and then fold the other end while also flipping it. So we're making a circle rather than just gluing those two ends together. Be a little finicky at first, but you'll get it. You can kind of straighten it a little bit before you push it down. There we

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go. Now we have a tube and we're gonna fold this tube in half, so you can actually press it down. It will make it easier to fold, fold the tube in half, then fold the tube in half again and again, and once more. So three times. 35 00:01:54,600 --> 00:01:56,340 Make sure all the layers are straight. And then I'm gonna measure up two and a half inches from the bottom. And that's where I wanna begin my cut to the outer point. We're making the points of the crown, so pair of scissors, just line everything up, make a nice smooth cut, nice smooth cut to the point, open it up and ta-da, you've got a crown. If you've been to any holiday parties with me, you'll know that I wear these all night long. I won't wear it all night long right now. Other crowns that you can make are a little bit smaller. Like I said, I derived the four and a half inch measurement from the length of my roll. So if your roll is shorter or longer than that, you can also make your crown taller if you'd like or shorter. Some other things to include are some candies, some chocolate coins, some real coins. I have some English pounds here and some old American coins that I thought would be really fun for a kid to receive or anyone to receive. Some other ideas could be astro origami. This is from Faith Hale's class, or some cool buttons that are nice and shiny, and also maybe a joke or a riddle. I found some of these bad jokes online by Googling dad jokes and I got, "Why do sweaters tend to hang out with each other?" "They're close knit." Buh buh. There are a few things I want you to know about how to enjoy your party crackers, because sometimes you can pull them and nothing happens or the paper rips and it's a little disappointing. So I wanna give you some tips on how to ensure to get the best pop. Here's the party cracker that we made from fabric, and you want to ensure that you hold really tightly onto the edges where the ribbons are. Usually you're doing this with one other person, they're holding on and you pull at the same time, and the cracker snap on the inside has a tiny little bit of gun powder on it and it makes a pop. Don't worry, they're totally safe. The key part of it is to hold on really tight when you pull with our paper cracker. You also wanna hold right at the ribbon, but you can also put a little tiny piece of tape, taping the snap down to make sure that when you pull, both pieces crack apart and you get that fabulous pop. Add some fun to any celebration by sharing one with a friend. 89 00:04:47,395 --> 00:04:47,685

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