

# Upcycling glass jars for storage and crafts

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Welcome to Upcycling glass jars for storage and crafts.

Hi, I'm Shelle Wells of PreparednessMama and one of the founders of Rootsy.org. We are excited you've joined us this month and hope you'll learn something fun and useful.

In this class you'll learn how to take those old, ugly glass jars that we all have, and turn them into something special. I've gathered all these resources into a downloadable handout, so be sure to look for the link to get it at the end of the presentation.

Upcycle – to reused discarded objects or materials in such a way as to create a product of a higher quality or value than the original. I think the opportunity to upcycle your trash into treasure is unlimited!

Why should you even bother saving glass jars? After all they are a dime a dozen.

Upcycling glass saves the environment. Really – While most areas have a recycling program, there are still many that do not. I live in a rural area in central Texas and we do not have curbside recycling. My only option is to throw my glass jars out, save it and take it to the dump recycling center, or repurpose them for household uses.

Upcycling is frugal – it costs very little or no money because you're using the leftovers that you already have.

Upcycling get you creating – I don't always make time for "crafting", but it was fun to take these old jars and think of all the ways I could reuse them.

Upcycled jars make great gifts - Especially once you find a process that you enjoy doing. Think of the money you'll save on Christmas gifts this year.

## How to Clean Jars

In order to be successful with all of these projects, you need to start with clean jars.

The basic way for jars that have paper labels is to soak them in warm, soapy water until they soften.

Remove as much of the label as you can. Put them in a sink with warm water and dish soap.

Let them sit for 30 minutes and slip off the labels. It's really that easy and this is the best, cost effective approach. It may require a bit of scrubbing but not much.

My husband loves Queso cheese dip and these are also my favorite jars to save. I love the wide mouth, straight sides, and that they are stackable. I store my all dried herbs in them. They have a plastic label that is easy to remove, but it leaves a sticky residue behind.

## How to remove sticky residue

You could use nail polish remover, rubbing alcohol, ED40, or Goo Gone to get that sticky mess off of there, but those all cost additional money.

The cost effective solution that I like the best is plain old baking soda and vegetable oil.

Mix the baking soda with enough vegetable oil to form a spreadable paste. Slather this on with a spoon and leave it for an hour. You want to cover every sticky spot with the mix.

After an hour, wash it off with soap, water, and a scrubber sponge.

## How to get the wax out of jars

If you are repurposing candle jars and there is leftover wax in them, you can remove it by pouring hot water into the jar.

After 10 minutes the wax will melt and float to the top. Pour it off into the garbage and decide if you need to do a second hot water pour.

Stubborn spots respond well to the baking soda, vegetable oil trick we learned earlier.

## Decorating Jar Lids



Now that you have the jars clean let's get into decorating the tops. There are many options.

Of course you could leave them with the Tostitos brand hanging out, and I do that, I put these jars into use long before I decorate them. But it's nice to have your pantry or herb storage looking spiffy and coordinated like these jars.

### Paint the tops - PreparednessMama

You can accomplish this by painting the tops. The process is simple. Using sandpaper, you scuff up the lids to they will hold

paint better. Pay close attention to the outer rims, because these will get the most use.

A few coats of spray paint and you have a new look. You can find the tutorial at PreparednessMama. <http://preparednessmama.com/repurpose-glass-jars/>

### Chalkboard lids and colored bands – Dwellings by Devore



If you have canning jars that you are repurposing try this idea. Paint the lids with chalkboard paint and the bands with your favorite color. What a great way to organize your spices!

You'll find this tutorial at Dwellings by Devore

<http://www.dwellingsbydevore.com/2013/03/spice-spice-baby.html>

### Add glass knobs – Consumer Crafts

I just love this idea of painting the jars and adding knobs. Be aware – knobs are expensive if you buy them new (a fancy glass one cost around \$4 at Home Depot and that kind of shoots the frugality of the project)



Look at garage sales and second hand stores and try to scoop them up at a better price.

You'll find a tutorial to make this project at Consumer Crafts.com

<http://blog.consumercrafts.com/decor-home/decorative-knobs-diy-jars/>

## Apothecary jars – Creative Confetti



How about making apothecary jars for fancier storage.

With a bit of coordinating paint, a distinctive knob, a cleaned up jar, a candlestick and hot glue - you can have something really spectacular. How would you like to get a set of these as a gift?

The tutorial is at Creative Confetti

<http://creativeconfetti.blogspot.com/2012/07/super-glue-and-pickle-jar-too.html>

## Decorating without paint

There are lots of options for decorating upcycled jars without paint.

## Lace and twine - Musely



You can wrap lace and twine around the jars and use them for candle holders

The instructions are at Musely .com

<http://m.musely.com/tips/Wrap-Lace-Around-A-Mason-Jar-And-Add-A-Tea-Candle-To-Create-A-Unique-Candle/5052147>

## Paper desk organizers – It All Started with Paint



You can wrap paper and twine and use them for desk organizers. These are easy to change out to match the seasons

Tutorial at It All Started with Paint

<http://www.itallstartedwithpaint.com/mason-jar-desk-organizers/>

## Paper + Mod Podge - Little House of Four



Unlike the previous jars, these paper coverings are permanent. This look is accomplished with mod podge. Do you see my favorite jar type in there! I'm making some this week!

Visit

<http://www.littlehouseoffour.com/2016/01/recycled-glass-jars-turned-stylish.html>

## Rope Handles – Burlap and Blue

Jars can be cleaned up and have a rope handle added. These cost big bucks if you buy them ready made in the store.

All you need is twine. Hot glue and the tutorial found at Burlap and Blue

<http://www.burlapandblue.com/2012/04/19/hanging-mason-jars-a-tutorial/>

## Color tinted glass jars



So far we've talked about decorating jars that will be food safe. You can use paint on the inside of the jars, but once you do you should not use them for food afterwards.

I love the look of this colored jar idea. As you can see these are being used as vases for a dried flower presentation. Real old jars like these are hard to find and expensive.

The look is accomplished with Mid Podge and food coloring. They are baked in the oven at a low temperature. The tutorial is at Fancy That Design House .com

<http://fancythatdesignhouse.com/colored-tinted-glass-jars/>

I tried it with mixed results, so here are my four additional tips that you won't find in her tutorial.

1. If you want the dark look that Fancy House created, make sure you purchase black food coloring too.
2. Also use more food coloring than you think you need, otherwise you'll get these lightly colored jars
3. Don't add much water, keep the mixture as thick as you can
4. If there are any drips on the glass, you will have drips when they are finished cooking. They don't even out like she says. Either live with them or wipe them out before you set the color.

It's not a total loss, I'm using mine as candle holders on the deck and the drips don't matter to me.

## Paint the Outside



Painting the outside of the jars keeps them safe for food storage

To create these canisters, you use spray or brush on chalkboard paint and a fancy label

The tutorial and a link to download the label is at Houseful of Handmade

<http://housefulofhandmade.com/farmhouse-kitchen-canister-diy/2/>

This technique works well on any jar. I used a jug with a leaf pattern and lightly sanded some of the paint off after it dried.

I will use this as a flower vase on the deck, but since the inside is untouched by the paint, you can store anything inside it.

## Mercury Glass - Landee See Landee Do



Another look is mercury glass. These old fashioned jars are very hard to find. Get this look by first spritzing a mixture of vinegar and water on the jar, and then immediately spraying it with reflective paint.

This causes bubbles that you dapple off with a paper towel.

The tutorial is at Landee See Landee Do

<http://www.landeeseealandeedo.com/2013/06/diy-mercury-glass.html>

## Dots and Stripes – Something Turquoise

This next look is easy to do with blue painter tape and dots from the office supply store. Arrange the tape in your design and spray paint over them. Remove the tape and dots and

you're done.

The tutorial can be found at Something Turquoise

<http://somethingturquoise.com/2012/06/29/diy-painted-frosted-glass-jars/>

## Other Upcycling Ideas

I found other uses for upcycled jars as I was putting this together



To maximize storage area you can hang lids from the bottom of a shelf. It looks like these are holding herbs and spices. I wouldn't recommend keeping yours exposed to sunlight like this because it shortens the shelf life of the herbs.

But if you have an enclosed cabinet with wooden shelving this is certainly an option.

I've also seen it used to organize crafts, or nuts

and bolts in a garage.

## Utensil Caddy – Small Home Soul



I thought this idea was terrific.

Using 4 jars, a piece of wood and 4 metal connectors, they created a utensil caddy for their outdoor parties.

It stands up on its own and is easy to move around.

Here's a link to the tutorial from Small Home Soul

[http://www.smallhomesoul.com/mason-jar-utensil-](http://www.smallhomesoul.com/mason-jar-utensil-caddy/#_a5y_p=5572316)

[caddy/#\\_a5y\\_p=5572316](http://www.smallhomesoul.com/mason-jar-utensil-caddy/#_a5y_p=5572316)

## What is the best use for upcycled jars?

Decorated candle holder, herb storage, pantry food or stylish organizers?

That's hard to say; luckily the results are only limited by your imagination. Thanks for joining us at Roots.org



Don't forget to download the handout with links to all these awesome projects and thanks for joining us at Rootsy.

AND don't forget to join the conversation in the Simple Living forum; I've started a thread so we can share other ideas for upcycling glass jars.

How will you upcycle your glass jars?

Notes: