

DRIED ORANGE GARLAND / ORNAMENTS

Garlands made of dried fruit and popcorn are considered to be the original decoration for the Christmas tree. While there's not definitive proof of why these materials were used for decorations, we understand these decorations to be inexpensive for people to buy, and farmers could make additional profit on left over crops that had dried out. Eventually this practice declined as synthetic garlands were mass-produced¹. Below we will walk you through how to make these decorations at home!



MATERIALS

- Orange(s)
- Twine or jute
- A sharp knife
- Paper towels/napkins
- Baking sheet
- Baking rack or parchment paper
- Oven
- Cutting board
- A nail
- A cooling rack

INSTRUCTIONS



- 1) Preheat your oven to 250°F
- 2) Using your cutting board and knife, slice the orange(s) to about ½ cm thick. If cut too thick, the slices will take too long to dry. If cut too thin, the slices will be more translucent in color but may also curl or burn.



- 3) Using the paper towel, pat dry the orange slices and lay them in a single layer on a parchment lined baking sheet or on a baking rack over a baking sheet.



- 4) Place the baking sheet with the oranges in the oven once preheated. The orange slices will bake 4-6 hours. You'll want to turn them over once an hour to make sure they dry evenly.

¹ https://www.kpcnews.com/features/life/kpcnews/article_266ae77b-0805-584f-b7f5-1af20e1954d9.html

Virtual Christmas at the Castle



- 5) Once the oranges are mostly dried, using an oven mitt pull them out of the oven and set them on a cooling rack and let them cool for 20 minutes.



- 6) Using the nail, poke a hole just under the rind of the orange. Poke just one hole if you're creating ornaments. Poke two holes at the top of the orange (positions II and I if it were a clock) if you want to create a garland.



- 7) Thread your string/jute/twine through the hole(s) you created. If creating ornaments, tie the ends of the string together once threaded through the orange. If creating a garland, use a single piece of string and weave it through multiple orange slices – start by inserting the string through one hole on the orange slice and then out of the other hole on the slice, when adding multiple slices make sure they line up next to one and other.



- 8) Hang your ornaments or garland upon your tree, or throughout your home. These also make darling decorations for wrapping gifts. The oranges will continue to dry out over the next few days. These can be stored in a glass or plastic jars with a tight fitting lid for future holiday seasons; they will darken with age.

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