

A SEED PACKET *Surprise*

BY BECKY SHANDER



I'm obsessed with packaging. Whenever I come across plain or mundane packaging, I can't resist the opportunity to try and create something with a little bit more pizzazz, especially when these items are meant to be used for gifts. When it comes to gift giving, it's always worth it to use lots of care and attention, making sure the details are extra special — presentation definitely matters. This gesture of love undoubtedly shows the recipient how much they mean to you. And although this sentiment is priceless, it doesn't have to cost big buckets of money to shower our loved ones with affection.

To create my seed packets, I began by using common items found in the kitchen such as wax and parchment paper. These inexpensive, semi-transparent, yet fairly strong materials are perfect for holding seeds. To embellish the outside of each packet, I created a bird-inspired collage. (I'm obsessed with birds, too!) Then the inside of each packet is filled with dried seeds. To add a bit more personality to my packet labeled "Annual Surprise," I filled it with annuals (fun, right?), plus a special necklace surprise with the message, "Grow."

Wearing jewelry with a positive message, such as "grow," can encourage one to keep good thoughts in mind. And by sharing good thoughts, there's potential for happiness to grow ... inside and out, everywhere, and all around. I love spreading this type of seed, sprinkling inspiration in all directions. →

Technique

For the Seed Packets

Use a store-bought seed packet as a template by emptying the seeds and then carefully taking the packet apart. Place this template on top of wax or parchment paper (before doing this, I added texture to the paper by crumpling it and then smoothing it out flat again with my hands), and then trace the packet shape onto the paper. Use scissors to cut around the template, and fold the packet using the original template as a guide. Create a collage to fit on top of the front side of the folded packet. Once you're happy with the design, carefully unfold the packet and machine-sew the collage elements to the front side of the packet. For the "Annual Surprise" packet, I sewed my paper bird image onto a tea-dyed, mini envelope before sewing it to the front of a parchment paper packet (this envelope will be used as a pouch for the "Grow" necklace, so make sure not to sew the top opening closed). For the collage on the "Nasturtium" packet, I used craft glue to adhere a strip of fabric to the bottom of the bird, simulating a nest.



If you don't have a seed packet handy, simply fold over a piece of wax or parchment paper to create your packet in a pouch style (e.g. "Nasturtium" packet). Once you've folded over the paper, machine-sew a bird image and other paper or fabric elements to the front side of the pouch (be sure to unfold the paper before sewing). After the collage is finished, fold over the paper again and sew the two short ends, creating the pouch. Fill with seeds and sew the pouch across the top end to seal.

To further embellish the seed packet, type seed names or fun descriptions of the contents, such as "Annual Surprise", onto craft paper. Cut around the words and use a glue stick to adhere them to a tag (you can also machine-sew the words to a tag, like in the "Poppy" packet). Add some sparkle to the tags using craft glue and mica flakes. Attach a tag to each packet using string, a skinny strip of fabric or ribbon, and a rusty safety pin.



For the Necklaces

To create the "Grow" necklace, paint the backside of a small, round, wooden tag with gold acrylic paint, and let dry. Type "grow" onto paper, and cut around the word. Cut a circle from vintage paper to fit on top of the wooden circle tag, and use craft glue to adhere both elements to the wooden tag. Apply a light layer of gel medium over the collage, and let dry. Then apply a thin layer of Diamond Glaze on top, and let dry. To complete the necklace, add a beaded dangle and a chain. Lastly, tuck the necklace into the mini-envelope that was sewn to the front of the packet labeled "Annual Surprise." This packet in particular would make a perfect birthday gift.

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