**HOW TO: Recycled Tin Lantern**

Celebrate ***Trees in the Rigging: A Community Carol Sing and Boat Parade*** with these homemade, punched-tin lanterns created from recycled cans. The tiny holes will create gorgeous scattered light patterns on the sidewalks of Main Street at this festive event.



**STEP 1: GATHER YOUR MATERIALS**

* 2-4 cleaned, empty tin cans (you can use any size)
* a hammer
* an assortment of nails (for larger or smaller holes)
* colorful permanent markers
* paper, pencil, masking tape, scissors (if you plan to use a pattern)
* votive candles (LED work best)
* a towel

**[](https://inhabitat.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2012/07/DSC_0061-001.jpg)**

**STEP 2: CLEAN AND FREEZE**

Remove labels from cans and clean thoroughly. Fill each can with [**water**](https://inhabitat.com/smart-hand-pumps-could-provide-clean-water-to-rural-communities/)and freeze overnight until solid. The ice stabilizes the cans and prevents them from bending when holes are punched in them later.

**[](https://inhabitat.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2012/07/DSC_0050-001.jpg)**

**STEP 3: DESIGN YOUR PUNCH GRAPHIC**

Decide on a design for your punched-tin decorations. You may draw the pattern ahead of time on a piece of graph paper and tape it to the can as a guide. You can also freehand a design without marking it ahead of time.[**Knitting**](https://inhabitat.com/guerilla-knitting-documentary-explores-the-origins-of-yarn-graffiti/)patterns, wallpaper, textiles, and [**folk art**](https://pinterest.com/KatieBush/folk/) are all great inspiration sources for patterns!

**[](https://inhabitat.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2012/07/DSC_0056-001.jpg)**

**STEP 4: PUNCH OUT YOUR PATTERN**

Place the frozen[**tin can**](https://inhabitat.com/dazzling-recycled-tomato-tin-house-found-deep-in-patagonia%E2%80%99s-forests/) on a folded towel (to prevent the can from moving and to catch ice chips). Position a sharp, narrow nail above each mark on your pattern and gently tap it 3-4 times with the hammer until just the point has punched the tin can.  Repeat for each mark until you have completed your pattern.

**[](https://inhabitat.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2012/07/DSC_0059-001.jpg)**

**STEP 5: REMOVE THE ICE**

Rinse the can under warm water until the ice pops out. Let the can air dry.

**[](https://inhabitat.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2012/07/DSC_0067-001.jpg)**

**STEP 6: ADD SOME COLOR**

If you want to add color to your new punched-tin [**lantern**](https://inhabitat.com/lucrimas-nino-candle-lantern-creates-a-cozy-light-with-a-recycled-wine-bottle/), you can create a variety of fun, shiny designs by simply using colorful permanent markers.

**[](https://inhabitat.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2012/07/DSC_0090-001.jpg)**

**STEP 7: LET THERE BE LIGHT!**

Drop in some lighted votive [**candles**](https://inhabitat.com/product-review-we-test-out-the-led-candle-light-you-can-actually-blow-out/) and enjoy the fun, flickering patterns cast by your new handmade lanterns! Be sure to place the lanterns on a fire-safe surface as the candles can get hot.