

Garland Embellishments

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Snowflakes and fiddles and bells – oh my! Small glue-on embellishments are really handy for making ornaments, scrapbooks, altered objects, and junk art of all kinds. But unfortunately, they can get pricey. For example, a



a small pack of those adorable “Dress It Up” buttons are at least \$10 where I live, and can cost as much as \$17 (!).



They really are lovely, and I have used them on some of my crafts (such as the sewing-themed altered matchbox at left), but for many of my little projects I find them too expensive. The scrapbooking embellishments sold in the big craft outlets, although cute, are similarly prohibitive, especially if you are making crafts to sell.



Dollar store embellishments are always a price-wise option, but there’s one more inexpensive source of interesting additions to your craft stash: novelty fused plastic garlands.

These fused garlands come in a wide variety of motifs, including bells, snowflakes, stars, hearts, lanterns, Santas, musical instruments, and more. The irregular shapes make the garlands prone to tangling, and for this reason they frequently end up donated to thrift stores, where they are often sold quite cheaply.



For example, this musical symbol garland (right) contained 25 motifs; it cost me \$1, so the symbols were 4 cents apiece.

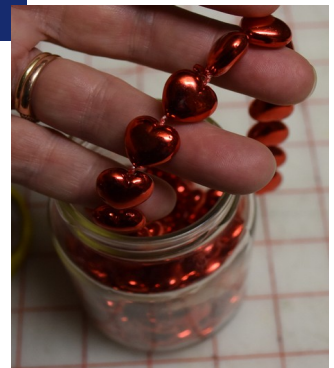


The beautiful large bell above cost under 15 cents; the garland it came from yielded 14 bells for only a couple of bucks.



The garlands typically come in gold, silver, red, pearlized white, or iridescent, and occasionally in green, blue, or pink. The most common shapes I see are bells and snowflakes, but others do show up from

time to time. If you watch the shops, you might hit it lucky (my sister recently found a silver garland with aliens and UFOs!). The samples shown above are from my own stash, and they've all come in handy as embellishments for my crafts.



Depending on what I'm making, I can sew the motifs in place or glue them to the project surface using Magna-Tac or GOOP; in some cases I can link them using jump rings.



For instance, I love this large snowflake on the Snowman Stocking's hat band!

<--- The fiddle adds a nifty 3D touch to my Hillbilly Hare ornament.



The holly berry cluster on this puzzle ornament (left) was made from a short strip of 4mm fused beads, to complement the holly leaves.

I can't wait to stitch Santa and his reindeer (above) onto a Christmas gift bag or stocking.

A silver-coloured bell nicely finishes off the beaded dangle on the bottom of this handmade ornament (right).



Repurposing garlands like these is a cost-effective way to add to your stash of embellishments, and to stretch your crafting budget. If you keep your eyes peeled in discount and thrift stores, you're bound to find something useful and interesting.