

Ornament Hacks

<jensoriginalsewembroiderydesigns.yolasite.com>
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I laughed out loud when I spotted this witty ornament while browsing on line. It's currently on sale too: \$21.36 CDN, down from its regular price of \$26.70 CDN (!).

I figured that an ornament like this would make a perfect small gift for my Christmas-crazy friend. One like this, but not this one: it's a fail.



For starters, those yellowish edges are unattractive and amateurish: if done right, the image should cover the full design area. But even worse, look at the huge hole right in the middle of Mona's forehead: What?!! No way is it worth the price, not with these mistakes. My friend won't be getting this one for Christmas.

Fortunately, I can make my own version – only much better. I started by editing the image of Mona so that the background fills out the round design area. Looks a lot better already, doesn't it?



And wow, look:
On my version,
there's no great
big hole through
Mona's face!



If you follow my projects, you'll already have guessed that I made my ornament from two 2.25" buttons, since I have the machine. But if you don't have one, and wanted to make your own ornament, you could try decouping images onto one of those flat wooden discs that you can buy at the craft store, or even onto juice can lids.



You can see my finished ornament on the next page.



I completed my ornament by gluing on some matching braid trim. Though adding trim is optional, I always do so because I like the finished look.

For the reverse of the ornament I used an image of the original painting without the Santa hat and packages. If you prefer, you could put the same image on both sides, or even add a personalized message.

If you've seen my post on making these ornaments (15 Sept 2023), you may recall what's involved: punching and aligning holes, pressing the buttons, gluing, clamping, and adding the trim around the outside border.



Ta da! A lovely ornament that Santa will be happy to place in my friend's stocking, and a decided improvement over the version I saw on line. Excellent!

But what if there's yet another hack I can try? Keep reading!

While I was browsing the same site, another ornament caught my eye: not the Mona Lisa this time, but a different Leonardo image, also on a flat ceramic disc, but this time with a lovely wide border. I like the framed look, and decided to replicate it for one of my Mona ornaments. But what to use for a border?!



Fortunately, I had just the thing. As luck would have it, a 2.25" button just fits into the indentation on a standard canning lid, and the raised border makes a perfect frame effect.



To complement the colours in the Mona Lisa images, I spray-painted two of the lids copper, then punched holes for a jump ring and glued the two lids back to back.

A narrow metallic braid trim completes the look and nicely covers the join. Once the frames were ready, I attached the buttons into the recess using GOOP – perfect fit!

DH loves this one. The frame adds a classy look – a nice finishing touch for an ornament based on a classic painting.

Beautiful!



If you like the framed look and don't have a button machine, you could get a similar effect by decoupage the printed images right into the recessed area of the can lid, and covering them with Mod Podge Dimensional Magic or with casting resin.

A few final thoughts about these hacks.

The ornaments on the site I looked at are made of ceramic, with images sublimated onto the surface. They are very nice, with intense and vibrant colours. But I'm not sure they're all that much nicer than the buttons and recycled lids that I used to make my versions.



To get a similar rich colour in my ornament images, I printed them onto matte presentation paper using my inkjet photo printer. It's perfect for ornaments -- and just as vibrant as the sublimated ceramic.

And when my button ornament creations are hanging on the tree, they look as pretty as any ceramic ornament – prettier even since I took a lot more care with the image placement.



These crafted ornaments are also lighter weight than the ceramic ones, so they can hang from nearly any branch, and as a bonus,

they won't break if they should get knocked off the tree – something to think about with little ones (or cats!) in the house.

Finally, there's something extra satisfying about making the ornaments yourself. You can make them exactly to your taste and personalize them in a variety of ways if you like. A gift of your time and talent is also much more meaningful.

I know my friends and family are going to love this year's new batch, and I couldn't be happier.