

## GIFT JARS with DECORATED LIDS

Use any jar or container to make a personalized, refillable gift to give friends and family! Using EasyCast epoxy coating to seal your decorated jar lid will make it a durable and long lasting keepsake. We'll explain the basics of a decorated jar lid and then you can go wild with your own ideas! Found and recycled items work great for decorating so let your creativity guide you.

Following are instructions for a project using tropical fruit candy. Design variations can be found at the bottom of the instructions.

## TROPICAL FRUIT CANDY JAR PROJECT



### TOOLS and MATERIALS

A jar to decorate (does not have to have a lid)

Styrofoam sheets  $\frac{3}{4}$ " thickness (necessary if jar has no lid)

Hot glue gun or white craft glue that dries clear

Tropical fruit candy (grocery bulk food area)

Craft polyurethane

Medium blue color acrylic craft paint

EasyCast epoxy 8 oz.kit (or substitute EnviroTex Lite epoxy if needed)

Mixing cups and sticks

Waxed paper

Plastic disposable spoon

Small disposable drink cup

Disposable foam craft brushes

Handheld heat gun (see craft stores)  
Sandpaper 180-320 grit  
Exacto or razor knife  
Gloves and eye protection

## INSTRUCTIONS

We found several unusual things to use as a lid for our containers: unfinished wood plaques, canning lids, lids from other jars, we even used a clay planting pot saucer as the lid and used the pot for the “jar”.

### MAKING THE LID:

Many nicely shaped jars don't have a ready-made lid so we made our own using Styrofoam sheets from the craft store.

- To determine the lid shape and size, place the jar opening on top of the Styrofoam sheet and trace the jar opening, then cut it out using an Exacto razor blade knife. Then cut a second piece of Styrofoam about ½ inch larger around than the first.
- Smooth both pieces on all sides using 180-320 grit sandpaper.
- Center the smaller piece on top of the larger one and glue together using either hot glue or white craft glue. Let craft glue dry for an hour.

### DECORATING THE LID:

- Mix equal parts blue paint and white craft glue and paint everything except the bottom of the lid and let dry. Styrofoam can be challenging to cover with paint so two applications are always needed. Then paint the bottom and let paint dry. Mix a new batch of the glue and paint for each painting session because the mixture doesn't store well and will dry out.
- Apply two layers of craft polyurethane to just the bottom of the lid; let each layer dry per instructions
- With the hot glue gun, create a heap of candy by gluing candy in decorative layers on the lid. Pick away the little glue strings as you go.



### COATING THE LID

- Protect work table with layers of waxed paper and put on the gloves and glasses.
- Measure two ounces of the EasyCast resin and two ounces of the hardener into a mixing cup. Follow the mixing instructions exactly, mixing in two consecutive cups.
- Turn a disposable drink cup upside down and rest the Styrofoam lid on it. We use this cup to lift the project from the tabletop which allows the wet EasyCast drips to be wiped away from the underside with a craft stick or foam brush. The disposable cup must be smaller in diameter than the Styrofoam lid.
- Very slowly pour the EasyCast over the lid, allowing the epoxy to seep into all of the open spaces between the candy pieces. Use the plastic spoon to pick up and redistribute the coating onto the candy and the lid.

- After about 30 minutes, use the foam brush to smooth the coating on the edges of the lid and to remove the drips from bottom of the lid.
- After one hour, scrape the drips off one more time and let the lid dry for at least 24 hours.  
TIP: if drips of EasyCast remain on bottom of lid, sand them away using a Dremel tool or sandpaper. Re-apply the craft polyurethane to hide the scratches made by the sandpaper.
- Fill the jar with tropical fruit candy, wrap a colorful ribbon around the jar and lid. It's ready to give to a special person!

### ADDITIONAL PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS

**Nesting Bird Jar:** A standard canning lid was glued together then decorative moss was glued to top and sides of lid. Faux silk leaves, berries and a colorful bird were glued to the lid. Two layers of white craft glue were applied to the entire lid surface. After glue dried overnight, the lid was coated with EasyCast. The jar may be filled with bird feed.

**Sports Team Jar:** A giant mug was purchased from discount store. The Styrofoam lid was painted in team colors. The logo was printed from an online source (it's okay to download the logo for crafting but you cannot lawfully sell items using the registered logo). Pretzel snack mix was glued to lid. Two layers of white craft glue were applied to the entire lid surface and allowed to dry before coating with EasyCast. The jar was filled with pretzel mix.

**Desk/Letter Jar:** A Styrofoam lid made and painted and a brass letter holder was hot glued to lid. Silk flowers, leaves and strands of faux pearl beads were glued around letter holder. Two layers of white craft glue were applied to the lid and flowers. Silver micro glitter was scattered on the wet glue layer. The jar lid was coated with EasyCast after the glue layer was dry. The jar is filled with office supply items like paperclips and stamps.



**Seed Packet w/ Clay Pot and Saucer:** Several seed packets were emptied and trimmed to fit on the sides of a 6" clay planting pot. We used an old piece of netting that originally held onions; if needed, substitute netting purchased from fabric store or garden center. Glue the seed packets on the sides of the pot and let glue dry. Coat the outside with a layer of white craft glue and then press the netting onto the jar and let the glue dry. We also cut out words from the seed packet to glue on the clay



saucer used as the lid for the project. Shop the miniatures area of craft stores for decorative elements like tiny clay pots, little birds, eggs, gardening tools and moss. Line the inside of the saucer with moss and arrange the decorative items as desired. Then apply EasyCast over the entire clay pot inside and out as well as the saucer. Remember to scrape the drips from the underside of the saucer lid so that it will fit into the clay pot and scrape the bottom of the clay pot so that the pot will sit flat on the table. Fill finished pot with flower and vegetable seed packets.

**Sack of Toys Jar:** For this jar we found a round, beveled wood plaque that, when turned upside down, created the perfect sized lid to decorate. Paint the lid with metallic holiday paint and let dry. Use 1" and ½" sized wood blocks to create a variety of package shapes to be glued onto lid. Wrap the blocks with holiday wrapping. Use a ready-made fabric jewelry gift "sack" to hold the "gifts" so that they're spilling from the sack. Apply two layers of white craft glue to the sack and gifts on the lid and let dry then coat with a layer of EasyCast. Scrape the EasyCast drips from underside of lid during the first hour of curing.

**Little Fishies Jar:** choose a jar shaped like a goldfish bowl. Make the lid from a Styrofoam sheet. Paint the lid, let the paint dry then hot glue a few seashells and some plastic greenery for seaweed. Use netting from fabric store to drape over the shells. Hot glue the Goldfish crackers in and around the seashells and netting. Apply two layers of white glue to all surfaces of the lid. Coat this lid with EasyCast; remember to scrape off the drips from the underside of the lid or sand the drips off later.

