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Easter Traditions On A Budget

By Dawn Holland

Every year moms scramble to find just the right easter basket. Will it be the sports easter basket for \$20 or the Spiderman one for who know how much? When did easter gifts become so expensive?

The average family has 2.4 children and easter gifts can break a budget in a hurry. Here are some wonderful easter memory creating ideas that won't break the bank.

1. Bunny Paw prints Grab an old shoe box lid and cut out big bunny paw print to make a stencil . On "Easter Eve" use the stencil to make paw prints through your house by sprinkling baking soda in the stencil. Turn it over to make left and right feet. (the baking soda vacuums up off the carpet)
2. Easter Eggstravaganza For most kids, easter is not easter without decorating eggs. This year instead of letting the kids have all the fun, start a tradition that involves the whole family. Throw an annual Easter egg decorating contest. Choose enough categories so everyone gets a chance to win. Some categories might be: funniest egg, most original egg, scariest egg, or celebrity egg. The wackier the categories, the more fun you will have decorating and judging. Ask everyone to submit an egg and display them on the kitchen table. Ask Grandma and Grandpa to be the judges. Before you know it, you will have trouble finding judges because everyone will want to decorate an egg!
3. Follow the Ribbon This is a simple tradition that doesn't take much preparation. All you will need to do is buy some narrow inexpensive ribbon from a local craft store. Choose a different color for each member of the family (15 to 25 yards per person depending on how crazy you want this to be). Once the kids are in bed, tie a ribbon to each of their hidden baskets and wind them in and out of the furniture and the other ribbons until you can't see where they began. Bring the ends to one central location (perhaps the kitchen table) as a place where your family can begin the entangled maze to find their baskets. Before you know it, everyone will be tangled in ribbons and laughs.
4. The Big People Egg Hunt On Easter Sunday, gather the adults together and have them each hide one or more eggs somewhere on themselves. It might be in Grandma's apron pocket, Uncle Bob's boots, behind Dad's glasses, or under Grandpa's hat. This hunt isn't just for the little ones, it involves everyone and is a wonderful way to connect the generations. Your family will be sure to get a laugh as

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the kids poke around looking for hidden eggs. No one and no place is considered out of bounds. You'll definitely want your video camera ready for this Easter Egg Hunt.

5. Personalize Letter from the Easter Bunny! What child does not get excited about getting mail? How about a personalized letter to your child from the Easter Bunny. This letter will be mailed directly to you child and talk about how mom and dad have told the easter bunny that he/she has been good. What an exciting memory for your child!

Easter baskets and gifts do not have to ruin your budget in order for them to be meaningful. These are just a few ways in which you can start some family easter traditions with your family. Here's to a wonderful traditions filled Easter!

Dawn Holland owns

<http://www.BooksFromTheHearth.com>

where you can purchase personalized

children's books and letters. To purchase your child's personalized Easter Bunny Letter, go to

<http://www.BooksFromTheHearth.com/home1.html>

and click on the "Custom Letters" tab.

Easter Scrapbooking Ideas

By Rachel Paxton

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Easter is a great time to capture family photographs for scrapbooking. Even if you don't scrapbook, planning your picture taking ahead of time ensures you won't miss any of these great family memories. No family traditions? Then this is a great time to start!

Here are some Easter photograph ideas for scrapbooking:

Photograph spring flowers in bloom. Daffodils and tulips will make a colorful contrast to your other photographs.

Have your kids help you make Easter cookies or an Easter cake. Snap a picture of them working in the kitchen and then make sure to take a picture of the finished product. We made a layer cake

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and arranged it on a thick piece of cardboard covered with aluminum foil. It was lemon cake with lemon filling and pink frosting. We decorated it with store-bought Easter candy. Around the base of the cake we arranged Easter grass and added chocolate eggs and peeps for decoration. It made a great picture!

Gingerbread houses aren't just for Christmas! Make a gingerbread house and decorate it for Easter with pastel colors and lots of Easter candy. The possibilities are limitless.

If your family attends Easter church services, make sure to get a picture of your girls in their Easter dresses. Dressing up is a great excuse to take a picture.

Coloring Easter eggs never gets old, whatever the age of your kids! They never get tired of showing you how creative they are. Join in on the fun and then take a picture of the finished product.

Easter egg hunts are also fun for the whole family. Take some good action pictures and get a picture of your kids with their Easter baskets.

Easter dinners are a great time to take family pictures. It's a good time to take pictures of relatives you don't often see, and fun to get pictures of the family laughing and enjoying a meal

together. Take pictures of any of the good food you want to remember later.

Have fun picture taking, and have a happy Easter!

Rachel Paxton is a freelance writer and mom who is the author of *What's for Dinner?*, an e-cookbook containing more than 250 quickeasy dinner ideas. For recipes, tips to organize your home, homedecorating, crafts, and more, visit Creative Homemaking at <http://www.creativehomemaking.com>.



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