

Orange Pomander Balls



'Tis the season for the wonderful smells of pine trees, hot cider, and winter spices. Enhance your December by making beautiful pomander balls! This fun and beautiful craft is a festive way to celebrate winter while learning about cloves and the unique origins of this old holiday tradition.

What Are Orange Pomander Balls?

Orange Pomander Balls are oranges with cloves inserted into them. Today these beautiful oranges ornamented with artistic patterns of cloves serve merely as festive decorations that enhance a space with seasonal scents. But in their earliest days, dating back to medieval times, they served a significant purpose! A pomander is a ball made for perfume. For centuries, people carried different types of scented pomanders believing they would protect against infection and to lighten the scent of filth in the streets.

Pomanders made of oranges and cloves were originally considered a charm against witchcraft! By the 1800's, however, as sanitation had improved and superstitions waned, orange pomander balls shed their functional purpose and became simply lovely holiday accents families could make together.

SUPPLIES

Oranges
Cloves
Toothpick or Nail
Optional:
Ribbon
Cinnamon Sticks
Star Anise

STEPS

- 1) Use a toothpick/nail to poke/carve designs into the orange skin.
- 2) Push the pointed sides of the cloves into the carved skin to adorn the design.
- 3) When all the cloves have been added, consider accenting your creation with a few star anise seeds pushed into the orange, or ribbon with cinnamon sticks, pine sprigs, or winter berries tied in.
- 4) Place around your home to display your beautiful creation and to add lovely, festive scents to the room, or hang them from a tree!



**Thanks to Little Cooks Reading Books for use of their photo.*

Opportunities for Expanded Learning

What are cloves, and where do they come from?

Learn about this magnificent smelling spice [HERE!](#)

Why were cloves believed to protect from illness and harm?

Learn about the health benefits of cloves [HERE!](#)

Interested in history?

Take a deeper dive into the social history of pomanders [HERE!](#)

Ready to create?

Make an orange pomander ball alongside a “Victorian child” [HERE!](#)



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