

# A craft not forgotten

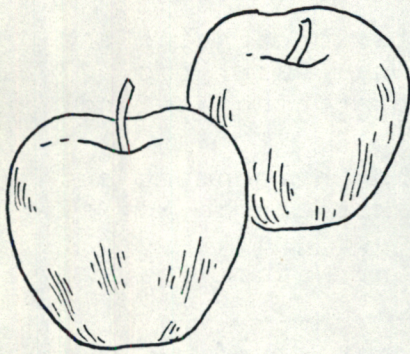
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While walking through the woods this fall you may run across a long-abandoned apple tree brimming with fruit or a heavily-laden wild crab apple tree. You can use these finds to add beautiful scents to your home and to bring a bit of your walk in the woods home with you for the winter.

There are many ways to use apples to scent your home but probably the most well-known is the pomander. Originally, in Elizabethan times, the pomander was a small ball of gold or silver filled with rare-scented spices and "fixed" with ambergris. This was worn on a chain around the neck or waist to ward off objectionable smells.

Today the pomander is generally known as an apple (or citrus fruit such as orange or lemon) studded with cloves, and that has been cured in a spice mixture. They are very easy to make and involve three basic steps.

1) Preparing the pomander - cover the outside surface of the apples with cloves, pushing the pointed end of the clove in through the skin of the apple until only the head of the clove is showing. It may be easiest to poke a small hole first with a nail. The cloves can be placed in lines or randomly over the surface of the apple. This should be finished the day it is started or the apple may begin to rot.



2) Preparing the spices - the clove-studded apple then needs to be 'cured' in spices and a fixative to enhance the smell, keep the fruit from rotting, and to ensure the scent remains for some time. To make enough curing spice mixture to keep several pomanders curing at once (8oz.), you need to mix together:

- 4 ounces powdered cinnamon
- 2 ounces powdered cloves
- ½ ounce powdered allspice
- ½ ounce powdered nutmeg
- 1 ounce powdered orris root

The type and amount of spices can vary according to taste, but the essential ingredient is the fixative, in this case orris root. It is available in health food stores and should always be added in the proportion it is in the above mixture: 1 ounce orris root to 7 ounces spices. This mixture can be used over and over again, but should be stored in a plastic bag between uses.

3) Curing the pomanders - after mixing the curing spices, sprinkle about half the mixture in a glazed pottery bowl, and place the pomanders on top. Sprinkle the rest of the spice mixture over the pomanders.

Turn the pomanders each day, making sure to sprinkle them with a bit of the spice mixture. continue this until the pomanders have completely hardened (two weeks to a month). Once they are hard they are finished. They can be tied with ribbons and displayed in bowls to scent a room, placed in drawers, or hung in a closet.

These pomanders will last forever - when their scent fades, just dip them in warm water, put them in a bowl of curing spices and cover with a plastic wrap. Keep turning them everyday and in a couple of weeks they'll be good as new.

