

Truly Smashing Pumpkins

Découpage puts a more refined face on holiday jack-o'-lanterns.



Few things say Halloween like a good old-fashioned carved pumpkin. But if you're after seasonal adornments with a bit more polish (and staying power), consider the options featured here. By combining the art of découpage (you'll find easy instructions on the following page) with iconic country motifs—toile, botanical illustrations, even a quilt pattern—we've devised decorative objects that won't expire on October 31. Opt for faux pumpkins (*Funkins*, from \$19.99; pumpkinzone.com), and you can display them year after year.

◀ A TEXTBOOK CASE This gourd gets its graphic appeal from *Pictorial Webster's* (\$35; Chronicle)—a volume filled with cool black-and-white illustrations. Choose your favorite drawings from the book (we used approximately 120 for a medium-size Funkin), then photocopy them onto off-white cover stock paper. Next, carefully tear out each photocopied image, leaving about half an inch of white space around it. (The rough edges will give your finished product added interest.) Using the découpage technique detailed on the next page, cover an entire Funkin with the images, overlapping their edges as you work.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANA GALLAGHER; CRAFTING BY KIRSTEN FIELDS



idea notebook

► **GREEN SCENE** We produced this pastoral idyll by photocopying toile fabric (*Waverly's Rustic Life in sage*, \$39.99 per yard; joann.com). To re-create the effect, begin by painting a Funkin with two coats of flat acrylic paint, in a shade that matches the background of your fabric; let dry. Meanwhile, photocopy the fabric in color, making enough copies to completely cover your Funkin and resizing the pattern if desired (we shrunk this one by 25 percent). Cut out individual scenes from the toile, leaving about a quarter inch of white space around each. Using the découpage technique detailed below, cover the entire Funkin.

Découpage 101

STEP ONE Cover your workspace with wax paper; then pour Mod Podge Matte all-in-one découpage sealer (\$7.99 for 16 ounces; plaidonline.com) into a mixing bowl.

STEP TWO Using a narrow foam brush, spread an even coat of Mod Podge on the back of a printed image.

STEP THREE Press the image onto your Funkin, smoothing out any air bubbles; repeat steps two and three for remaining images. Note: To make an image better fit the contours of the Funkin, you may want to cut small slits at the top and/or bottom of the paper. When covering an entire Funkin, it's also helpful to suspend the faux gourd in a bowl and work on one half at a time (let dry for about 10 minutes before flipping to complete the other side).

STEP FOUR Once all images have been applied, use a foam brush to spread a thin coat of Mod Podge on the entire Funkin. (Again, it's helpful to suspend the Funkin in a bowl and coat one half at a time; let dry for about 10 minutes before flipping to complete the other side.) Let dry for one hour, then repeat with a second coat to seal. Let dry for one full day.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKI DUISTERHOF; CRAFTING BY MARISSA CORWIN



◀ **STAR POWER** For this modern take on a classic quilt pattern, download our motif (countryliving.com/pumpkin-quilt) and print out in color. Determine how many stars you'll need to span the circumference of your Funkin and make color copies of the motif, resizing if necessary. Cut out and set aside. Paint the Funkin with two coats of flat white acrylic paint; let dry. Using the découpage technique detailed on the opposite page, apply the stars in a band around the Funkin.

◀ **BABY BLOOMER** Give even the smallest gourds a cultivated air by selecting a floral fabric with a petite pattern, which will disguise overlapping seams. Our pick: a Liberty of London cotton calico (\$36.95 per yard; bandfabrics.com). Photocopy the fabric in color, making enough copies to cover your Funkin. Measure the distance from the bottom center of the Funkin to the base of its stem. Cut the photocopies into strips of this length, each about one inch wide. Using the découpage technique detailed on the opposite page, cover the entire Funkin with the strips, working from the base of the stem down and overlapping the paper slightly as you work.