



Pumpkin Topiaries & Candles
By Tammy Jones, HGTV.com

Nothing says autumn like a pumpkin! Use these simple projects to bring these versatile veggies to your tabletop.



Pumpkin Topiaries

Use any size pumpkins, gourds and pots to create topiaries as large or as small as you like. This project is so simple, kids old enough to use a glue gun can do it themselves.

Materials (per topiary):

3-5 small pumpkins & gourds in graduated sizes
terra cotta pot or other container
floral foam to fill the pot
glue gun & glue sticks
wooden dowel (or chopstick)
silk, velvet, or dried leaves or moss
ribbon
knife, pumpkin-carving kit or drill
green, brown, or tan pipe cleaner

Steps:

1. Cut the foam to fit the pot snugly and so that the top of the foam is level with the rim of the pot. Use a little glue in the bottom of the pot to help hold the foam in place.
2. Cover the foam with moss or circles of leaves attached with hot glue. Make sure that the rim of the pot doesn't show; run a bead of glue around the rim to help leaves stay in place and hide it.
3. Glue the largest pumpkin or gourd to the center of the leaves/moss. Glue the next largest on top of it, and so forth until your topiary is done.





Alternative: Instead of gluing each gourd or pumpkin to another one, create a pumpkin topiary (like the one in the image above, on the left) on a wooden dowel. (I used a chopstick--it's the perfect size for the little pumpkins.) Cut small holes/slits with a knife (careful, they are quite tough-skinned; and a drill will be necessary if you're using gourds) all the way through the pumpkin centers--except for the top pumpkin. Only cut into the bottom of the top pumpkin and leave its top intact. NOTE: If kids are doing this project, let parents do the cutting or drilling. Put the three pumpkins on the stick with a little space between and leaving a couple of inches on the bottom. Wrap the stick with a brown, tan, or green pipe cleaner between the pumpkins. Poke the bottom of the stick into the foam through the center of the leaves/moss. Remove it, add some glue in the hole, and replace the topiary in the foam.

4. Fill in between each pumpkin or gourd with a ring of leaves attached with hot glue.

5. Tie a bow around the pot. Make a pair of these topiaries for your mantel, foyer or buffet table, or as a centerpiece for an autumn dinner.



Pumpkin Candles

Tiny pumpkins are simply adorable, and those little gourds you see this time of year are embellished with beautiful patterns, fascinating knots and colorful stripes. They make a pretty decoration just piled up with some colorful leaves, but when used in a simpler way, their unique beauty is more recognizable.

For these candles, simply cut a circle out of the top of as mall pumpkin or gourd and remove that piece. Stand a taper candle in the hole, or make a larger hole and use tea light or votive candles. If you want even more punch, use larger pumpkins/gourds, cut a larger hole, and use a pillar candle. A row of these nestled on scattered leaves makes a beautiful and unexpected tabletop decoration.

