

Thanksgiving Table Settings

Decorate the Thanksgiving table with these adorable activities. First, fashion a colorful **placemat**, that is woven from construction paper or personalized white paper. Then craft a jingling **napkin-holder** that captures your little one's hands as turkey feathers. Finally, add a personal touch to this or any special meal, by reserving each guest a seat with a baby turkey **place card**. These activities hold a little something for everyone. Make one, two, or all three!

Materials: See each craft for the materials required. Substitutions welcome!

Woven Placemat: white or fall-colored construction paper, scissors, tape, pastels/crayons/markers, ruler, contact paper or plastic sleeve

Napkin Holder: small bells (or beads, googly eyes, jewels, etc.) empty toilet paper roll, tan, red, brown, and orange construction or foam paper, tape or glue (hot glue guns for adults, but white school glue will also work)

Place Card: pine cone. (Time for a nature walk! Or perhaps a trip to the craft store.), feathers, paint (acrylic preferred for more dramatic results, but washable paint will work, too); paintbrush, googly eyes, hot glue gun and glue, leaves, small orange triangle



Directions:

Woven Placemat

- 1) Check out this video to craft your own woven placemat:
<https://youtu.be/R5MJQA8xeX0>
- 2) Use colored construction paper to make a fall-themed mat. Or decorate white paper as shown in the video.
- 3) Cover and seal with clear contact paper, or if using a standard sized 8.5x11 sheet, slide it into a plastic sleeve to make this a wipeable (and reusable!) surface.

Napkin Holder

- 1) Start by wrapping the empty cardboard tube in brown or tan paper. (A foam sheet is shown in the example photo.)
- 2) Trace and cut out handprints from willing volunteers and tape or glue these "feathers" to the back.
- 3) Next, (adults) use hot glue to adhere two eyes onto the body of the turkey. Jingle bells make this fun to shake, but beads or buttons will also work. Add an upside-down triangle as a beak.
- 4) Finally, roll up a cloth napkin and insert into the tube. If you fold it in half, you'll have two "feet" popping out the bottom of the turkey tube.

Baby Turkey Place Card

- 1) Start by dusting off a pinecone. (Take a nature walk and look for feathers while you're at it!) If nature is out of stock, the local craft store will suffice.
- 2) Cover your work surface with scrap-paper. Acrylic paint is recommended for lightfastness, but washable paint will also do. Acrylic paint is not washable, but will show more dramatic results.
- 3) Alternate painting the pinecone scales in orange, yellow, or red. (Yes, that's what the individual pieces of a pinecone are called.) Allow it to dry, then glue eyes and a triangular beak on the front and glue or tape a feather at the back.
- 4) Turn this tiny turkey into a place card, by writing the guest's name on a small rectangular piece of construction paper. Glue this to the bird and add any other embellishments that you like.

Extension:

- ✓ Swap in different color options for the placemats, and **keep the materials out** for your guests to create their own.
- ✓ Experiment with **different napkin folds** and see which works best for the napkin holders.
- ✓ Curious about **lightfastness**? See if your partner knows! Or do some research.
- ✓ All of these tangibles give your younger guests an **incentive** to join the feast. Then they have something to keep them **engaged** with the meal.
- ✓ **Mesmerize** your young guests at the kitchen sink after the festivities are over with this work of **science magic**. Pour a little water on a plate. Sprinkle pepper all over the water, then add one drop of dish soap to the center of the peppery water. The results are shocking! Enjoy!
- ✓ Share your Thanksgiving place-settings on social media at **#littlechildrenBIGactivity**.