

Keen Halloween Workshop: Poison Apple Crate Craft

By Mindi Leatham

Your **Poison Apple Crate** can be used as a center piece/decoration, a serving tray for candy apples, or to hold party favors and trick-or-treat candy. The glittered **Poison Apples** go with the crate as decoration or they can be placed in a basket and used as an accessory for a wicked witch costume. Other embellishments included are a homemade coffee wood stain, a paper monarch, a glittered paper crow and free templates at www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples.

*Note about the Poison Apple Templates: there are two options available for download on my site. If you wish to print directly onto the paper you are using for your craft, download the first group of templates. The benefit of these is that they require less cutting/tracing and save time. It's a good idea to have backup paper in case there is a printing error. If you wish to make cardstock templates that you can cut out and then trace onto your desired paper, use the second group of templates. The benefits of these are that you can use them again if you are planning on making multiple projects, they use less scrapbook paper, pencil lines may be easier to see on dark paper and you don't have to worry about printing mistakes.

Coffee Wood Stain

Materials:

- 1/4 cup coffee grounds (use your own, request some from a coffee shop or make without a coffee maker by following the directions at http://www.ehow.com/info_8016075_can-coffee-grounds-stain-wood.html)
- Closeable container (I used a glass jar) or French press
- 1/4 cup hot water
- Coffee filter or cheesecloth

Directions: Place coffee grounds into closeable container or French press. Pour hot water over grounds and let steep at least a few hours, preferably overnight. Use a filter or cheesecloth to strain out grounds. You can use more coffee and less water to make stain darker.

Wood Crate

Materials (can be purchased at craft stores):

- Drop cloth or newsprint to cover work surface, if desired
- Wood crate with 2 solid sides, any shape or size, mine is roughly 9.5” x 11.5” x 4.75”.
- Sandpaper, fine grain
- Coffee ground wood stain or regular, water based wood stain in any color
- 2 Sponge brushes
- Cardstock, if desired, for printing label templates in Large, Medium and Small (2 of each) available at www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples
- Templates require Internet connection and printer/ink
- Patterned scrapbook paper, I used black and white damask
- Solid, dark heavy weight paper, I used black scrapbook paper
- Watercolor paper (8.5x11) if desired or any kind of heavy weight white paper
- Scissors
- Spray adhesive or craft glue
- Spanish moss
- Box that fits inside crate with a little room to spare, floral foam or crumbled paper, if desired
- Real, candy or glittered apples
- Printable poison stickers available at www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples, if desired
- Sticker paper, if desired
- Paper crow

Directions:

1. Choose a work surface in a well-ventilated area and cover with drop cloth or newsprint, if desired.
2. Use fine grain sandpaper to sand with the grain of the crate. Brush away sawdust.
3. Place crate upside down and give visible surfaces a light, even coat of stain with a sponge brush, using the second sponge brush to soak up excess stain, if necessary. For a darker color, give more coats as desired, letting dry between coats if you are using coffee stain. When crate is dry, turn over and stain inside. To create wood grain effect with coffee stain, let a bit of stain puddle at the edges of wood, let dry and repeat. If you don't like the pattern you made you can "erase" it if it is still wet by painting over it and dabbing with a cloth. If you are using regular wood stain, shade crate by giving extra coats to the edges to make them darker and dabbing centers with a cloth while they are damp to make them lighter. Let crate dry. If desired, you can use sand paper on light colored areas to further distress a wood stained crate.

4. Go to www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples where you can print two of each label for each crate end. Print the Large Label on patterned scrapbook paper, the Medium Label on dark paper and the Small Label on white paper -OR- print Poison Apple Templates Page 1 and Page 2 on cardstock, cut and trace onto patterned, dark and white paper. Cut out labels and spray backs with spray adhesive or use craft glue. Glue the Small Labels onto to center of the Medium Labels. Glue the Medium Labels onto the center of the Large Labels, and then glue the Large Labels to crate ends.

5. Fill crate with Spanish moss using box to fill in center so less moss is needed. (You can also use crumbled paper or floral foam.) If using as a decoration, arrange **Poison Apples** on moss. If using as serving tray for candy apples, place dish on top of moss. If using with real apples, print **Poison Apple** labels from www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples on sticker paper, cut and place on apples.

Poison Apples

Materials:

- Fake apples, as many as you want (I purchased 5 at Dollar Tree)
- Spray adhesive or craft glue
- Glitter (I used ruby red but you can get creative...black, poison green or gold would all look magical!)
- 1/2 of a shirt box or protective work surface cover, if desired
- Clear Sealer, if desired (I recommend Krylon Glitter Blast)
- Felt (I used glittery green)
- Cardstock, if desired, for printing Leaf template available at www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples
- Template requires Internet connection and printer/ink
- Pinking shears or scissors
- Wire (just about any gage will do, I used 26. You can also use a paper clip)
- Wire cutters
- Glue gun with glue sticks
- Other items for costume accessory, if desired: basket, cheesecloth, checkered fabric, paper monarch

Directions:

1. Choose a work surface in a well-ventilated area. Cover 1/2 of apple with spray adhesive or craft glue. Hold the apple over the shirt box and sprinkle with glitter. Cover and sprinkle other 1/2 of apple, let dry. Repeat with all apples. Pour excess glitter from the box back into the container. I recommend coating apples after they have dried with a clear sealer so that they don't shed. I like Krylon Glitter Blast because it doesn't dull the sparkle.

2. Using pinking shears (or scissors), cut out leaves. If you'd like a template go to www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples and print Poison Apple Leaves on cardstock. Cut wires for each leaf with cutters approximately one half inch longer than length of leaf. Glue wire down the center of leaf with glue gun. Leave about 1/2 inch of wire sticking off the bottom of the leaf. Poke wires into the apples near the stems and arrange leaves.

3. Arrange apples in Poison Apple Crate or if using apples as costume accessory, arrange in basket with cheesecloth and checkered fabric. Use glue gun to attach paper monarch. If desired, use glue gun to keep Poison Apples in place.

Glittered Paper Crow

Materials:

- Artificial crow (can be purchased at craft stores, I bought mine at Dollar Tree)
- Craft glue
- Black glitter
- ½ shirt box, if desired
- Clear sealer (I recommend Krylon Glitter Blast)
- Heavy weight white paper such as construction or cardstock
- Glue gun
- 2 beads or buttons for eyes

Directions:

1. Coat beak, legs and feet with glue and cover with black glitter, I like to do this over ½ a shirt box because it makes it easy to pour excess glitter back in jar, let dry.
2. Seal, let dry.
3. Rip feather shapes out of white paper
4. Use glue gun to layer the feathers onto the bird
5. Attach eyes with glue gun

Paper Monarch

Materials:

- Cardstock, if desired, for printing Monarch Body and Monarch Detail templates available at www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples
- Templates require Internet connection and printer/ink
- Black heavy weight paper
- Orange (or another desired color) paper, solid or print (I used polka-dot)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue (I prefer a white, clear-drying glue stick)

Directions:

1. Print Monarch Body on black paper and Monarch Detail on orange paper from www.MindiLeatham.com/poisonapples -OR- print out Poison Apples Template Page 1, cut, trace and cut again. If you don't want the lines to show, print on the backs of papers.
2. Glue Monarch Details onto the black wings, leaving gaps between pieces for the black to show. Glue antennae onto the back of Monarch Body and curl around pencil.