

340 - What's Saving My Gift-Wrapping Life

Hi there! You're listening to The Lazy Genius Podcast! I'm Kendra Adachi, and I'm here to help you be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't! Today is episode 340 - What's Saving My Gift-Wrapping Life.

In this episode, I'm going to share ten things, and these things make gift wrapping easier, more enjoyable, more fun, and in some ways more meaningful than if I didn't have these things. So if you love wrapping, hate wrapping, or are somewhere in between, I think this list will offer some good help wherever you are. Before we get into the list but still in the spirit of holiday gifts, we have a fantastic email resource going out on Friday for free to anyone who wants it. You can sign up at thelazygeniuscollective.com/gifts, but it is a giving guide, not just a gift guide. I will have gift ideas that I have given and love and have loved for a long time, but more than that, it's a way to think about your gift-giving, planning and shopping and deciding and making the whole process easier. It's all my best tips and tricks and permission for a season that can feel pretty overwhelming. So if you'd like that email, the link is in the show notes, or you can go to thelazygeniuscollective.com/gifts.

Okay, let's get into what's saving my gift wrapping life.

Number one, I watch the entire Lord of the Rings trilogy while I'm wrapping gifts. I do wrap in multiple sessions which we'll get to, but when I wrap gifts, I always watch Lord of the Rings. It has been my personal tradition for maybe ten years, and I don't really watch those movies any other time of the year. You could do that with Harry Potter or your favorite Christmas movies. I do love the idea of watching some kind of trilogy or series because of bringing one story into the entire wrapping process. Now you might be like "Kendra, that trilogy is seventeen thousand hours long." You're correct. I mean, it's for sure ten. Am I wrapping gifts for ten hours across the board? Probably yeah. I have many kids, I have a big family, I get gifts for friends and teachers and such, and I wrap stocking stuffers with paper. I also take my time which we'll also get to, so it's not a speedy process by choice.

All that to say, I look forward to wrapping because I'm watching these movies I love with my whole heart. It's a whole experience and the best thing. Maybe you can take that idea and make it your own somehow. I hope you do!

Number two. I have all of my wrapping stuff together in one place. This is a no-brainer, but it also tripped me for the longest time. For years, I had ribbons and tags and stuff spread out amongst a few small containers and couldn't remember what was where. I also would only have one pair of scissors and one container of tape, and sometimes I'd leave it with the gift wrapping stuff but then I'd need them to open a package in the kitchen. Or I'd keep them in the kitchen like I do throughout the year but get frustrated after I got settled in that I had everything but the very essential tools of scissors and tape! Now I have one large shallow container that lives under my bed that has literally all of my wrapping stuff except for paper and bags. Ribbons, tags, little fun decorations, and a pair of scissors and plenty of tape that always stay in that

container. The paper and bags are in a hall closet that I walk past when I get the under-the-bed box, so I don't mind that those are in two different places at the time being. I also like that the paper and bags are visible which they wouldn't be if they were under my bed. All that to say, it saves my life to have everything but paper and bags in one place, including a pair of scissors and tape that are just for wrapping gifts.

P.S. Someone in the Lazy Genius Facebook group named Sherri Fisher Moore shared that she uses a hanging garment bag to store all of her wrapping paper. Great idea. I've also seen the idea of putting the tiny things in a hanging shoe bag that goes over a closet door. You don't have to store either of those hanging from a closet door, but you could temporarily during the holiday season, or you can just roll them up for easier storage. That's like a bonus Lazy Genius of the week idea right there.

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Number three. I use the same color palette ish every single year. This is one of the things where I decided once a long time ago that our Christmas color palette would be cream, navy, forest green, and red. All my decorations, which are minimal, are that color palette, and so is my wrapping stuff. So any time I need wrapping paper or ribbon or anything, it doesn't matter what the vibe or pattern is. In fact, I like to mix up the vibes and patterns. The only important thing is that they're in the same color family, or they go with that color family. So using accents of white or brown from kraft paper or even a fun pop of orange or gold will work because those colors go with the baseline palette of cream, navy, forest green, and red. It makes choosing wrapping paper so much easier because even stuff that's leftover still works with whatever I get this year. I don't even have to check. It's pretty great.

Number four. Vintage ribbons or even just fabric ribbons. I will never shame those old school gift bows that looks like smushed stars and come sixty to a bag. I will also never shame the spools of plastic ribbon that you can curl with the side of your scissors. Plastic ribbons are fantastic, and they should be used by anyone who wants to. Because of how I want my gifts to look and feel and because of how I want to feel when I wrap them, I go with fabric ribbons. I love fabric ribbons so much, and I especially love tiny spools of vintage ribbon I might stumble upon a vintage store or at Goodwill. I keep an eye out in stores like HomeGoods and BigLots and Tuesday Morning for spools of fabric ribbon. Wide, narrow, velvet, thick ribbed cotton... I love them all. I think fabric ribbons save my wrapping life because they don't need much except to exist, and they make something I'm already doing feel a little extra special. Which matters to me. Vintage or fabric ribbons for the win.

Number five. I invest in high quality wrapping paper. By high quality, I don't mean expensive. But I like a thick paper. I love paper with the grid on the back for easier cutting. I don't love the really thin paper that I used to get at the dollar store. That's good paper for stocking stuffers because I do wrap those, but for larger regular gifts, I invest in good wrapping paper. It makes the whole experience feel better and special and less annoying because the paper isn't tearing every two seconds. If you're having trouble telling when the paper is wrapped in plastic wrap, I tend to find

that matte papers are higher quality than shiny ones. And I personally prefer matte paper anyway, so I tend to choose that regardless.

I would never presume to know your financial situation and will not flippantly suggest that it's not that much more and that you can get it. If you've been here for even one episode, you know that's not what we do here. I will, however, encourage you to think about the difference in cost between paper that's more flimsy and perhaps annoying and paper that's a little sturdier. Chances are the quality roll is maybe three bucks more than the other rolls. Maybe five. And when you think about how many gifts you can wrap with one roll of paper, the price per gift you're paying in ease and enjoyment might totally be worth the difference in cost. Sometimes we buy the cheapest thing because we just always buy the cheapest thing, but if you're doing that without consideration of why and how a slightly more expensive, higher quality item might improve your entire experience, I invite you to shift that thinking and honestly just consider what matters more.

P.S. My favorite places to get wrapping paper are the aforementioned Home Goods and Tuesday Morning. Sometimes Target but not unless I'm in a bind and have to combine errands.

Number six. I like to add something natural to most wrapped gifts, and that makes it feel super thoughtful, special, and beautiful without much effort or without needing to know all kinds of wrapping techniques.

If you wrap a box in a solid colored paper, especially matte paper, tie it up with fabric ribbon, and then stick a little branch of rosemary or a tiny stick from your yard or a piece of evergreen from the tree outside, that gift will look and feel so special, cozy, and required no crafting or serious skills from you. Literally just tuck the branch under the knot of the ribbon, secure it with a little tape, and be done. I don't do this for my kids' gifts by the way. They don't care about sticks or nature. But if I'm wrapping something for my mom or mother-in-law or sister or honestly anyone except my kids, I love to think about adding something natural. Fabric ribbon already does that because it's like made of cotton or burlap or something woven that feels like it comes from the earth and not from a machine. That might not be the aesthetic or priority you're going for, but it is for me. An easy way I can make my gifts feel special and have fun wrapping them without working too hard is always a win.

Number seven. I do all the wrapping myself, including for my in-laws, and I chose a long time ago not to resent that. I love wrapping gifts, and I'm in my own little Lord of the Rings world! I'm fine! But for a couple of years, even though I loved it and even though I was having fun while doing it, I still resented Kaz for not helping me. He's smart and he knows me. He knew I was having fun, and even when he would ask if he could help, I would tell him no. Why would he keep asking? But I still held on to the resentment that I was the one doing all of it. I've let that go. I'm not actually resentful of that. It was misplaced resentment. It came from feeling frustrated that I did everything for the holidays without being thanked. If you remember from the division of labor episode a couple of weeks ago, sometimes you just want to be thanked! I love being the one in charge of the holidays. Really and truly. I love it, I'm good at it, and we have a great time

in December. But that doesn't give me free license for resentment. If I want to be thanked, I can ask my husband to acknowledge that I did it all and say thank you. I honestly just wanted it to be noticed. And now I let the resentment go. Wrapping gifts is so much better without resentment, y'all.

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The eighth thing that always saves my gift-wrapping life is that I wrap in multiple sessions. I don't do it all at once because I cannot finish it all at once. Why even try? Why not plan maybe three evenings where I take my time, give myself low expectations and plenty of space, and just enjoy myself? If you hate gift-wrapping, chances are good that you just power through and try and get it all done at once. I totally get that, and I'm not telling you to stop doing that. If it's working for you, keep doing it! I'm just offering the thought that maybe slowing down and expecting to wrap in a couple of sessions is your new baseline, not an indication that you can't move fast enough or that you're lazy or whatever.

Also wrapping all your gifts at once could be painful! That leads me to number nine.

Number nine is to stand up. Wrap standing up! I mean, wrap however you want, but I learned years ago that wrapping standing up is so much better for my back. I clear off the kitchen table, move all the chairs out of the way, put some of the wrapping stuff on those chairs, and wrap. It does not hurt as much to wrap standing up. The other thing that saves my life about standing up is that I don't have to get up and down to reach that gift that's further away or if I need another roll of paper or whatever reason. When I would wrap sitting down, I would get so annoyed at having to stand up. Now I just stay standing and get what I need easily without resenting my joints or the mere idea of movement at all. Standing up saves my gift-wrapping life.

And finally number ten. I take my time. I mentioned this already, but it bears repeating. I take my time. I don't rush through it. I don't worry about getting everything done at once. I don't get mad when I run out of steam sooner than I planned. I like taking my time. Again, I watch the entire Lord of the Rings trilogy while I'm wrapping! It takes a little while! And I like it that way.

If you wish you could take your time but are realizing you can't because you usually don't have your gifts until closer to the holiday and literally don't have a lot of time, that's okay. Everyone can make different decisions, and you can keep whatever is working for you. If waiting or feeling rushed isn't working for you, consider if you can get most of your gift shopping done a little earlier. Back it up a bit. Start brainstorming gift ideas. Talk to family members now about what y'all are doing this year. Start small, and be kind to yourself if how you wrap and when you wrap and how you feel about it is in process. Most things are.

And those are ten things saving my gift-wrapping life.

Before we go, let's celebrate the Lazy Genius of the Week! This week it's Amber Anastasi, and I am obsessed with this idea that's very on theme with this episode. Amber writes, "Every

December we would put the tree up and it would look sad and bare underneath. Last year, I was organizing a closet and decided to put all the old games, toys, and puzzles under the tree. It looks way more festive and the kids spend the month of December revisiting old favorites or bringing me things that can be donated. It encourages us to appreciate what we have, and helps us make sure that what we own is still working for our family. Thanks for all you do. Love your show.” Well, Amber, I think you made a majority of these listeners moan in happiness, and there will be a lot of games and puzzles under trees this year. What a beautiful idea. Thank you so much for sharing it with us, and congratulations on being the Lazy Genius of the Week!

Okay, y’all that’s it for today! Don’t forget to sign up for that giving guide email that’ll go out on Friday of this week, on November 17th. If you resonated with any of the energy from this episode, of feeling permission and ease in tight spaces, that email will help you feel that way again but by a factor of like 25. There will be so much goodness in that email, so go to thelazygeniuscollective.com/gifts to sign up. And also a quick reminder that you have three more days to order your Lazy Genius sticker pack from our little sticker popup that we’re doing! Preorders close for those on Wednesday, November 15th, so head to thelazygeniuscollective.com/stickers to order your sticker pack! These stickers are too much. The most fun, and I hope you love them. Thanks for listening, and until next time, be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don’t. I’m Kendra, and I’ll see you next week!