

How to Decorate Your Bookshelf

Need something extra special to spruce up your 2nd grader's room or study space? Here's the perfect activity for you and your child to do together: personalize a bookcase or set of shelves! Using a can of spray paint for the base color and a metallic shade for the details, you and your child can give an old set of shelves a second life by making it over into a unique and personalized piece! As she paints her chosen designs on the shelves, your child will exercise her creativity, explore her artistic side, develop her fine motor skills—and learn about the value and fun in recycling, too!

What You Need:

- Old bookcase or set of shelves (plastic or wooden)
- Spray paint
- Acrylic craft paint in a metallic color
- Paint brush
- Scrap paper
- Newspaper

What You Do:

1. To limit your child's exposure to harmful paint fumes, this first step is for you. Following the instructions on the spray can, apply a coat of paint to the bookcase or shelves.
2. While the paint dries, have your child plan out the designs that she will paint on the shelf, using the scrap paper to record her ideas. Possible designs include swirls, stars, or favorite animals such as the snakes, rats, and lizards on the shelves pictured. What special interests does your child have?
3. Once the base paint is dry and your child is finished planning out her designs, help your child paint her chosen designs onto the shelves. Remember, the designs don't have to be perfect—this is a time to encourage self expression.
4. Let the finished shelves dry completely, approximately 24 hours.

Once your shelves are dry, find a good spot for them and use them to store favorite books or games, or as a display shelf for favorite possessions.

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