

LET IT SNOW!

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Who can forget waking up last January and looking out at a scene that resembled the magical land of Narnia, with icicles hanging at every turn and roads hidden under drifts of snow. Gardens, parks and open spaces then quickly turned into a funfair as grown-ups and children alike, sculpted polar bears, cats, dogs and even Doctor Who's tardis! If like most families you captured this winter wonderland with a camera, why not use a selection of these images to inspire your gift giving over the festive season. What's more, it's a great way make some original cards or presents and to re-capture memories of a very special time. So as they say, 'Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow'.

Getting Started:

Decide which images you wish to use. You could sit down together as a family to do this and either print out a series of thumbnail (small) pictures or simply make a digital slide show and choose the best shots. Aim to select photos that are perfectly focused and have a good composition.



Did You Know?

The worst cold spells in Britain occurred between 1550 and 1750. This was known as the Little Ice Age.

The first recorded Frost Fair was held on the frozen river Thames in London in 1608. It had tents, sideshows, food stalls and even included ice bowling!

The last Frost Fair was held in the winter of 1814. It began on 1 February and lasted just four days. An elephant was led across the river below Blackfriars Bridge.

Christmas Cards

Print your very own Christmas cards that feature your snowy photos. Several high street stationers sell blank greetings cards and envelopes designed for printing on either inkjet or laser printers. Make sure you buy the correct product for your type of printer. Always set the print quality to 'high' to get the best results and do a test print first. You can print your images just as they are, or you can use photo-editing software on your computer to add borders, text and other effects. If you don't want to print the cards yourself, upload your images to an on-line company and they will print them for you – always check prices and quantities before you proceed.

Another idea is to alter a printed image using traditional art media. Try printing an image on a glossy blank postcard and then use sandpaper to add texture, add lines with gel pens or apply watercolour paints; young children will particularly enjoy this activity. Finally, glue your postcard to a blank greetings card or send as it is through the post to friends.

Crafty Tips:

- Always make sure you save a copy of an original image if you are going to edit a photo.
- Print out lots of Christmas cards and have a tabletop sale to raise money for your favourite charity.

Oh the weather outside is frightful,
But the fire is so delightful,
And since we've no place to go,
Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!

Lyrics by Sammy Cahn & Jule Styne, 1945

Decorating Gifts

You can use your photos to transfer images to almost any surface using specialist digital papers, some of which can be purchased as single sheets. Iron your winter snapshots onto tea towels and send them to family and friends overseas for a truly personal gift. Alternatively, Grandparents would love to drink out of mugs decorated with their grandchildren playing alongside a snowman. For some ideas try visiting Crafty Computer Paper: www.craftycomputerpaper.co.uk a website that specialises in digital transfer papers for both inkjet and laser printers. The site has lots of project ideas for you to try, video demonstrations and a gallery of photos sent in by customers of items they have made. Here are a few ideas taken from the site of what you can do with digital transfer papers and fabrics:

- Water-slide decal paper – place the printed paper into water and slide the paper onto the surface of soap, candles, plastic...
- Dry rub decal paper - this paper is great for transferring images onto porous surfaces like paper, card and wood.
- Iron-on heat transfer papers – can be used on both natural and synthetic fabrics.
- Fabrics to print on – feed A-4 sized sheets of linen, organza, cotton lawn, denim and raw silk through your printer. Use your prints to create quilts, cushion covers, clothes, bags and anything else that you can think of. Fabrics are washable.