

# Handicraft

## Introduction

A **handicraft**, sometimes more precisely expressed as **artisanal handicraft**, is any of a wide variety of types of work where useful and decorative objects are made completely by hand or by using only simple tools. It is a traditional main sector of [craft](#), and applies to a wide range of creative and design activities that are related to making things with one's hands and skill, including work with textiles, moldable and rigid materials, paper, plant fibers, etc. Usually the term is applied to traditional techniques of creating items (whether for personal use or as products) that are both practical and aesthetic.



Handicrafting has its roots in the [rural crafts](#)—the material-goods necessities—of ancient civilizations, and many specific crafts have been practiced for centuries, while others are modern inventions, or popularizations of crafts which were originally practiced in a limited geographic area.

Many handicrafters use natural, even entirely indigenous, materials while others may prefer modern, non-traditional materials, and even [upcycle](#) industrial materials. The individual [artisanship](#) of a handcrafted item is the paramount criterion; those made by [mass production](#) or machines are not handicraft goods.

Like [folk art](#), handicraft output often has cultural and/or religious significance, and increasingly may have a political message as well, as in [craftivism](#). Many crafts become very popular for brief periods of time (a few months, or a few years), spreading rapidly among the crafting population

