

# Shoe box packaging ideas

(from various web sites)

A small shoebox can have a big impact. What goes into the box is fun, but what comes out of it is eternal. Be a part of changing children's lives all over the world in Jesus' Name through the power of a simple gift with Operation Christmas Child.

Keep in mind that with many of these items, even the more practical ones, you can get as creative as you'd like. You could decorate a store-bought gift, like ordinary flip-flops. Or you could make some of the items yourself, like a doll or an apron, for instance (there are lots of ideas on online). **Just don't get stressed about what to put in your boxes**; pack with love, and know that this shoebox will be huge blessing for a child who may have never even received a gift!

## Toys:

Include items that children will immediately embrace such as dolls, toy cars, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, balls, toys that light up and make noise (with extra batteries), etc.

## School Supplies:

Pens, pencils and sharpeners, crayons, markers, notebooks, paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books, etc.

## Hygiene Items (non-liquid):

Toothbrushes, bar soap, combs, washcloths, etc.

## Accessories:

T-shirts, socks, hats, sunglasses, hair clips, jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries), etc.

**A personal note** (see section below with ideas for personal notes)

## Do not Include:

The shoeboxes must be shipped world wide and subject to various customs regulations. Therefore, please do not include the following:

Used or candy; toothpaste; damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; seeds; chocolate or food; liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans.

## Personal Note Ideas: (from [FaithfulProvisions.com](http://FaithfulProvisions.com))

Have you thought about writing letters for your Operation Christmas Child shoebox? It makes the shoebox so much more personal. Plus, if you include a picture of your family with your mailing address, you may get a note back from the child who receives your box!

A Lithuanian girl got a picture in her box and asked who the people were. When they told her it was the people who sent her gift, she kissed it. ~story from Operation Christmas Child

This makes a great project for children to do. Writing a simple note helps them understand as well that a real person—a child who might live in a much different place but who is still very much like them—is going to receive this box. It makes it more personal on both sides—for the one giving as well as the one receiving.

TIP: Tape your note and picture onto the underside of the shoebox lid!

Use a colorful piece of paper, a postcard from your city, or the first page of a tablet that you include in the box for your letter. Encourage your child's letter writing with these tips:

- Introduce yourself by telling them your name and age.
- Write about how you had fun packing the box.
- Tell the child that you hope he/she will enjoy the gifts.
- Draw the outline of your state with a star showing where you live.
- Be sure to write clearly, but don't worry about trying to write in another language. There are usually translators available at the box openings who will be able to interpret the letter you write.
- Share a little about yourself. Your favorite things to do, favorite foods to eat, and games you like to play.
- Remember, smiley faces are universal, so draw some on your letter!

You can also download a coloring page from Operation Christmas Child <http://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/promotional-resources-print-art/>. This is a great activity to do with your kids so they can learn more about this ministry.