

Think Outside the Trash Can: Conversation Starter Tin

by Alissa Trowbridge

The last time I went to Starbucks, I purchased a small tin of peppermint gum. The gum itself was great, but it was the little tin that really caught my attention.

I admit my husband thought there was nothing I could do with such a small tin. At just 3 1/4 inches high and 3/4 of an inch wide, it's pretty small. However, I thought it would be a darling conversation starter to sit out at my next gathering. This would also be perfect to get your family talking at the dinner table, to pass the time on a long car trip, or at a tea party for your little girl and her friends. If you can't find this particular tin, try the band-aid tin box by Provo Craft. It's a bit bigger than my version and has a handle on the top, but it's ready to alter, so you can skip my first two steps.

Here's what my tin looked like before I altered it.



1. Because the tin was multicolored, I thought it best to prime first so the colors didn't show through the paper. I sanded the tin using a coarse grit sandpaper followed by a piece of fine grit. I then used a damp rag to make sure the paint bits were removed for the smoothest finish possible.

2. Next, I covered my tin with three thin coats of gesso, allowing each coat to dry before applying the next. Gesso is a fabulous primer I highly recommend for covering altered items that have printing or colors you don't want to show through. Use one that says it'll work on metal or it'll flake or peel on this project. I used Alexander Art Artist Quality White Gesso, which I found in the oil paint aisle at my local craft store. Here's what my tin looked like after sanding and priming.

3. I traced the tin shape on patterned papers leftover from April's Solo Kit and attached them with Mod Podge. I applied a very thin coat to the tin itself and then to the back of my paper. This will eliminate any chance of bubbling and make sure the paper is attached securely since it'll be handled a lot. After allowing to dry, I added embellishments and rub-ons.



4. Finally, I typed ten conversation starters on regular computer paper, trimmed them down, and folded each slip so it would fit in the tin.?



I love how this project turned out. It was a great way to use up scraps from my April kit and repurpose at the same time. I can't wait to put it out at my next party!