



National Candle Association

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CANDLE HOLDERS: COMBINING DECORATIVE FLAIR WITH SAFETY

No matter what your candle preference – tapers, pillars, votives, or a grouping of various candles – make sure every candle is placed in or on a fire-resistant candle holder.

Although candle holders are a basic must-have for safety, they're also a great way to add additional decorative flair to your candle arrangements. Here are some of our favorite ideas for making the most of your candle holders.

Candlesticks. Candlesticks allow tapers to stand securely upright, and are most often used for the dining table or on the mantle. Grandma's candlesticks were probably ho-hum holders that dutifully held a taper but didn't make much of a decorating statement.

Today's candlesticks are anything but ho-hum. They come in all shapes, sizes, heights and materials, and in a multitude of designs that range from ultra-contemporary to country to traditional. Silver, pewter and crystal remain popular, but brass, chunky glass, colorful ceramics and intricate porcelain holders are increasingly grabbing the limelight.

In addition, candlesticks are no longer being relegated to the table or mantle. Try grouping several same-color tapers in candleholders of varying heights and visual weight, but made from the same material, on a coffee table or entry-hall chest for uncommon stylishness.

Always make sure tapers fit snugly into candlesticks and that they will stand perfectly vertical, without any hint of a wobble. A bit of florist or modeling clay can sometimes be used to secure a slightly wobbling candle.

Votive Holders. Votives liquefy when burned, and a votive cup or holder is designed to contain all the liquefied wax and keep it away from anything flammable. Votive holders can be made of any fire-resistant material, but are most often made from glass to allow the candlelight to shine through. Colored glass votive holders, often adorned with mosaics or faux jewels, add a colorful sparkle to any room or outdoor setting. Use a line of votives to add big drama to a table or mantle or outdoor pathway. Tealights can always be placed in votive holders.

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Pillar Plates are a subtle way to enjoy the beauty of the pillar candles safely. These flat plates are typically made of stone, metal or ceramic. Rectangular or square stone or ceramic pillar plates in deep earth shades are perfect for creating candle-scapes with an Asian or minimalist flare. Round pillar plates in brass or silver create an elegant setting for more traditional decors; chargers are especially effective as pillar plates if you prefer a rim to your arrangements. Heavy glass pillar plates are a popular way to place individual pillars within an overall arrangement, keeping the focus on the color and design of the candle. Pillar plate arrangements are most effective when they contain pillars of varying heights and shapes for visual interest. Leave at least three inches between each candle to ensure proper burning.

Candelabras can add a dramatic touch to any setting, such as a formal dining table, coffee table, mantel, a fireplace, or on a grand piano in Liberate style. Candelabras hold multiple candles in a single apparatus and can be made from a variety of materials including ceramic, metal and glass. Although most people automatically associate candelabras with tapers, there are also candelabras designed to hold mini-pillars, votives and ball candles.

Lanterns and Hurricanes are a great way to use candles in high traffic areas or in breezy areas of a home. A typical lantern or hurricane surrounds the candle with glass or metal to block the elements from coming into contact with the flame. The heat-resistant base -- often brass or pewter -- usually holds a specific type of candle (pillar, taper or votive), depending upon its design. Oversized clear glass hurricanes surrounding a large pillar lend an exceptionally dramatic look to a home when placed in pairs on a mantel, coffee table or entry hall table, and work well with traditional, Southwestern, French country or contemporary settings.

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