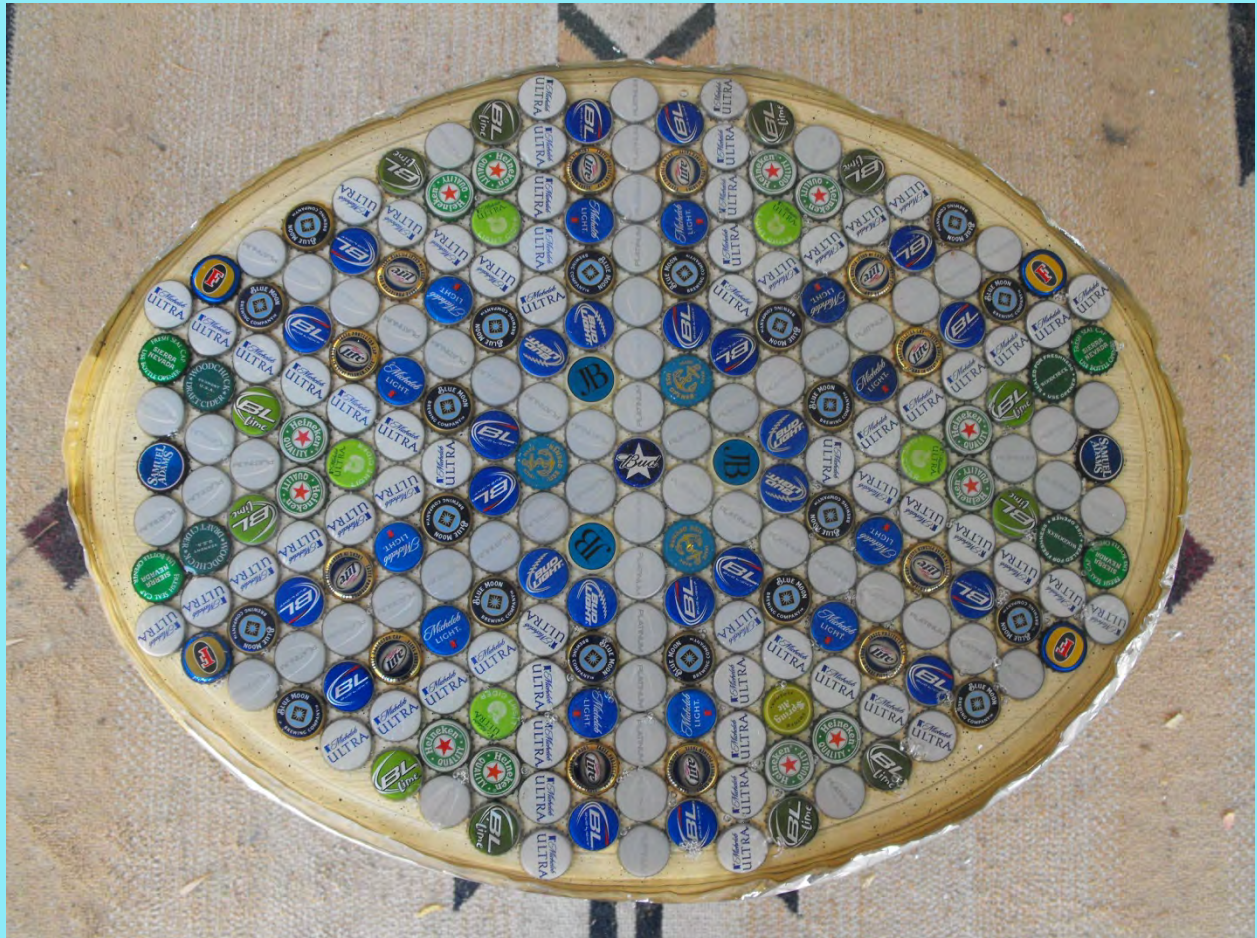


# How to Make and Sell Bottle Cap Tables

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By: Heather Weems



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# Introduction

If you are a college student who likes to drink beer and make money, but don't want to work a full time job, this manual is for you. I got started selling bottle cap tables about a year ago, and it has become a great way to make extra money. You can make several mistakes in this lengthy craft, but I promise to show you all the tricks I know to help you through this process. Then I will show you how you can make some money from the table (if you don't just want to keep it for yourself) when you are done. If I had a manual like this one when I started, I would have avoided several mistakes in the beginning and would have made more money.



# Chapter 1: Gathering Supplies



Figure 1: Image of supplies needed to decorate your table

This chapter will show you the supplies you will need and how to find them.



Figure 1: Supplies you need for your table



Figure 2: Supplies you need for your resin



## Supply List

- Table- You can use any size or shape you choose. The best places for you to find inexpensive tables are garage sales, and thrift stores such as Goodwill.
- Bottle caps- If you plan on making a design in your table, you will need several hundred caps before you begin. You should find a bar in town that serves lots of bottled beer and talk to the bartender about getting their bottle caps. Most are very friendly and willing to help you but, if they aren't, just find another bar. DO NOT try to get all of the caps by drinking the beers yourself. You won't be able to make the table for months that way.
- Pliers- You should use small pliers for this project. If you don't have them, you can find them at any hardware store.
- Storage bags- You can use any bags or bowls you choose. I suggest you use clear bags because it makes the sorting process much easier when you have lots of different kinds of caps.
- Adhesive- If you have any adhesive then you are set. If not, you should buy Gorilla glue, Super glue, or a hot glue gun for this project.
- Foil- You will need a good amount of foil so make sure you have close to a full roll when you start.
- Resin- You can find resin at your local Home Depot. I used Parks brand Super Glaze. You can also find it online at a much lower cost. I suggest you buy at least two boxes of the quart size because it does not go very far.
- Duct tape- You should have a full roll of duct tape when you start, just in case.
- Containers- Make sure you have two large containers that could hold about a gallon each. You should use containers you don't mind getting very messy. Also, do not use a container that you use for food.
- Stirring utensil- Any utensil you have that isn't for food will work for this.
- Paper Towels
- Sheet- It would be better to use a queen if you have one but anything larger than your table will work.
- Computer





## Chapter 2: Designing and Gluing your Table

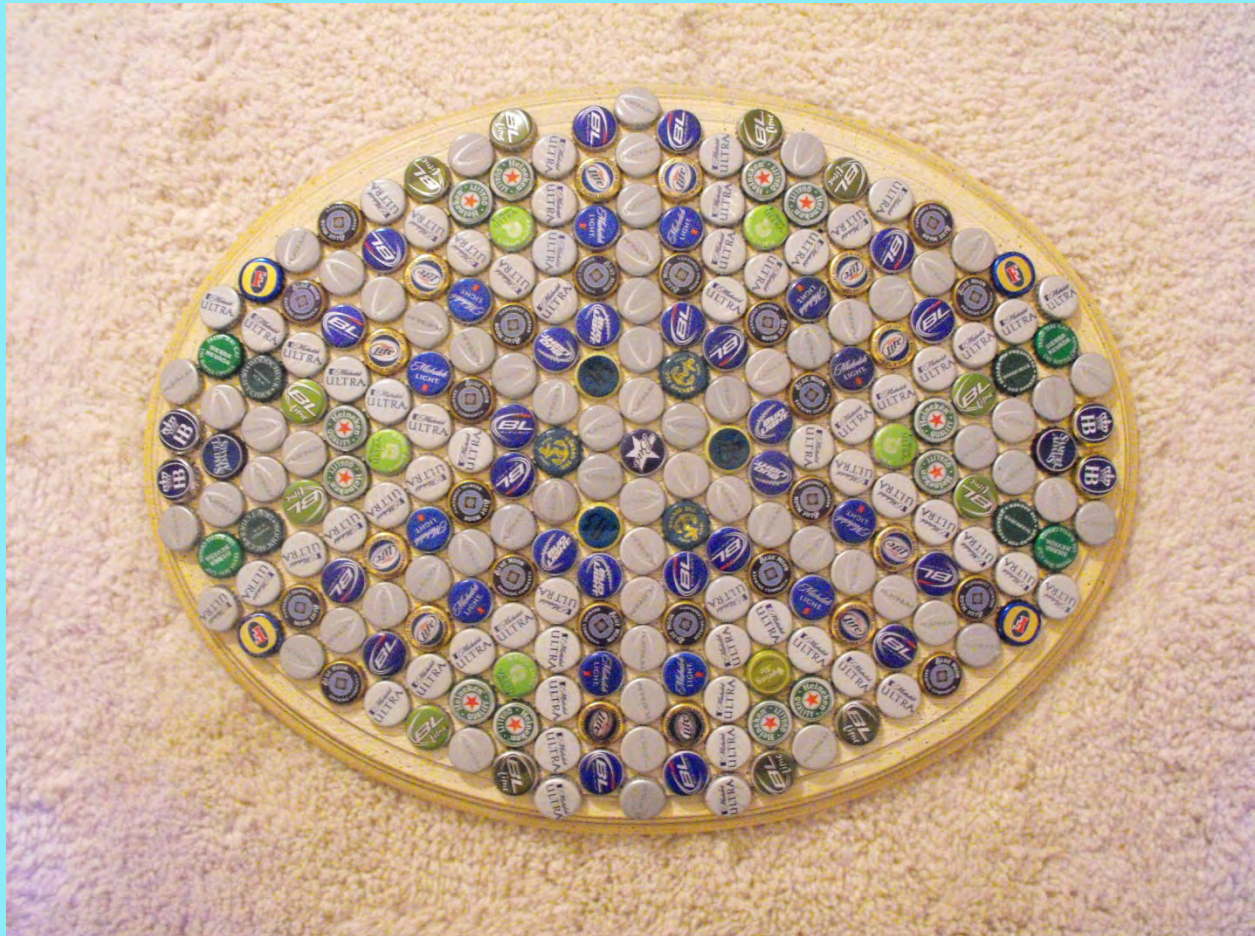


Figure 3: Completed table design

This chapter will show you how to organize your caps, design your table, and glue the caps down.



## Organizing Your Caps

1. Gather all of your caps you've collected.
2. Rinse any dirty caps.
3. Dump all the caps in a pile on the floor as seen in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Pile of caps for sorting

4. Sort the caps however you'd like. I sort the caps by color and brand.
  - This is a long part of the process so be patient. You can do it!



Figure 5: Caps after sorting



## Creating Your Design

1. Create a design. You should start playing with the caps if you don't already have a design in mind. Playing with patterns and color schemes is how I have created all of my tables. There are a few basic ways to start the design.
  - You can just throw a bunch of random caps together shown in Figure 6. This is by far the fastest way you can do this part.



Figure 6: Random cap design

- You can start with one cap in the center and add a different color to each layer around it like Figure 7.

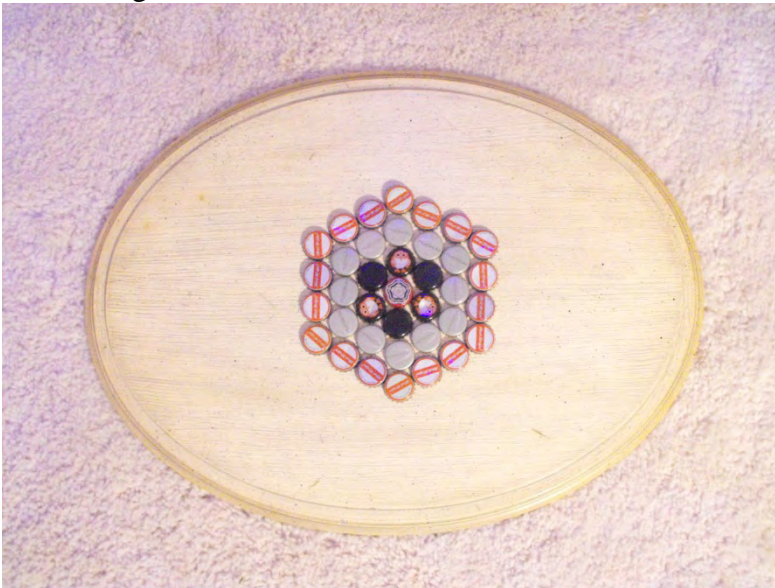


Figure 7: Flower cap design



- You can make a cap structure and fill it in with color like in Figure 8. If you want your caps to be close together, you have to use a hexagon pattern as shown in the previous examples. Otherwise, you will have blank spaces on your table.

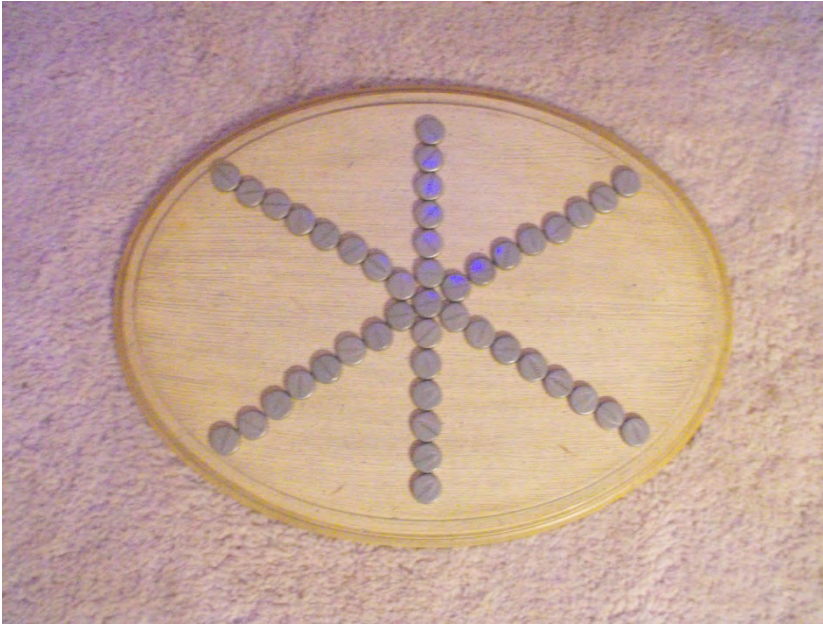


Figure 8: Basic structure for pattern

2. Once you figure out the pattern you want to use, start filling it in like in Figure 9.

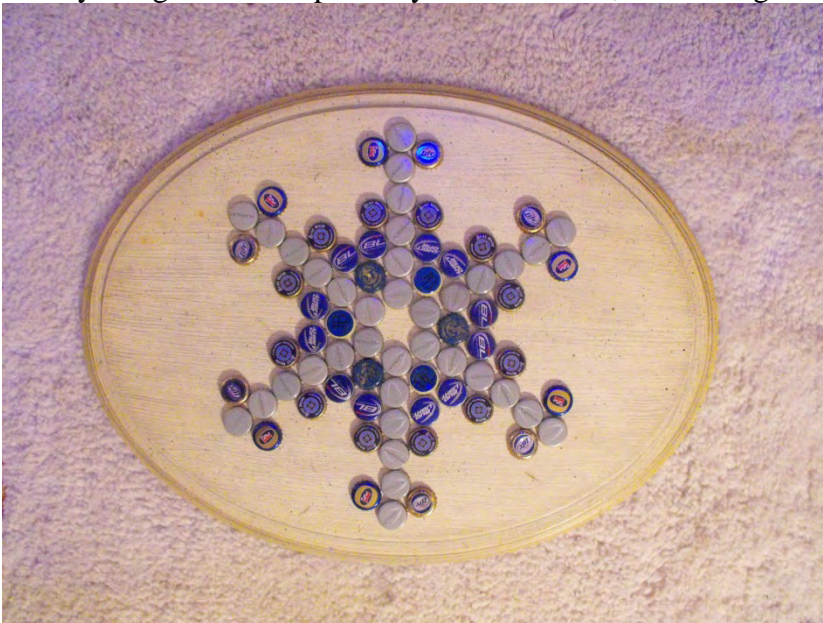


Figure 9: Partially filled in pattern

3. You can use the pliers to fix and slightly bent caps as you can see in Figure 10.



Figure 10: Using pliers to fix a bent cap

4. Continue filling in until you are satisfied.
  - Remember- You can get the whole basic shape on your table then start switching colors until you find the right combination. It doesn't have to be perfect the first time.

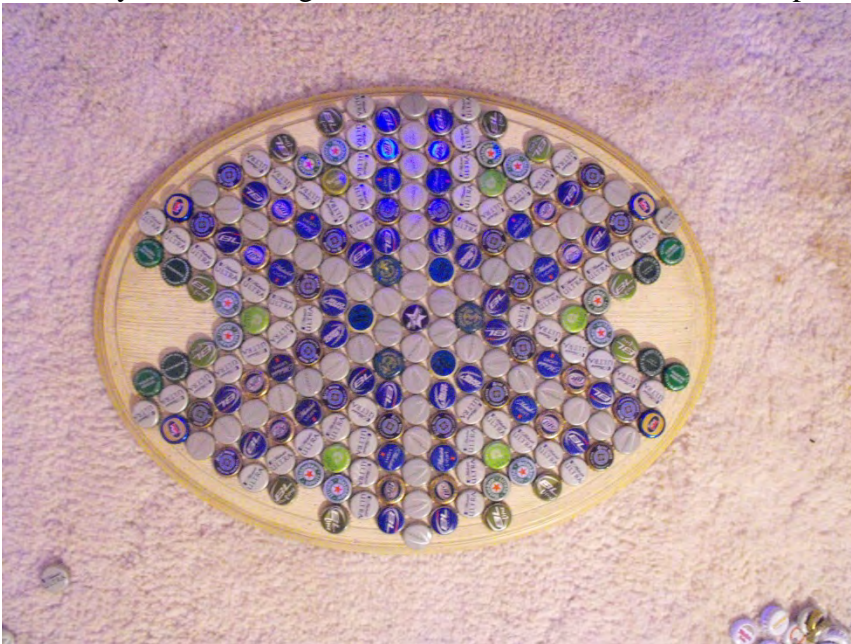


Figure 11: Table with almost complete design





Figure 12: Completed table design

## Gluing Your Caps

1. Center your caps so none are falling off the edge.
2. You should start with the center cap and glue the caps in the order shown in Figure 13.
  - Make sure you get a thin layer of glue around the base of each cap before securing it.
  - Place the caps as close as they will fit to the center cap.
  - Check that the vertical and horizontal lines in your pattern are straight as you glue. This will help ensure a cleaner design.
  - You can line the caps up by pattern also, if you'd like a cleaner design.  
Example: Rotate every Bud Light so they are facing the same direction or following the directions of the lines in your pattern.

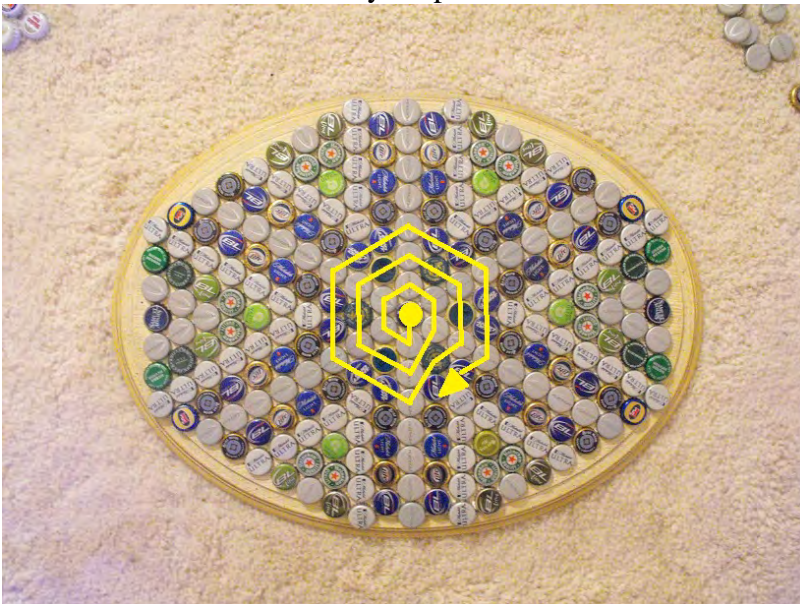


Figure 13: Pattern to follow when gluing



Figure 14: Gluing starting with the center cap

3. When you are done gluing, let your table sit for about an hour, or until the caps on the edge feel secure.



Figure 15: Table after gluing is complete



# Chapter 3: Putting a Resin Top on Your Table



Figure 16: Table with drying resin

In this chapter you will learn how to work with resin and cover your table with it.



## Preparing Your Table for Resin

You can skip this entire chapter if you are putting a glass top on your table.

1. Pull a length of foil long enough to wrap around the rim of your entire table.
2. Fold it in half.



Figure 17: Folded foil

3. Wrap the folded foil around the edge of your table.
  - Keep your foil as straight as possible, any creases or cracks will imprint in the resin.
4. Secure the foil with duct tape as shown in Figure 18.



Figure 18: Secured foil rim



5. Go around the base of the foil and duct tape the foil securely to the underside of the table. Make sure there is no space between the pieces of duct tape or resin can leak through.



Figure 19: Duct tape securing foil to bottom of table

## Preparing Your Resin

1. Take your two containers, stirring utensil, resin, table, and paper towels to a well-ventilated area.  
NOTE: You need to do this in a room with ventilation to avoid the strong fumes.
2. Put paper towels under your second container to avoid a mess.
3. Prepare the resin according to the package instructions. You should try to stir slowly to avoid bubbles from building up.



Figure 20: Resin stirred in first container





Figure 21: Resin stirred in second container

## Pouring the Resin and Finishing Your Table

### Pouring

1. Pour the resin onto the tabletop as shown in Figure 22.
  - The slower you pour the fewer bubbles you will end up having.



Figure 22: Pouring the resin on the table

2. Pull your stirring utensil across the surface of the table to pop any bubbles that may appear like I do in Figure 23.
3. Continue popping bubbles for about ten minutes or until you haven't seen one for a while.



Figure 23: Getting the bubbles out

### Finishing the Resin

1. Cover your table with a sheet if it is outside like I do in Figure 24. You should make sure nothing is touching the surface of the table or it will not come off after drying.



Figure 24: Table covered with sheet

2. Wait for twelve hours
3. Reveal your masterpiece the next day.



4. Remove the foil from the edges like in Figure 25.



Figure 25: Removing the foil from the table

5. Use your razor blade to remove any foil that sticks to the resin and to remove any bumps around the lip of the table like I do in figure 26.  
**CAUTION:** You should be careful while using the razor blade to avoid serious cuts.



Figure 26: Cutting the resin lip off the table



6. Enjoy your completed table.

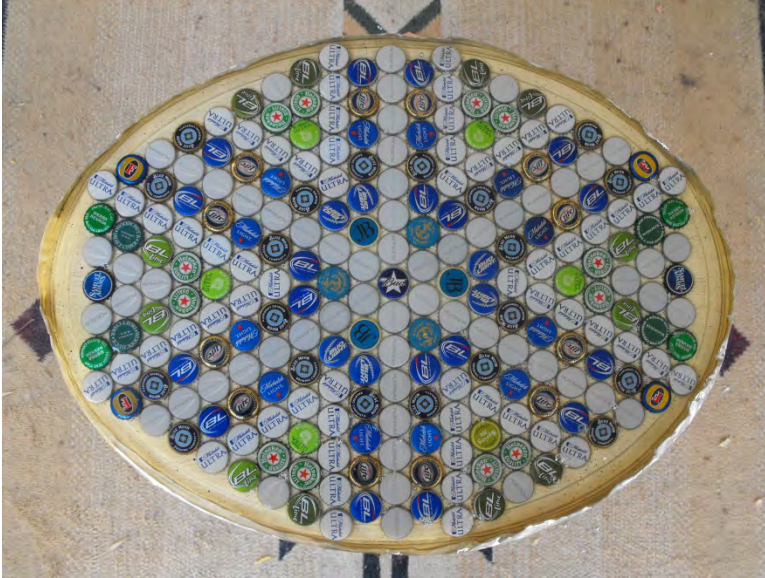


Figure 27: Completed table

## Chapter 4: Selling Your New Table



Figure 28: Table ready for sale

In this chapter you will learn different ways to sell your table.





## Pricing Your Table

You make the ultimate call for the price to charge but I will give you some steps to figure out a good range.

1. Add up the costs of everything you spent on the table. (Don't include the cost of beers you drank, that'd be silly.)
2. Estimate how much time you spent on the table.
3. Give yourself a decent hourly rate.
4. Include all in the total.

## Finding a Place to Sell Your Table

There are many different ways you could sell your table but these are the best I have used.

- Coffee Shop- You can talk to a coffee shop owner about displaying your work. Many local coffee shops will sell work for local artists for a commission.
- Craigslist- You can use this site to sell your table locally. You will need to be flexible on your price and make your asking price slightly higher to help with bargaining.
- Etsy- You would have to pay for an account with this site. This is a plus because you will be able charge more on this site since the site is considered high quality.

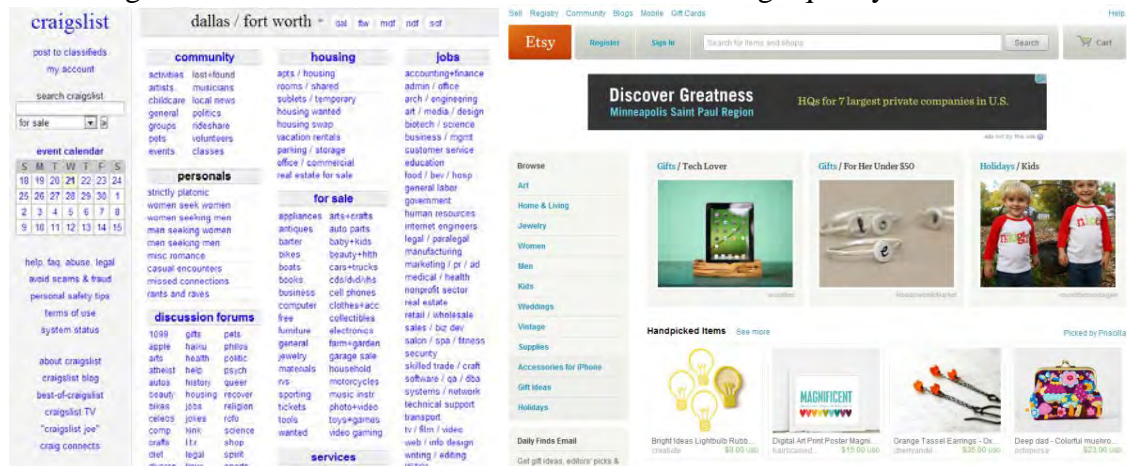


Figure 29: Image of Craigslist and Etsy sites

I hope this manual was helpful and good luck on your craft adventure!



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