

TIPS ON RECAPTURING THE SPIRIT OF THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CARD



One of the delights of the holiday season is receiving personalized greeting cards from family and friends, especially those who are far away or from whom you haven't heard from in a while.

There's no need for them to include a long letter explaining everything they've been up to for the past 12 months (though a few will include this). A few hand-written words or even just the printed message inside will do. The fact that they've taken the time to send you a beautiful card with a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Happy Chanukah, Happy New Year, or similar thought is all that needs to be said.

For this reason, holiday cards are one of the few types of correspondence we purposely set out on display during this time of year.

They are, however, a relatively recent invention, created by a man who was feeling somewhat overwhelmed by his social network.

The Knight Who Invented The Christmas Card

Sir Henry Cole was a prominent educator and philanthropist in early Victorian England. The founder of the famous Victoria and Albert museum, he moved in the highest social circles and therefore kept up a voluminous correspondence.

Around the holidays in 1843 Cole was facing a pile of unanswered Christmas letters. To not send a reply would have been considered the height of rudeness. Yet he simply did not have time to sit down and handwrite a response to each.¹

Then he had an idea.

Part of Cole's clever solution came from a change in the mail system. A few months earlier the British Postal Service had introduced the "Penny Post." Putting a one penny stamp on any postcard or letter would ensure its delivery anywhere in the country.

So Cole commissioned artist J.C. Horsley to design a simple card to send to his friends (shown at the top of this newsletter). It featured a three part Christmas scene, a place for Cole to handwrite the "To" and "From," and the wish of "A Merry Christmas And Happy New Year."

The cards went out. Cole's recipients thought it was a great idea. And the modern Christmas card was born.

Within a few decades his Christmas greeting idea caught on in the U.S. And today, according to Time, Americans send out 1.6 billion holiday cards each year, generating about \$2 billion in sales.²

Remembering Cole's Original Vision

The illustration on Cole's card features a center image of an extended family enjoying a holiday feast. But on either side of them are depictions of feeding and clothing the poor.

The idea that acts of charity were as much a part of Christmas as the family celebration was strong in the mid-1800s. (Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* also appeared in 1843.) But in our era it's in danger of being entirely elbowed out of the way by the commercial frenzy that's become the focus of the season.

So, in the spirit of Henry Cole's first Christmas card, as you exchange season's greetings, we invite you to join us in making special contributions to organizations that are helping the needy. We are so thankful to everyone who participated in our Toys for Tots drive; we collected two overflowing boxes of toys for children in need.

We're wishing you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year!

Source: Efficient Advisors

Golf Tip of the Week



Practice With a Paddle to Improve Your Swing

Holding your hands correctly when you swing helps give you the direction and power you need to move the ball. Some golfers often just pick up and play, without paying attention to where they place their hands on the club. For the best grip, your top hand should give you leverage while your bottom hand remains square. You can practice this grip by swapping your club for a paddle (like what's used in table tennis):

1. Hold the paddle in one hand with the paddle face perpendicular to the ground.
2. Keep your hand in the same grip position, which will reflect where you need your clubface during a swing. This should mimic having your bottom hand's position square to the clubface.
3. Practice swinging the paddle like you are going to hit a ball.
4. Repeat multiple times until you feel comfortable with the grip.

This technique should help square your bottom hand to the clubface at impact.

Tip adapted from Chris Johnston | Golf Tips Magazineⁱ

Recipe of the Week



Lamb Sausage with Confetti Couscous

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ pounds Brussels sprouts, trimmed and cut in half
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 pound sausage links, lamb, pork, or chicken
- 1 cup couscous, cooked
- 2 medium carrots, chopped finely
- 2 small sweet peppers, chopped finely
- ½ cup fresh mint, chopped

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 475°F, and coat Brussels sprouts with olive oil and ¼ teaspoon each of salt and pepper.
2. Place prepared Brussels sprouts on a greased, rimmed baking sheet, and put into oven. Roast for about 15 to 20 minutes, or until they tenderize and brown.
3. Cover another baking sheet with aluminum foil, and put the sausage links on the sheet while the Brussels sprouts cook. Place baking sheet with sausage in oven and cook for about 15 to 20 minutes, or until links reach 165°F.
4. Mix the finely chopped carrots, peppers, and fresh mint into the cooked couscous. Add 1 tablespoon olive oil and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Toss until thoroughly combined.
5. Top couscous with cooked sausage and serve with a side of Brussels sprouts.

Recipe adapted from Good Housekeepingⁱⁱ

Health Tip of the Week



Know the Signs of Osteomalacia

Osteomalacia is a condition that results in bone softening—which differs from bone thinning (osteoporosis). Most commonly developed from deep deficiencies in Vitamin D and calcium, other contributors like kidney or liver disorders can also cause osteomalacia. Older adults are often prone to developing this condition, which can lead to bone fractures.

What are the symptoms?

In the first stages of developing osteomalacia, you may experience no symptoms, even if an X-ray picks up on the condition. As it worsens, you may start feeling pain in your bones and muscles, most commonly in the following areas:

- Legs
- Lower back
- Hips
- Pelvis
- Ribs

The pain often worsens at night or whenever you put pressure on your bones. Eventually, you may end up having difficulty walking due to muscle weakness. Consult your doctor if you or a loved one may have symptoms.

Tips adapted from Mayo Clinicⁱⁱⁱ

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ⁱ <https://www.golftipsmag.com/instruction/faults-and-fixes/build-better-golf-grip/>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes/easy/a42181/lamb-sausage-with-confetti-couscous-recipe/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/osteomalacia/symptoms-causes/syc-20355514>