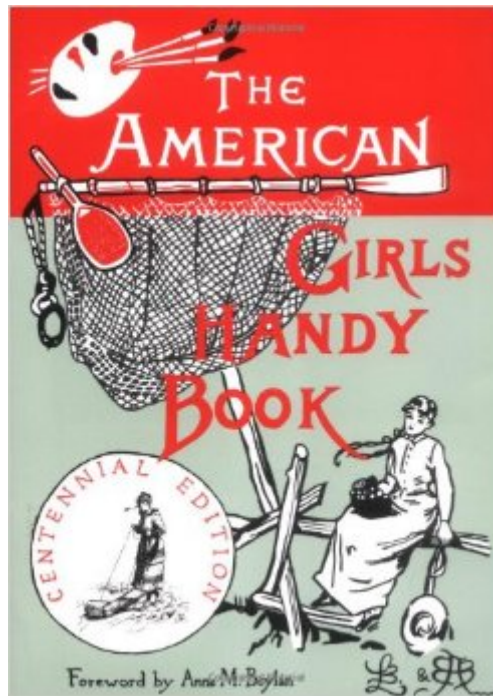


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# American Girls Handy Book: How To Amuse Yourself And Others (Nonpareil Books)



## Synopsis

If Tom Sawyer had been a girl, Aunt Polly would certainly have seen to it that she had a copy of this book and with a heartfelt blessing. Its a magical cornucopia of projects, devices, toys, gifts, dolls, recipes, decorations, perfumes, wax and clay modelling, oil and water-color painting and games, all with clear and practical directions for how to make and play them. Vintage Americana by the Beard sisters, two of the founders of Girl Scouting in the United States. "In the Beard sisters' version, 'the American girl' ranges in age from eight to eighteen. Healthy and spirited, she thinks nothing of taking a ten-mile 'romp' through woods and fields with a group of friends, and collects flowers and leaves for preservation or presentation to friends and relations. Above all, however, the Beards' girl is handy. She can make a hat rack, a screen, or a bookshelf; fashion a macrame hammock or a cornhusk doll; and draw, paint, sculpt, or decorate a room. The American Girls Handy Book, in short, by emphasizing what girls can do, presents a portrait of girlhood that is vigorous, active, and full of possibilities." - From the foreword by Anne M. Boylan

## Book Information

Series: Nonpareil Books (Book 46)

Paperback: 496 pages

Publisher: David R Godine; Reprint edition (September 1, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0879236663

ISBN-13: 978-0879236663

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 5.5 x 1.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (25 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #93,534 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in [Books > Teens > Hobbies & Games > Crafts & Hobbies](#) #10 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Crafts & Hobbies > Papercrafts, Stamping & Stenciling > Book Making & Binding](#) #25 in [Books > Teens > Hobbies & Games > Games & Activities](#)

## Customer Reviews

Originally published in 1887. Not politically correct! And lots of fun. My daughters and I can learn how to: make Easter egg dolls; weave a rope net for lawn tennis or a hammock; make May-baskets to hang on neighbors' and friends' doors; plan a picnic, burgoo, or corn-roast; make our own daytime "fireworks" for Independence Day; make leaf prints, cornhusk dolls, flower sprays and a

variety of seasonal garlands; host autumn nutting parties; understand the decorative language of flowers and heraldry; furnish a seaside cottage with beach-gathered items; and make fairy-dancer boxes and sachets to give as Christmas gifts. This book shows girls how to: be creative, curious, and crafty; make lots of fun out of very little material; notice nature and nurture their bodies, minds, and spirits. This book is a marvelous antidote to everything that irks me about the end of THIS century. A breath of fresh air.

Sure, it might be a little outdated, but it's a great glimpse into a past time. And today's kids would probably enjoy the chance to do some old-fashioned things described in this book, like making their own hammock or refurbishing some old furniture. The instructions for painting and drawing are basic and useful, and many of the ideas presented are things forgotten about and could stand resurrection. Lots of attention paid to girls getting exercise and being healthy, contrary to modern perceptions of Victorian women. Good for parents and teachers, and kids who are fond of history and open to old-fashioned ideas.

I used this book when a child. I used my mother's copy and never was bored during the long hot summer days before air conditioning in the 1950's. The partner book, *American Boy's Handybook* is also fun. Wow, what resources for parents and kids (especially for home schoolers and scout leaders)!

I received this book for Christmas and it is one of my favorite books. It has crafts and activities ranging from preserving flowers in wax to turning an old straw hat into a drawstring bag. Along with fun crafts and games, and even interior decorating, this book shows one how life was like back in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This book is over 100 years old, and the activities are still really fun and easy to do! I recommend this book to any girl, young or old!

For mothers who are not ashamed to have their young girls grow up knowing "feminine" arts, this book is a gem! There are some complicated projects (hammock making) which most of us would not have time or inclination to do, but others (corn husk dolls, botanic art, flower pressing, and home-made candy recipes) which any mother could help even very young daughters accomplish. In addition to the projects resource that it is, the book is a homey, nostalgic history of the things which used to occupy the time of young women preparing for homekeeping.

It has small print, and is really hard to get into. I thought it would give me lots of ideas to enjoy with my 12 year old granddaughter, but I didn't find anything applicable. Maybe if I were in the early 1900's I would have enjoyed it more. Maybe I'm missing something, but it's not for me...

My mother bought both for me as a child. I spent days going through the American Boys Handy Book but the girls version bored me to death. I was excited to learn of the amazing things boys got to do in older times but what girls were doing sounded a great deal like chores. The best bit with the American Boys Handy book is you get history and crafts together. There are many things you can still build, at least if you don't live in too urban an environment. If you do live in the city or want more female crafts than trapping, fishing and animal training, get a more modern craft book for your children. The American Girls doll company likely still makes interesting period crafts if you'd like to go the historical route. They did when my nieces were young.

A wonderful snapshot of another time. A treasury of folklore, crafts, and games that is charmingly illustrated with pen and ink. I only read this as an adult, but was already familiar with similar books from my parents' generation (late 30s, early 40s).

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