

Even if you are not all that religious, getting ready for Christmas is still one of the most elaborate and difficult tasks of the year. You need a Christmas tree, a nativity scene, outdoor and indoor Christmas lights, antique ornaments passed down in your family, and, of course, Christmas gifts. Then there is all the preparation involved in sending out holiday cards, preparing a fancy holiday meal, and getting your clothes ready for the trip to church. But to me, the most important part is the figure that, both literally and symbolically sits above everything else: the Christmas tree topper.

Most families have a Christmas tree topper that they use every year, but in my family it was different. One year, we would have a Christmas tree angel, while the next year we would use a Christmas star. A few years ago, we actually had a pretty outlandish Christmas tree topper. We decided to make something by hand all together, but we could not decide on a theme. My sister wanted to make a Christmas tree star, while my brother wanted to make one of the camels that the wise men were riding. I thought it would be nice to make a pumpkin (I was still in a Halloween mood) and my father and mother wanted to make a turkey and an angel respectively.

What we finally decided was to each make a part of it. What we ended up with was one of the most outlandish Christmas tree toppers ever made. It had different faces, shapes, and body parts sticking out at every angle imaginable. We loved it, but objectively speaking, it was just a little bit terrifying. One of my good friends brought her 5 year old son over and, when he saw it, he started to cry right away.

Of course, most people have much more conventional tastes than that! Usually, an angel Christmas ornament or a Christmas light star looks best at the top of a tree, but it is nice to be able to mix it up every now and again. Just make sure that, if your Christmas tree topper is a family heirloom, you are always careful about putting it up. It might seem like a good idea to let your youngest son be a big boy and climb up on the stepladder with the Christmas star but, when he drops it and breaks it, no one is going to be all that happy about it!