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Michael's® Unveils 2026 Creativity Trend Report, Revealing a Shift Towards Creative Living in the Analog Era

New data shows a pivot toward hands-on rituals and skill-building as consumers swap screen time for self-discovery and tangible connection

IRVING, Texas, March 10, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- [Michael's](#) is fueling the joy of creativity and celebration with the release of its annual [Creativity Trend Report](#), declaring 2026 the Year of Creative Living in the analog era. Launched in tandem with National Craft Month, the report identifies a cultural shift: consumers are no longer just crafting as a hobby, but are using tactile, analog activities to reclaim their time and identity in an automated world.



A New Perspective on Creativity

"In 2026, creativity is no longer just self-expression – it's self-definition," said Heather Bennett, President and Chief Customer Officer at Michael's. "In a world that feels increasingly automated, creativity has become a natural cornerstone of the cultural return to hands-on, offline living. Our customers are moving past the passive scroll and seeking out the friction of a physical hobby. They are reminding us that the most valuable things we own aren't just bought—they're the ones we've had a hand in creating."

As the leading destination for creating and celebrating in North America with nearly 1,400 stores, Michael's leveraged exclusive sales and search data, consumer surveys conducted within the last six months, and insights from in-house trend and design experts to identify the eight creative movements set to define the year ahead.

The Eight Crafting Trends Defining 2026:

- **Main Character Maintenance:** Consumers are curating their "personal lore" in physical form, turning junk journals, vision boards and personalized keepsakes into

tangible archives of identity. Junk journaling searches are up 63% year-over-year and vision board searches have increased 61%, signaling growing demand for hands-on memory keeping.

- **Touching Grass Crafts:** As digital fatigue rises, creativity is moving offline and outdoors, with portable projects becoming grounding daily rituals. Searches for analog hobbies such as knitting, crocheting, embroidery, journaling and painting have surged 136% over the past six months and yarn accessory sales grew 40% year-over-year.
- **Crafting Chemistry:** Project-centered gatherings are replacing passive scrolling, as shared making lowers social pressure and builds deeper connection. Craft Night searches are up 103% year-over-year, Girls Night Crafts searches have increased 242%, Paint Party Kit searches have climbed 329%, and guided craft kit sales increased 86% year-over-year.
- **Gilded Gifting:** Gifting is becoming more personal and story-driven, with consumers embracing handmade pieces that feel like modern heirlooms. Searches for mini loaf pans with lids are up 919% year-over-year, while bag charm searches have increased 912%, reflecting a shift toward meaningful, DIY gifts.
- **Skill Stacking:** Skill is emerging as a modern status symbol, with consumers investing in sewing, needlepoint, knitting and other craftsmanship-based hobbies. Needlepoint searches are up 251% year-over-year, sewing pattern searches have increased 152%, and overall, 72% of Michaels shoppers used creative projects to save money in the past year.
- **Wabi-Sabi Spaces:** Homes are embracing visible brushstrokes, texture and imperfection as handmade décor replaces showroom perfection. Searches for visible mending are up 144% year-over-year, while DIY home décor searches have increased 79%.
- **Confetti Culture:** Consumers are proving no milestone is too small. Party decoration searches are up 125% year-over-year and party banner searches have doubled, reflecting the rise of everyday celebration.
- **KitschCraft & Charms:** Driven by Gen Z and Gen Alpha, playful charm-covered accessories and resin trinkets are turning everyday items into expressive mood boards. Searches for Shrinky Dink kits are up 414% year-over-year, while resin charm searches have increased 115%.

Bringing the Trends to Life

Michaels is supporting the "Year of Creative Living" through new product offerings, new in-store experiences, and new in-store events throughout 2026. This includes expanded needlecraft assortments and fabric, which is now available in 90% of stores, as well as plans for new dedicated in-store Charm Bars and Patch Bars coming to stores later this year. Michaels will also host a series of trend-inspired in-store events starting this spring to give customers a place to experience these trends firsthand, learn new skills, and connect with their local creative community.

Read the [full 2026 Creativity Trend Report here](#), and shop the latest trends at [Michaels.com](#)

and Michaels.ca.

About The Michaels Companies, Inc.

At The Michaels Companies, Inc., our purpose is to fuel the joy of creativity and celebration. As the leading destination for creating and celebrating in North America, we operate over 1,300 stores in 49 states and Canada and online at [Michaels.com](https://www.michaels.com) and [Michaels.ca](https://www.michaels.ca). The Michaels Companies, Inc. also owns Artistree, a manufacturer of custom and specialty framing merchandise. Founded in 1973 and headquartered in Irving, Texas, Michaels is the best place for all things creative. For more information, please visit www.michaels.com.

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Crafting Chemistry

Creativity for Deeper Connections

As social media shifts from connection to competition, people are craving ways to be together that feel more real, deeper, and more meaningful. Crafting Chemistry explores the rise of shared creative experiences, where creating together builds real connections and shared joy.

A shared project changes the energy of a room. It gives hands something to do, breaks social pressure, and creates space for more natural conversation. Instead of just "catching up," people share with something tangible — and a memory tied to it. This isn't about elaborate hosting, it's about shared presence.

Guided Craft Kit
+86%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Pro Tip:
Make your next hangout hands-on. With expanded group craft kits, beginner-friendly embroidery and paint sets, and more, it's easier than ever to turn connection into creation.

Knitflix & Chill
Movie nights are no longer just about the film. They're about the cozy, shared experience of creating together. Knitflix & Chill is a new way to relax together without disappointing one another.

Group Craft Kit
+52%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Date Night Craft
+30%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Flow State > First Dates
It's not just about the first date. It's about the shared experience of creating together. Flow State > First Dates is a new way to relax together without disappointing one another.

Girls Night Crafts
+242%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Christmas Diamond Art
+67%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Polar Party Kit
+329%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Gilded Gifting

Gifts as Artifacts of a Relationship

In 2024, gifting is less about the object and more about the gift's origin. People crave gifts that feel like treasures, not commodities. They're looking for gifts that tell a story, that connect them to someone they care about. It's not just about the gift, it's about the story behind it.

Handmade Jewelry Sales
+50%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Grandmacore 2.0
+433%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Mini Loaves of Love
+919%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Natural Yarn Sales
+40%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Pro Tip:
Don't just give a gift. Give a story. People are seeking out gifts that tell a story, that connect them to someone they care about. It's not just about the gift, it's about the story behind it.

Skill Stacking

The new status symbol? Skill.

Skill Stacking captures the shift from casual crafting to craftsmanship. In a culture shaped by convenience and digital shortcuts, people are craving real skills and are investing in techniques that build competence and confidence. Crafting is shifting from a casual pastime to meaningful capability — sewing, knitting, woodworking, needlepoint, and heritage techniques are being rediscovered as modern life skills.

Needlepoint
+251%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Upcycling
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Sewing Patterns
+152%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Pro Tip:
Skill Stacking reflects a growing desire to understand how things are made — and to make them yourself. These projects aren't just hobbies; they're functional, practical, and deeply rewarding. They extend the life of beloved pieces, transform everyday materials into something personal, and build confidence through visible progress. In 2024, skill becomes a form of self-definition. Mastery is the fun and progress in the proof.

Crewed Embroidery
+204%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Needle Kits
+248%
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

Sew Bros + WIP Wednesday Warriors
People are seeking out guided projects that offer structure and support, especially for beginners.

SOURCE The Michaels Companies, Inc.