



Woo your valentine with help from Crabby

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Crabby Office Lady

If garden-variety Valentines are blighting the rose of your passion, if that rose is in petal free-fall, perhaps it's time for you to be a little more creative. Get help from Office and create your own hothouse valentine flowers.

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Come Valentine's Day, greeting card companies and chocolatiers can be assured that the economy — *their* economy — is fine and dandy, thank you. And of course, we, as investors in this industry are responsible for that. Not that there's anything wrong with a generic store-bought Valentine. I mean, should you not teach your children to take the easy road and have more time to watch reality TV?

 **NOTE** OK, so I'm being snotty; I can't help it. This holiday gets to me. On one hand, I find it irresistibly charming, the glorification of Cupid — that adorable, weapon-bearing cherub — slinging his arrows into the hearts of myopic soul mates. On the other hand, Crabby has been [married — and divorced — three times](#).

When it comes to matters of the heart, you should know by now that it's not how much you spend (although jewelry stores may take issue with this) but how you express yourself to your loved one (cue the violins ...). However, not all of us are arty-crafty people; some of us (me included) need a little help getting started. Hence, the many Office templates at your disposal.

"The secret to creativity is knowing how to hide your sources." (Albert Einstein)

I like that quote because my very first column was about [how to customize templates](#). I talked about how you could always pass off the final product as your own because if you use the templates the way they're meant to be used, then they *are* your own.

The templates on Office Online are among the most popular types of content — and with good reason. They are free, there are many of them, and if you can't find at least one that makes you sound sweeter than candy hearts you're not really trying.

We have a gazillion templates that you can use for this holiday that celebrates love in all its forms. Here are three of my favorites:

PLATO QUOTE VALENTINE	CONVERSATION HEARTS VALENTINE	WU TI QUOTE VALENTINE

All of these templates were created and submitted by one individual who I'm guessing has had a bit of experience with love ...

Community-submitted templates are like little valentines that customers send each other all year 'round. If you're impressed by these three, take a look at some [recently-submitted community templates](#).

But don't limit yourself and simply search for "valentines" on the site; you can take almost any template, customize it, and make it suit your purpose. For example, there are two candy-bar-wrapper templates — one designed for a wedding and one for a birthday — that can easily be transformed for Valentine's Day. I mean, how creative is that? Your personalized message on a 5 oz. chocolate bar! (And no, Milton Hershey didn't submit these; DrumFairy did).

THE WEDDING CANDY BAR WRAPPER LOOKS LIKE THIS: MY OWN WRAPPER FOR FOR MR. RIGHT #4



- [Candy bar wrapper \(wedding\)](#)
- [Candy bar wrapper \(birthday\)](#)

And let's not forget the kids, shall we? Valentine's Day arrives on the same date every year, Mom & Dad (or just Mom, or Mom & Mom, or Dad & Dad, or just Dad) so if I were you, I wouldn't wait until the 13th to start working with your kids on their class valentines. But even if you do, you're still going to be OK. Take a breath and download some of our do-it-yourself kids' valentines:

MAKE YOUR OWN VALENTINES FOR KIDS



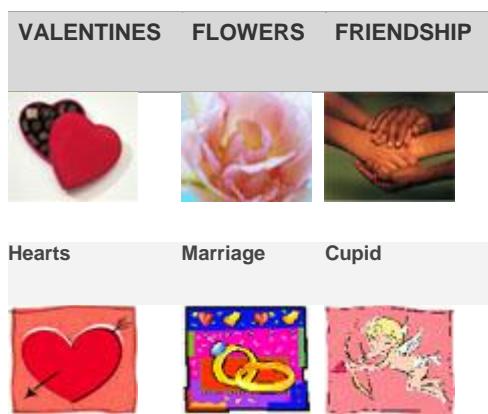
Some more of my favorite Valentine templates:

- [Sweetheart certificate](#) (I never knew there was such a thing; I wonder what I have to do to get one?)
- [Valentine's Day address labels](#) (for the Casanova)
- [I Love You card](#) (Whimsical and fresh. Like me, at my first wedding.)

So, go on — what're you waiting for? A personalized engraved invitation (which you can make yourself, you know)? Valentine's Day 2008 is just around the corner.

"Love of beauty is taste. The creation of beauty is art." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

All of the templates on the site were made with clip art you can find on the [Clip Art and Media Home page](#). With more than 150,000 pieces of clip art on the site, if you can't find *something* that you can use ... you're not really trying. Once you're on that page, you can use its handy-dandy **Search** box, and, by plugging in a variety of keywords, make your valentine the picture of success.



"The best place to find a helping hand is at the end of your own arm." (Swedish proverb)

Your love may be so powerful and all-consuming that you just can't settle down long enough to figure out how to customize those templates, or even how to search for the perfect piece of clip art. Perhaps you have much too much on your mind and in your heart to be bothered with such trivialities. However if you don't take at least a tiny amount of time to figure out how to create the perfect valentine, you will end up deciding whether to give your love Dora the Explorer or Looney Tunes. (Of course nothing says love like Pepé Le Pew, now does it? Speaking of which, there is a fine line between heavy wooing and stalking. Keep that in mind, won't you?)

Crabby is here for you dearie.

- [Templates help](#)
- [Make your own valentines for kids template instructions](#)
- [Clip art tips and articles](#)
- [Crabby makes the most of the Clip Art and Media site](#)

And finally, if love means never having to say you're sorry (ha!) and if love has inspired you to create the most fabulous template of all, why then [Submit a Template](#) and share how you feel with the world. (Be sure to check [Guidelines for creating templates](#).)

"The final mystery is oneself." (Oscar Wilde)

This is the day to make someone yours — the day to strike up something new, let someone know you love them, or keep the home fires burning (at home, please). And finally, it's a day to avoid that frantic last-minute dash to the grocery store for a valentine that's sure to say, "Hey! I'm boring, thoughtless, and I have no creativity or passion! Love me, why don't you!"

"Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs." — William Shakespeare

About the author

[Annik Stahl](#), the Crabby Office Lady columnist, takes all of your complaints, compliments, and knee-jerk reactions to heart. Therefore, she graciously asks that you let her know whether this column was useful to you — or not — by entering your feedback using the **Did this article help you?** feedback tool below. And remember: If you don't vote, you can't complain.

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