



Pakistan's vibrant truck art

This is what trucks in Pakistan look like – all of them! They are painted in bright colors, and decorated all over with metal cutouts, chains and other bits that jingle and chime, which has earned them their popular English title: jingle trucks! This kind of folk art is unique to Pakistan and is called truck art.

Trucks travel long distances carrying goods across the country. Truck drivers are away from their home and family for weeks and months at a time.



The drivers personalize the trucks with sceneries that remind them of home. Pictures of celebrities and politicians they admire are also painted on trucks.

Pakistan



Truck owners spend the equivalent of thousands of dollars decorating their trucks. Building and decorating a truck involves at least 13 crafts. The main frame is made by the welder (*lohar*), metalworker (*show wala*) and the *denter* (local word for a person who irons out dents); engine work is done by the mechanic (*mistri*) and the

electrician (*bijli wala*); the base color is given by the spray painter (*rang saaz*), and the calligrapher (*likhai wala*) writes poetry and other texts. Specialists of glasswork, metalwork and woodwork further adorn the vehicle – each with their own craft; *chammak patti wala* and the *plastic wala*, respectively, work with reflective tape and decorations made of plastic. Seats are made by the upholster (*poshish maker*) who also decorates the truck's interior with beadwork and other hangings.



Truck art was once thought to be garish, but has recently become very popular in Pakistan. The art form is spilling over into clothing, accessories, accent pieces for the home, and souvenirs!



You can learn more about Pakistani truck art and our truck art decorating activity [in our 2020 Newsletter!](#) Short videos are also available [here](#) (11m) and [here](#) (4m)!