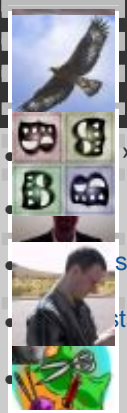


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# How to Make Paper - An Illustrated Step-by-Step Guide<sup>92</sup>

By Stacie Naczelnik

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## Design Your Own Paper & Recycle In A Fun Way

The method to make paper was developed in 105 A.D. by Ts'ai Lun. This paper was made from tree bark, rags, and hemp. In 610, the art of paper making reached Japan. In fact, you can still find some of the world's most beautiful paper coming out of Japan.

By 751, Chinese prisoners of war were in the area that is now Afghanistan. The Chinese prisoners began making paper--thus, spreading the methods to Baghdad Egypt, Damascus, and Morocco.

Paper making reached Europe in 1200. The 19<sup>th</sup> century brought about the industrialization of papermaking.

Today, most paper is machine made. There are still many people in regions throughout the world who keep up the tradition of making paper by hand.

Now, you can make paper at home.

### What You Will Need:

- Blender
- Rolling Pin
- Flat workspace

### Gathering All Your Supplies

- Kitchen sink with stopper, or large plastic tub
- Kitchen Towels, or rags
- Paper Blotters
- Deckle (*make your own, or buy one at a craft store*)
- nylon screen
- sponge
- leaves, moss, glitter, or other decorations
- Paper - you can use old envelopes, papers, newspapers, stamps (but avoid glossy paper, like magazines)
- Microwave or hair dryer, if desired



### How to Make a Deckle

- [Deckle for Papermaking](#)  
A simple method for making your own deckle at home with supplies you can find at any craft or hardware store.
- [Making a Deckle Box](#)  
Another easy way to make a deckle, but in a different format. It also talks about making different sized deckle boxes.

### Step 1

Assemble your deckle by fitting the larger frame over the screened side of the smaller frame.

### Step 2

Fill your sink or tub with warm water (so it feels nice to touch--not too hot, not too cold). The water should be about three inches deep.

### Step 3

Now, it is time to make your paper pulp. Tear your paper into squares (about 1"). Combine water with the paper in your blender. It should be about 2:1, two parts water to 1 part paper. Blend until the pulp is soft. You might see some chunks, but not any big ones.

### Step 4

You are ready to pour your pulp. Place your deckle and screen in the sink (or tub), so the water is about 1" below the top of the deckle. Hold the deckle down under the water with one hand. With your free hand, pour the pulp into the deckle. Swish the deckle around.

### Step 5

Lift the deckle straight up, draining the visible water. You want to keep the pulp even, so avoid tilting the deckle as you lift it. Once the visible water has drained, tilt the

### Step-by-Step Photos for Steps 1-3



Step 1: See the two parts of the deckle, the larger part is the top.

[Click thumbnail to view full-size](#)

### Step-by-Step Photos for Steps 4-5



Step 4: Hold the deckle in the water with one hand.

deckle. Wait for the water to stop draining.

## Step 6

Place the deckle on a flat surface. Remove the top half of the deckle. There will be a layer of wet fiber (pulp) on the screen.

## Step 7

Now, you need to sponge the pulp. Place your loose screen over the pulp. Use a moist sponge to evenly press over the pulp. Squeeze the sponge out into the sink, and repeat. You want to draw as much moisture out of the pulp as you can. Fold a kitchen towel, or rag, in half, then turn the pulp (with screen and deckle) over onto the towel. Use the sponge on the deckle screen to remove excess water. Squeeze out sponge and repeat.

Remove the deckle, leaving the pulp pressed against the loose screen. You can peel the pulp off of the deckle if it sticks.

## Step 8

It is time to couch (*pronounced koo-ch*) the paper pulp. Flip the screen and pulp onto a piece of blotter paper. The pulp should be sandwiched between the screen and the blotter. Use a rolling pin to roll over the pulp sandwich. The pulp will transfer from the screen to the blotter. This method is called couching (*kooching*). Couch the paper again, onto a dry blotter. If your paper pulp is still really wet, couch again.

## Step 9

Carefully lift one corner of the pulp sheet, slowly peeling it off of the blotter. It is time to let the paper dry. You can let it air dry (which takes 1-3 days depending on humidity), heat it in the microwave for about 1-2 minutes, or use a blow dryer on the paper.

Don't be surprised if your paper curls. To flatten it, stick it under some heavy books overnight.

You have just made one piece of paper!

## The Step-by-Step Photos

[Click thumbnail to view full-size](#)

### Step-by-Step Photos for Steps 6-7



Step 6: Remove the top of the deckle.

[Click thumbnail to view full-size](#)

### Step-by-Step Photos for Steps 7-8



Step 7: Use the sponge on the screen to remove excess water.

[Click thumbnail to view full-size](#)

### Step-by-Step Photos for Steps 8-9



Step 8: Flip the pulp and blotter over onto a dry blotter page.

[Click thumbnail to view full-size](#)

### Paper Making with Lonnie and Jacqueline

### Making Paper with 4th Graders

The Step-by-Step Photos on the right show how I went through the 9 steps to make paper. I wanted to make red paper, so I found some red scrap paper. I combined it with some white paper that had drawings on it. For texture, I added some dried moss. I also tossed in some cinnamon to give the paper a nice scent. I blended all of these together with some water.

### Ready to Make More Paper?

The blotters need to be dry before you make more paper. Either have enough dry blotters on hand, or dry them in the microwave first. Instead of using blotters, you can also use felt pieces or rags.

If your screens start to stretch, simply use a blow dryer on them. This will help tighten them back up.

### Embellish Your Paper

You can create different textures and designs by adding anything to the pulp that you can put into your blender - think spices (make it smell good too), essential oils, petals, potpourri, colored paper, food coloring, glitter, leaves, tea, and moss.

You can also add the embellishments to the pulp after you complete **Step 4** from above. Simply place or sprinkle the items on the pulp, gently embedding them into the pulp. When you move on to **Step 5**, pulling the deckle out, the items will be stuck to the surface of the paper.

You can embed a picture (paper copy, not glossy) into your paper with this same process.

### The Papermaking Videos

On the right, you will find three videos showing how to make paper. These videos are helpful to watch because they give you a general idea of the papermaking process.

**Paper Making with Lonnie and Jacqueline:** The process used to make paper in this video is most similar to the method I have described here. This video will show you how easy it is to make paper, plus it shows a few small differences in style between how paper is made in the video and the method provided here.

**Making Paper with 4th Graders:** This video shows you how easy it is to get children involved in papermaking projects. As well, it offers more ideas for paper decorating embellishments. The method shown here differs from mine, but allows you a look at another way of making paper.

**Quick Papermaking Demo:** This is a quick, simple demo showing how easy it is to make paper once all of your supplies are set up.

### Embellishments



To add a picture, simply place the photo on the pulp while it is still under water.

[Click thumbnail to view full-size](#)

### Quick Papermaking Demo

- [How to Crease Paper When Making Holiday Cards](#)

Whether you are making holiday cards, greeting cards, or small books, the perfect crease can make or break the quality of the your project.

## What's Next?

After you get the hang of making your own paper, start experimenting. See how thick or thin you can make your pieces. Play with the colors and embellishments. If you use different sized deckles, you can make different sized pieces of paper.

You can use your paper to write letters, make cards, or create wall decorations. You could even use the paper to make your own book. You can straighten the edges of your homemade paper by cutting them. However, a wavy edge is the true mark of handmade paper.

Another fun idea when making your paper, is to adding different kinds of fibers to your paper. For example, you can add bits of yarn or string to the pulp.

While making your paper, ponder these strange facts: Paper began to be used as toilet paper in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century!

## Some Quick Tips:

To prevent ink from running while writing on your handmade paper, simply add some liquid starch to the pulp mixture.

Another method to both drying and flattening your paper is to use an iron.

- **Making Paper from the Garden**

This article, by Sharon Lovejoy, shares how to make flower paper using plant fibers from the garden. She provides an easy recipe with room for experimentation.

- **Learn To Make Homemade Paper**

This is a kid-friendly tutorial on making paper at home. It includes a step-by-step recipe, as well as historical information about papermaking.

- **How to Make Home Made Paper You Can Plant**

The Thrifty Fun website provides a great recipe for making paper that can be planted. This recycled paper can be implanted into your garden, and used as compost. The site also includes a forum for comments and ideas.

- **Paper Online**

Paperonline is an educational resource to learn about the history of paper around the world. The site offers a timeline, so it is easy to follow the progress of paper throughout the years.

- **Reuse/Recycle: Homemade Paper**

Here is an alternative method to making paper. The site also offers a quick and simple process for making your own deckle out of an old picture frame and window screen.

- **How To Make Paper - Homemade Papermaking**

Pioneer Thinking provides a collection of crafting how-to's, including a simple recipe to make paper at home. The site offers a list of possible materials that can be recycled into handmade paper.

- **China's Ancient Papermaking Tradition Preserved**

Learn more about the ancient tradition of papermaking in China. This site also shows you how the traditions are still preserved in China today, while allowing you to explore other arts from the country.

- **Why Recycle Paper?**

Learn more about the recycling process from Green Practices. This site talks about paper recycling, as well as recycling plastic, glass, and metals. The site also offers more resources, like facts and statistics related to recycling.

## Papermaking Supplies on eBay

## Papermaking Supplies on Amazon



Papermaking With Garden Plants & Common Weeds  
NEW Hiebe

Current Bid: \$11.24



Japanese Papermaking by Timothy Barrett (1984) Signed

Current Bid: \$9.99



NEW Encyclopedia of Papermaking and Bookbinding: The...

Current Bid: \$18.63

No Photo

4 antique books paper making papermaking rag how to

Current Bid: \$9.99



The Art Of Papermaking

Price: \$9.93

List Price: \$20.95



Arnold Grummer's Complete Guide to Easy Papermaking

Price: \$1.93

List Price: \$21.95



Arnold Grummer's Papermaking Kit and Video

Price: \$26.95

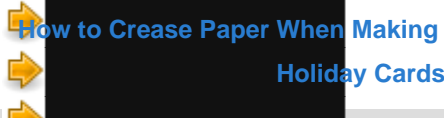


Japanese Papermaking: Traditions, Tools, Techniques

Price: \$38.95

List Price: \$50.00

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### Comments

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**Zsuzsy Bee** says:

9 months ago

Super-duper HUB!

You added everything that anyone could need. We have always enjoyed making our own paper and all of our cards all year long are from our own stock. We make our paper in the summer so that it doesn't take as long to dry.

great HUB

regards Zsuzsy

**CTCV** says:

9 months ago

This is truly wonderful! I can give you RATE OF EXCELLENCE...and I commend you for this. You're terrific. Thanks for hubbing.

---

**WordPlay** says:

9 months ago

This is terrific! I'm going to bookmark it for future use. :-)

---

**stubbs** says:

9 months ago

wow this is superb, the pictures are great. I'm going to pass this onto my cousin shes really into her own crafts and things she'll love this.

great great hub

---

**Lissie** says:

9 months ago

Fantastic -I am getting inspired into new crafts at hubpages!

---

**G-Ma Johnson** says:

9 months ago

phew..what else do you have time for??with presentations like this Stacie?  
This was very good...G-Ma:O) for real

---

**MrMarmalade** says:

9 months ago

Your style is not only good but your information great

Thank you

---

**coolbreeze** says:

9 months ago

Nice Job Stacie

I remember making paper in school.

Its alot of fun

---

**Isabella Snow** says:

9 months ago

Wow! I want to do this!!!!!! You've made feel creative, Stacie!! Look out, Hallmark!!

---

**Whitney05 says:**

9 months ago

Great step by step guide with pictures!

---

**jdnyc says:**

9 months ago

Great hub!! I'm excited to look at some of the others you have made! This was very well put together!

**compu-smart says:**

9 months ago

What a cool idea and great hub! i will get have to get my niece who is a very keen drawer, and very environmentally friendly can now create her works of art on her very own home made paper!!

Thanks:)

---

**funride says:**

9 months ago

Nice hub! Great idea to save our trees ;)

Thumb up!

**waynet says:**

8 months ago

This brings back memories of me at art college, at first dreading all these creative making things, but I loved it! making your own paper is not only economical it is friendly for the environment and fun to do too.

I'll be all set for making paper next weekend so I'll be using your hub as a guide as it's been awhile! Cheers!

---

**vreccc says:**

7 months ago

Stacie,

Great hub! I remember making paper in elementary school. I don't know if they still do it these days. I work for a school district. I'll be sharing this one with the elementary school teachers. Ahh, what the heck... the high school teachers, too.

Jonathan



**singpec476 says:**

7 months ago

This si another one of those things you never actually think about until someone mentions it, making paper would have never crossed my mind great hub.

---

**johnngd says:**

7 months ago

Top hub - what a great way of recycling old scraps of paper - I heard you can use cotton to make paper - you get an excellent effect apparently - has anyone tried this?

**cyndeehaydon says:**

6 months ago

What fun - as a homeschool mom of 2 boys this looks like a fun and educational process - excellent Hub!!

---

**clearwaterhomes says:**

6 months ago

As we all work to be more eco friendly this is a fun and functional way to make a difference.

**Hubalicious says:**

6 months ago

THIS really does sound like a lot of fun.... But I am not sure I could sacrifice the margarita maker (blender) for the project.

---

**Eileen Hughes says:**

5 months ago

This is a great hub, I did it years ago but forgot how. Now I can do it again

**Jared L says:**

5 months ago

nice instructions...but this takes to much patience out of me :)

---

**Techie says:**

5 months ago

Amazing graphical instructions.

**Medical Alert Calling System** says:

5 months ago

Very useful tips! Thanks for sharing them with us!

---

**fread45** says:

5 months ago

I'll make a flower for my spouse

**ialwayshaveprojectsatschoolonpaper** says:

5 months ago

this is great for my school projects!

(it might even be useful for 5th grade next year)

thanks!

---

**Hope Wilbanks** says:

4 months ago

Very cool! I've always wanted to make paper but haven't been brave enough to try it yet. Your instructions are very easy though so maybe I'll give it a try. :)

**ngureco** says:

4 months ago

An easy step by step guide with good photos.

---

**jshaiju** says:

3 months ago

Excellent hub. Good work. Step by step instructions. Expecting more hubs like this.

**First Eagle** says:

3 months ago

Very useful tips! Thanks for sharing !

---

**John** says:

3 months ago

Hi Thanks for sharing

**ProCW** says:

2 months ago

That's very interesting Stacie! I'm into recycling, but never thought of recycling paper like that. Great hub and resourceful recycling!

ProCW

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