

Nature Recycled Paper Making Instructions - Nature Play WA

To make cards, invitations, envelopes, gift tags, thank you notes, decorations

YOU NEED:

- Shredded or torn recycled paper into small pieces
- Deckle frame covered in mesh, loose mould frame, loose soft wire mesh to fit between two frames (example size: A4)
- Thick sponge
- Thin gauze dish cloths
- Thick smooth cardboard larger than frames
- Square tub to fit deckle frame
- Old blender
- Mixing bowls/ small tubs for paper pulp
- Found nature objects: leaves, shells, feathers, pressed leaves or flowers, seeds or petals

METHOD:

1. Put torn/shredded recycled paper into a tub. Cover with hot water. Soak for at least a couple of hours, best to leave overnight for a soft pulp. Best to add vegie dyes or coloured tissue paper now so pulp absorbs colour.
2. Lay out cardboard, perhaps put a thin gauze dish cloth on top to more easily remove dry paper later.
3. Have a thick damp sponge ready.
4. Put a couple of handfuls of pulp in a bowl or blender, add water as required and blend. If you don't have a blender, you can manually mix or mash very soft pulp for a rough texture.
5. Make a couple of batches, put into square tub, add water to about 10cm (or as required). Add more water for a thinner paper, less for thicker paper.
6. Hold together deckle frame, soft wire and mould frame, immerse vertically down into pulp mixture, rest on bottom of tub horizontally, gently lift to scoop up pulp, hold to drain water.
7. Take off mould frame, gently hold up soft wire with framed paper pulp over cardboard and gradually lower onto cardboard.
8. Sponge and press off water then remove soft wire. Leave framed pulp on board to dry.
9. Repeat on to other cardboard.



Recycled paper soaking in water.



Shredded paper, onion skin dye, lavender and rose petals in water.



Paper pulp drying on cardboard next to deckle and frame.

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10. If you like, press and leave nature objects in wet paper for indented shapes when dry: shells, leaves (thick glossy eucalyptus leaves work well) or thick feathers.
11. When paper is dry, gently twist cardboard to remove paper.
12. Tear into desired sizes and shapes for a natural organic look.



Recycled paper drying imprinted with shells and leaves.

NOTE:

- Remember to give yourself time: it's an achievable, sustainable, cheap and fun project to do outdoors together but the different steps of the process are done over a couple of days or part of a week: finding nature objects, organising paper pulp, making the paper, waiting a couple of days for it to dry, creating the cards/ gift tags/ decorations/ envelopes.
- Add to the wet paper pulp: colours, scents (e.g. Lavender or peppermint oil), found nature of your choice, you can divide up pulp into different bowls for a variety of mixtures - homemade vegetable dye (e.g. Onion skins boiled in water give a yellow colour), torn recycled coloured tissue paper (blue or pink works well), dried rose/lavender/flower petals, dried leaves or glitter.
- Experiment for different effects.

IDEAS:

- Press wet framed paper pulp over a tree trunk to dry for a natural organic effect.
- Sandwich nature objects between two different layers of wet paper pulp in the frame before drying: pressed flowers, leaves or feathers.
- Try two different layers of various colours/ effects sandwiched together.
- Make your own deckle out of an old picture frame and staple on mesh. Use a smaller size frame for the mould to contain the paper pulp and fly wire for the soft wire in between.
- Use cookie cutters as a frame to pour in the wet paper pulp before drying: stars, love hearts, Christmas trees, for decorations, to stick onto cards or as gift tags punched with a string tie.
- Decorate dry recycled paper by stamping with painted potato shape cut outs, leaves or cut vegie/ fruit shapes e.g. broccoli looks like trees, strawberries cut in half look like love hearts. The kids can create a picture from stampings.
- Collect and press flowers and leaves between paper and books beforehand so they are dry and flat to use in papermaking.