

Turning Junk Mail Into Your Heart's Desire



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This workshop is not

A HISTORY OF PAPERMAKING OR ITS TECHNIQUES.



This workshop is not

**THE ONE
TRUE WAY TO
DO ANYTHING.**



This workshop is

- How I make paper
- A quick and fun introduction to hopefully inspire you to dive into papermaking
- Full of variations and possibilities

You'll learn

- Papermaking vocabulary
- The required tools & supplies
 - Basic techniques
 - Ideas for add ins to your paper
- Ways to use the paper you make

Tools & supplies

BLENDER

Pulping can dull your blender's blades quickly and paper is pretty hard to clean up after, so I recommend keeping a separate "crafting" blender or, at the very least, a set of separate blender blades.

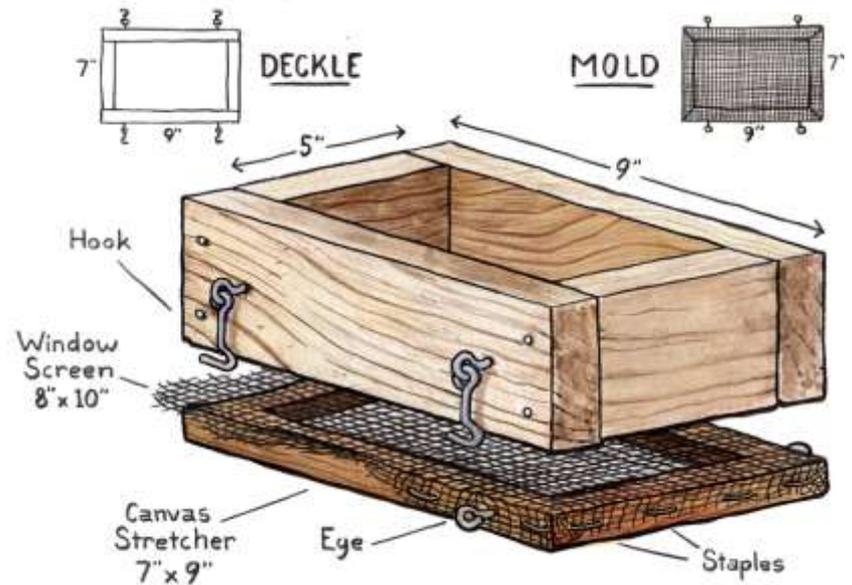


Tools & supplies

MOLD & DECKLE

This is what you actually make your paper on.

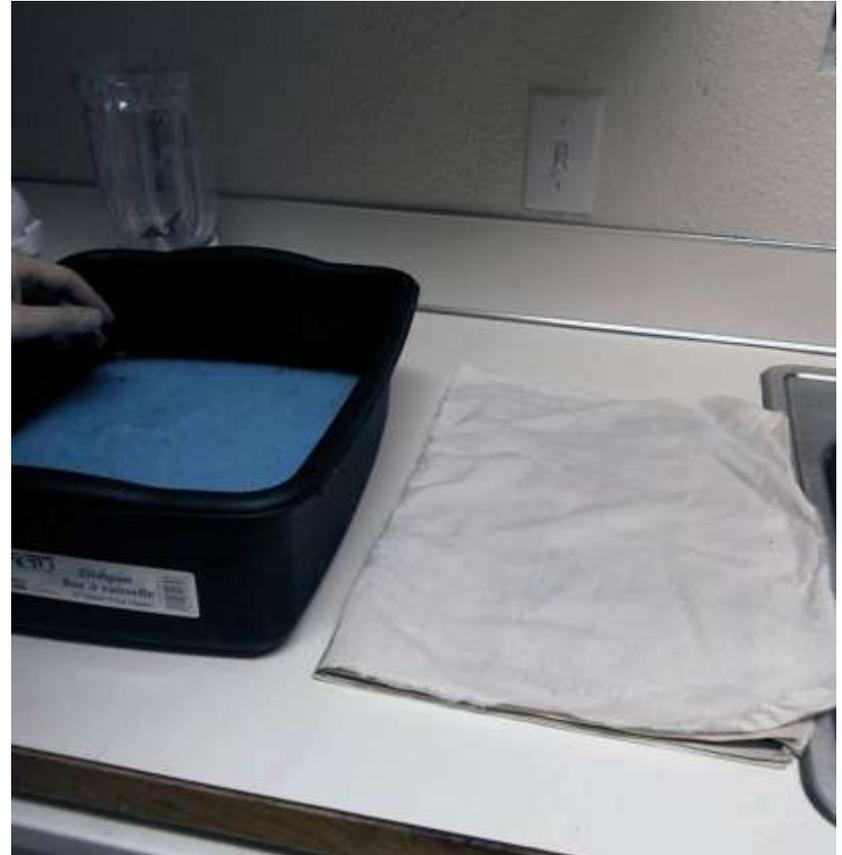
The deckle (on top) determines the size and shape of your paper. You can make your own mold and deckle from scratch, repurpose a picture frame or embroidery hoop or buy one as part of a papermaking kit.



Tools & supplies

VAT & FELTS

- **Vat.**
Vessel to hold your pulp and water mixture; this needs to be larger than your mold and deckle.
You can use a plastic bin, a dishwashing tub or cat litter pan.
- **Felts or couching sheets.**
Material used to separate sheets of paper while wet.
You can cut up an old sheet, wool blanket, T-shirts or flannel or buy interfacing at the craft store or felts from an art supply store.



PAPER PRESS

- Used to flatten sheets of handmade paper. You can use pieces of wood/plywood that's the size of your paper, bricks wrapped in cloth or a stack of books. Or just use a household iron set to "cotton" after your sheets are completely dry.

All about

PULP

- You can make paper out of:
 - Paper, including construction paper, brown paper bags, printer paper, newspaper, magazines
 - Glossy paper is usually more irregular and creates a more artsy look. I usually don't use glossy paper as more than 50% of my pulp mix.
 - None of these papers—and especially newspaper—are particularly archival, so keep that in mind when using your final handmade sheets.
 - Dryer lint
 - Plants and vegetable matter
 - Fabric



PULP ADD INS

- Dried flowers, leaves and/or herbs
- Used tea bags and/or coffee filters
- Decorative paper: book pages, handwritten letters, maps
- Glitter
- Tissue paper
- Small bits of thread and/or yarn

- To embed larger items (e.g., paper, fabric, leaves), first pull a sheet from the vat; dip the item you want to embed into the vat, coating it in a thin layer of pulp, and then gently work the item into your sheet of paper before transferring/couching it to your felt.
- If you find your natural add ins (like flowers) bleed into the paper, you can try boiling them for 10 minutes before adding to your pulp.

You can do this

TECHNIQUE

- Shred or tear your paper into 1” squares (maximum), then cover in water and soak overnight.
- Fill blender $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ with water and add a clump of your pre-soaked paper to make your pulp.
 - Less blending = chunkier, more speckled paper
 - More blending = more regular paper

You can do this

TWO METHODS

DIP

1. Fill your vat with a pulp + water mixture (called a “slurry”). I go for a mix of 70% water to 30% pulp.
2. At an angle, ease the mold and deckle into the slurry until the mold is fully submerged.
3. Gently rocking the mold and deckle back and forth, bring the whole thing to the surface.

POUR

1. Fill your vat with water.
2. Float the mold and deckle on the water’s surface and pour some of your pulp directly from your blender into it.
3. Once you are satisfied with the coverage of your mixture, rock the mold and deckle back and forth as you lift it out of the vat.

An aerial photograph of a wide river winding through a valley at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the water and the surrounding landscape. The river flows from the foreground towards the background, with some small islands or rocks in the middle. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and light blue. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

Remember

**YOU CAN NEVER
STEP INTO THE SAME
RIVER TWICE.
NOR CAN YOU PULL THE SAME
SHEET A SECOND TIME.**

Accept, relish
& go with the imperfections.

It's pronounced "cooching"

COUCHING

- Have a few sheets of newspaper topped with your felt nearby.
- Transfer the wet sheet from your mold to the felt by flipping the mold onto the felt.
- Use a sponge to remove excess water before trying to lift the mold.
- Layer another felt on top of your new sheet of paper, followed by some newspaper and a new felt—now make another sheet of paper!

DRYING

- Drying time varies a lot based on your pulp and climate/humidity.
- You can let your papers dry as-is in the stack of felts and newspaper; however, if your paper is still moist after 24 hours, swap out the newspaper to prevent mold from growing.
- You can also hang your felts from a clothesline and let the sheets dry that way, either indoors or outside.

Other considerations

CLEANING UP

- Do not pour your pulp down the drain. It must be strained out from your vat and either dried and saved for your next papermaking adventure or thrown out.
- Dried paper and pulp are a PITA to clean off everything—clothes, screens, tools. Wipe down your tools and supplies before the paper dries and after every papermaking session!

Other considerations

SIZING

- Depending on your pulp mixture, some handmade paper requires sizing before writing on it.
- You can either add sizing directly to your slurry or after the fact.
 - To the slurry, add ~2 tsp. liquid starch; or
 - Once your paper has dried, use spray starch and iron according to product directions.
- Papers made by recycling existing paper may not need sizing. This is just something you need to test and experiment with.

Resources

- An outstanding [step-by-step Flickr photoset of the papermaking process](#).
- [Straightforward tutorial on MAKE](#) with details on building your own mold and deckle.

Go further

- Plants can be more than add ins; they can be used to make a majority of your paper pulp, too.
 - Google papermaking + garlic / yucca / banana / corn husk / grass
- Plants (e.g., marigolds, spinach) can also be used to [dye your pulp](#).
- Properly prepared, you can also make paper using old fabric.

Get inspired

BY OTHER PAPERMAKERS & PAPER PROJECTS

- [Can a Papermaker Help to Save Civilization?](#)

New York Times, February 17, 2012

[Timothy] Barrett, who is 61, has dedicated his life to unlocking the mysteries of paper, which he regards as both the elemental stuff of civilization and an endangered species in digital culture. For his range of paper-related activities, he received a \$500,000 fellowship from the MacArthur Foundation in 2009. “Sometimes I worry about what a weird thing it is to be preoccupied with paper when there’s so much trouble in the world,” Barrett told me, “but then I think of how our whole culture is knitted together by paper, and it makes a kind of sense.”

- [Combat Paper](#)
- [Peace Paper](#)

About me

I'M A MULTI-CRAFTER



I like to make stuff

A word cloud of various craft and hobby activities. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern and vary in size and color. The colors include shades of green, brown, red, and yellow. The words are: beading, bookbinding, spinning, embroidery, art-journals, mixed-media, painting, drawing, kumihimo, baking, sewing, papermaking, knitting, cooking, and homebrewing.

beading
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embroidery
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baking
sewing
papermaking
knitting
cooking
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ANGÉLIQUE WEGER

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 - miscellaneaarts.com
 - isitsharkweek.com
 - angeliqueweger.com (coming soon!)



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Thanks

PHOTO/IMAGE CREDITS

- [Shredded paper photograph](#) courtesy of Tonx via Flickr.
- [Photograph of the Dartford \(UK\) papermaking mural](#) courtesy of Chris Beckett via Flickr.
- [“One Way” sign photograph](#) courtesy of Daniel James via Flickr.
- Blender photograph by Angélique Weger.
- [Mold and deckle illustration](#) courtesy of Lindsey North via Make.
- Photographs of [vat and felts](#) and [pulp](#) courtesy of B Zedan via Flickr.
- [Photograph of the River Dicle](#) courtesy of Senol Demir via Flickr.
- [Multitool photograph](#) courtesy of Emilian Robert Vicol via Flickr.
- Word cloud created via [Wordle](#).