

TAKE & MAKE KIT

Papermaking

TIME: 1 hour

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What's in this kit?

Did you know it takes 2-6 weeks for paper to decompose, which makes it highly recyclable compared to a plastic bottle that can take up to 450 years? In this kit you will recycle scrap paper into your very own handmade paper.

You will learn:

- Papermaking
- Recycling

Let's Get Started!

Materials

Recycled paper
Wire mesh screen
Sponge
Felt Sheet
Wildflower seeds

Tools

Scissors
Plastic bottle
Large mixing container

Step 1 - Gather paper from around your home

Find any paper that you can recycle such as junk mail or pages of used notebooks. Avoid anything glossy, shiny or anything with glue as this will make the paper pulp slimy and harder to work with.

Step 2 - Prepare recycled paper

Cut your paper into small thin strips and add it to the kinkle paper provided. You can also cut up the bag that the kinkle paper came in. If you don't have scissors, tearing your paper into small pieces will also work.



Step 3 - Fill container

Place all your paper strips into a plastic bottle. Any size bottle will work but one with a larger mouth will make it easier to slip the paper inside.



Tip: Don't pack the paper too tight. It will be better to have some space for your paper to move around later.

A note about color: the color of paper you recycle into your paper pulp will affect the color of recycled paper you create. If you really want a certain color paper, look out for that color in the paper you recycle. If you have it available, add colored construction paper or 1-2 tablespoons of acrylic paint to the paper pulp before adding extra water in Step 7.



Step 4 - Soak your paper

Once you have all the paper inside the bottle, add in cold water into the bottle until all the paper is submerged. Let this soak for at least 2 hours, overnight if possible.



Add some small clean rocks or quarters to the bottle of soaked paper. Throw on your favorite dancing music and shake your bottle around! Make sure you rotate the bottle and get the items inside moving from top to bottom.



Step 5 - Shake your bottle to create paper pulp

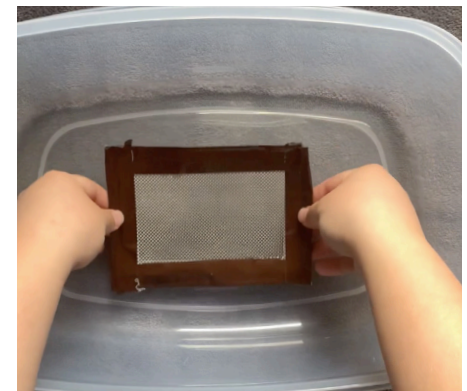
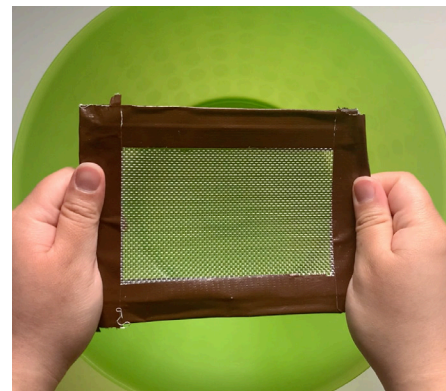
To make sheets of paper you need paper pulp. To create this without a machine, you will need to shake the bottle for at least ten minutes. You will have different textured paper depending on how long your paper was soaked and how long you shake your paper pulp.



Share this task with a friend if you get tired. The longer you shake your paper pulp, the finer the pulp will be. Some materials will break down faster than others. You will get unique textures with recycled paper.

Step 6 - Set up your paper vat

You will need a large wide container to help you create sheets of paper. This container needs to be large enough for you to dip the wire mesh sheet into. This should be a container you use specifically for arts and crafts. It can be a large mixing bowl but do not use this container again for other purposes.



Important: Once you add paper pulp to a container there will always be some pulp left once it dries. Even if you can't see it, tiny bits of paper pulp may cling onto the sides of your container.

Step 7 - Prep work area

Lay down an old bath towel to keep your work surface dry or work outside where things can get wet. Place your vat on your work surface and empty your paper pulp into your vat. Add more cool water so that your hands can comfortably reach inside the vat and scoop out pulp. Rinse your felt sheet in clean water and wring out excess water. Place this next to your vat.

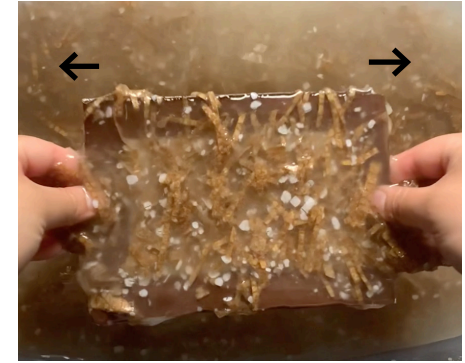


Step 8 - Pull a sheet of recycled paper

Gently shake your hand through the vat to agitate the paper pulp for even distribution.



Take your wire mesh sheet and slide it into your vat under the surface of the water and pull towards yourself to scoop up some pulp. Keep the mesh sheet even as you carefully but quickly lift it out of the water. Move your hands gently from side to side (like a seesaw) to achieve even distribution.



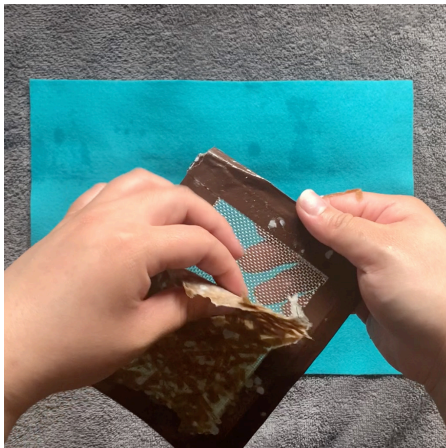
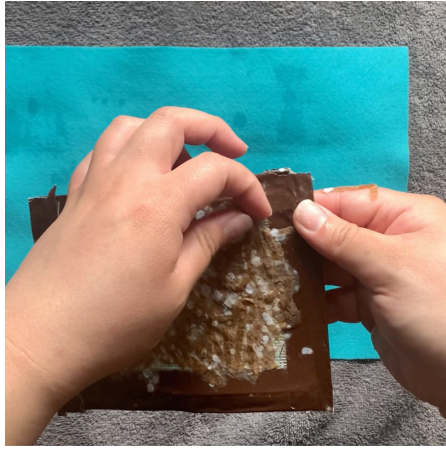
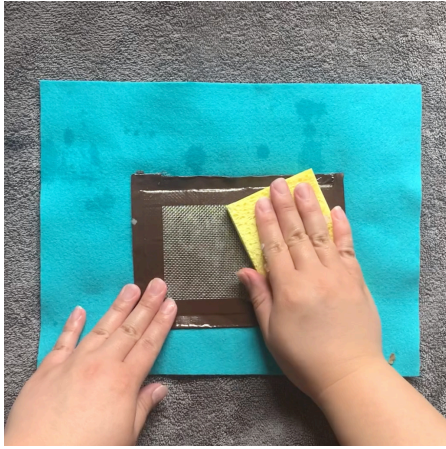
Let as much water as possible drip off from the mesh sheet. If you don't like the sheet you pulled, flip over the mesh sheet and quickly tap it off onto the surface of the water. This should release the pulp back into the vat. Remember to agitate the pulp inside the vat each time you pull a sheet.

Step 9 - Laying out your recycled paper

Once you have the water drained from the mesh sheet, carefully flip it onto the felt sheet. You may find it easier to rest the long edge of the mesh sheet onto the felt first before laying down the full mesh sheet faced down.



Once the mesh sheet with the paper is facing down on the felt, use the sponge to soak up any more water by pressing it against the mesh. This should also help release the paper from the mesh. Carefully lift the mesh sheet up from the felt. If you find any paper hasn't been released from the mesh, try dabbing it again with a dryer sponge or even peel it off by grabbing an edge of the wet paper. Don't worry, the sheet of paper should be pretty sturdy.



Step 10 - Let paper air dry

Take your freshly pulled sheets of recycled paper and press them onto the plastic bag that this kit came in. Leave them to air dry until they no longer feel cold or wet to the touch. This will take a few hours to a whole day. Once they're dry, they should naturally lift off from the plastic.

You did it! It may take some practice but you can create your own recycled paper like this!



SUPER IMPORTANT: DO NOT DUMP YOUR LEFTOVER PULP DOWN THE DRAIN. This will clog your pipes. Carefully strain any remaining water and pulp through your mesh sheet. This should catch most of the remaining paper pulp. Leave the pulp to dry before tossing out or try out the fun flower bomb activity in the Going Beyond section. DO NOT leave your paper pulp in water for longer than 3 days.

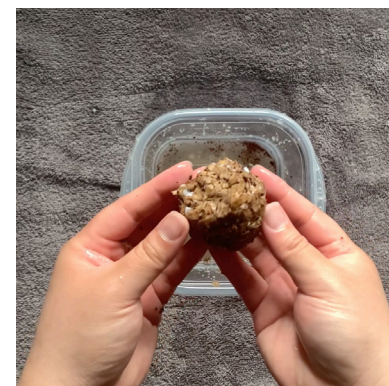
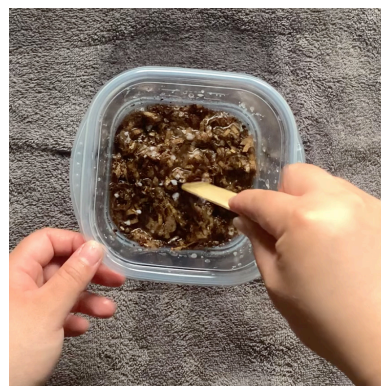


Go Beyond – Flower Bombs

So you've reached the end of your pulp but you know there's still just a little bit left in the vat. Strain it out of the vat with your mesh sheet and add the packet of wildflower seeds into the paper pulp.



Take a fist full of this mixture and squeeze out any excess water. If you'd like, you can mold them into fun shapes. Then plant these flower bombs in the ground and wait for them to grow.



Challenge

Create something new with your recycled paper. Every sheet you create is unique. Try doing something special with it. Make some art or do some writing. You can also put a few sheets together and create a small book or journal.



HANG OUT,
MESS
AROUND,
GEEK OUT.



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