

Truly Handmade Paper

Difficulty: ★☆☆☆☆ - Easy. Adult supervision is required while cutting the paper and working with hot water.

Time: 1 hour (+ a day for soaking and drying)



Materials

- Thin paper like newspaper or tissue paper
- Scissors (optional)
- Heat-proof container¹ to soak the paper scraps
- Hot water
- Gloves
- Flat waterproof surface
- Parchment paper or foil
- Rolling pin
- Hair dryer (optional)
- Seeds (optional)

¹ It's better not to use kitchen utensils to avoid getting ink from newspapers.

Steps

1. Tear or cut the paper² into small pieces.



2. Place the shredded paper in your container and pour hot water on it, covering all the pieces completely. Leave the paper to soak for 2-3 hours, stirring occasionally.



3. When the paper is thoroughly soggy and the water is cooled, put on gloves and mash the paper with your hands to turn it into pulp³.



² On average, two handfuls of cut newspaper make a sheet of handmade paper.

³ The pulp made from newspaper is usually grayish, beige or pinkish. It gets a little lighter when it dries.





4. Lay a piece of parchment paper/ foil on your flat waterproof surface. Squeeze the pulp to remove water and place it on the parchment paper/ foil. You can press it down a bit and form a rectangle.



5. Place another piece of parchment paper/ foil over the pulp. Then roll the pulp as thin as possible with a rolling pin.



6. Carefully peel off the top parchment paper and see how your paper sheet looks.



You can fill in any of the holes in the sheet with more paper pulp or form clearer edges, pushing it toward the center.



Repeat steps 5-6 until you reach the desired consistency and shape of the paper sheet.



7. Let your paper dry. You can place it outside in direct sunlight during the day. If it is still wet after 4-6 hours, you can let it dry overnight or use a hair dryer to speed up the drying process.



The paper ends up being a bit thicker than regular paper, more like card stock than anything else. You can trim it to shape or leave it with rough edges for a "rustic" look.

You can make as many sheets as you like or until you use all the liquid pulp. When you're finished, dump any remaining pulp outside on your compost pile or in your garden.

NOTE: Do not pour the pulp into the sink or toilet because it can block the drain.

Create plantable paper!

Gently press in a few seeds from your favorite garden flowers, wildflowers or herbs into the pulp before rolling it out.



When it dries, you can cut it into the desired shape, and it will be ready for planting in the soil.

