

How To Make Recycled Paper

YOU WILL NEED:

- Newspaper, used notebook paper, or other used paper
- Blender, a jar with a lid, or a bowl
- Warm to hot water
- Mesh screen or sieve
- Plastic trash bag or plastic sheet
- Rocks or something to hold your plastic trash bag down
- Towel

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Make the paper pulp.** Tear paper into pieces, about 1 inch square or smaller. Do not use scissors for this; it works better when you tear it by hand.

Bowl method: Place the paper scraps in a bowl and fill with warm to hot water, just enough to cover the paper. Let soak. Once the paper is soft and starts to easily fall apart, use your fingers to break up the paper into a pulp.

Jar and lid method: Place the paper scraps in a jar and fill with warm to hot water, just enough to cover the paper. Let soak. Once the paper is soft and starts to fall apart easily, shake the jar to break up the paper. Use a spoon to stir and further break up the paper until you have a pulp.

Blender method: Place the paper scraps in the blender and fill with warm to hot water, just enough to cover the paper. Let soak for a couple minutes. Blend the paper for 10-30 seconds until you have a pulp. Only blend a handful or two of the paper at a time so you do not burn out the blender.

For any method above, add water as needed so your pulp is the consistency of a thick soup.

2. **Strain your pulp.** Pour your pulp into the sieve or screen. Gently press the pulp to strain out some of the water while starting to thin out the paper, like you might gently press out a pizza dough.
3. **Press out your paper.** Lay your plastic trash bag out on a flat surface outside. The flatter the surface, the smoother your paper will be. Place your rocks on each corner to keep the bag from blowing away. Next, carefully plop out your strained pulp onto the plastic trash bag. Lay a towel over the strained pulp and gently press the paper. The towel will soak up more of the water and you can further thin out your paper.

MAKE IT MORE FUN! Press your paper on the ground by walking on it.

How To Make Recycled Paper, cont...

4. **Let it dry.** Remove the towel and let the paper dry outside in the sun. After a few hours it should be dry enough to bring inside. It can take up to 24 hours to fully dry.
5. **Enjoy!** Recycled paper can be used for all kinds of art projects, gifts, and more.

GET CREATIVE!

Here are a few ideas to customize your paper.

1. Add flowers or leaves. Before you flip your paper onto the plastic bag, gently press some fresh flowers or interesting leaves into the paper. When you flip it out to do the final press, the flowers will get embedded into the paper.
2. Add lavender, rosemary or other fragrant herb to make your paper smell good.
3. Choose used paper that has a color or add food coloring to make colored paper.
4. Add seeds to your paper and create plantable recycled paper for a springtime gift.

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