
Make a Mailable Art Book with Dawn M. Cardona

Chapter 1 - Make a Mailable Art Book

Overview

- Who doesn't love art and snail mail? This mailable art book is created from glued paper scraps for a patchwork effect, designed to enclose like an envelope, ready to be mailed as is. I'll show you how to choose and layer paper, and sew a three hole pamphlet stitch. I like to slowly fill my books with illustrations and mail them out to friends and family when they're ready.

Materials and book construction

- To make your mailable art book, you'll need two PDF templates, A cutting mat, a paper cutter, and three blades, a straight blade, a perforating blade, and a scoring blade. Some glue, scrap papers, two pieces of card stock at eight and three eighths and five and three quarters. Book binding thread, a ruler, scissors, a bone folder, craft knife, sewing needles, and an awl. First we're gonna cut out our template. I like to use a paper cutter. You have the option of using your scissors or craft knife. As you're cutting out your template. Make sure you only cut along the solid lines. You should have three pieces labeled, shape A, shape B, and shape C. There's a diagram included in the template. This is what your book will look like, closed and open, and if you lay it out, it kind of gives you an idea of what that looks like. We're gonna begin building the cover of our project. I've already prepared shape A, using your template as a guide. We're gonna cut out shape B using our paper cutter. I like to lay it on top, slide it into the paper cutter, slightly long here at the top, so I'm going to cut it again. And then choosing a third sheet of card stock or scrap paper. We're going to cut out shape C in the same manner. And now I kind of wanna give it some interest. I'm going to choose extra papers to layer on top and cutting to size. It'll give it a patchwork look. You can glue these pieces together, or if you have a sewing machine at home, you can sew them together. So all my papers are the correct length. I'm just gonna adjust the width. And there's really no set measurements, just kind of make it shorter than your template pieces. So I like to have two pieces for shape A, about three for shape B and one for shape C. Before we begin gluing these pieces together, we're gonna go back to the template pieces. As you can see, there are extra marks on your template. Shape A has a solid line. We're going to use a craft knife to cut this line, placing our template over our craft sheet using a ruler as a guide with your craft knife. You're gonna cut along this line. Mine's a little wobbly, but if you do the same, it's not a big deal. Now on shape B and C, you'll notice your dashed lines. We're gonna measure that out on our paper cutter. These are where you're going to score your lines. So we need to switch out the blade from a straight blade to a scoring blade. If your paper cutter doesn't come with different blades, you can always buy a rotary blade that has the option of removing that blade and inserting a perforating blade or a scoring blade. On shape B, you'll notice a dash line. This is where we need to score a line on our card stock. You'll need about five sixteenths from the edge. My paper cutter doesn't measure in sixteenths, so I'm going to use a ruler to help me figure out those numbers. That looks about right and you'll want to do the same for Shape C. Now you can set aside your templates and bring over your layers. This layer has gone a little too far over this opening, so I'm going to shorten it. And now we're gonna start gluing our pieces together. I like to add a line of glue along the edge and then smear it with a craft needle. At this point, you can use your sewing machine to sew this edge or add another line of glue. Press down firmly until it's stuck. And do the same for shape B, making sure your scored line is

to the left side glue, your first layer to the right side, and again, adding another line of glue to the other side. Or if you have a sewing machine, this would also be a good place to add a line of stitching. Now we're gonna add our last layer of paper. Sometimes when you add too much glue like I've done here, the wetness will ripple your paper, but that's okay. And now we're going to assemble our cover together. First, we'll start with shape C, and we'll glue it to shape B first. Along your scored line, we're gonna create a fold. You'll want the printed side down using your bone folder for a nice crease, run it along the paper and create that fold. You are gonna slip shape B into shape C like so, and lift the flap back up and add a line of glue. Press and hold to secure. If it's not sticking, try again. Now I'm going to fold along the scored line on shape B. Using my bone folder, I'm going to score a nice straight line and glue it to shape a heading. Some glue along the flap. As you can see, it doesn't fit perfectly, so I'm going to need to increase the length of my slit. Now our cover is finished and we can begin assembling our book. Open your cover, and in between shapes A and B, right along the crease, we're going to be making three holes. Using a ruler, you'll wanna take your craft needle punch a hole at one inches from the top, another inch from the bottom, and the third one at three inches in the center. Now we're going to set aside our cover, bring in our pages, fold them in half, one at a time. To get a nice clean crease, open them back up. And we're going to make three holes along the crease using our ruler. Remember that our pages are a little bit shorter, so our measurements will be slightly different as we mark these three holes, we'll want to mark at seven eighths from the top, seven eighths from the bottom, and two and seven eighths in the center. These holes should line up perfectly with the holes on the cover. I like to use my book binding needles. You'll want to cut a length of string about 12 inches. This is book binders thread. If you don't have book binders thread, any thread would work as long as it's strong and doesn't tear apart when you pull it. Starting at the center hole, you'll wanna push your needle through. I like to first push it through the pages before I find the very center hole in the cover. Pull your needle and thread through leaving just enough thread for tying it at the end. If you flip your cover over, we're gonna do the same thing. It's very faint, but there's a small mark that I made with my needle earlier. Gonna push that through the cover and then through to the pages. So we've gone from the center hole to one of the holes at the ends. We're now going to reach over to the very top hole, stick my needle through the pages, and then through the cover finding that tiny little mark that you made earlier. And then we're gonna finish off in the center hole. I like to place my loose strings on each side of this center thread, so that when I tie it, it holds that thread in place. You can tie it once or twice, whatever you prefer. Cut off the excess string. Close your book once again to kind of test it out. We will close it back up. And here's our mailable artbook. Customize your artbook with illustrations or short stories and drop it in the mail. I have a few other examples to show you how to do that. This example here has stitching. I use the sewing machine to give it a bit of interest and depth. It's a lot of fun. And this example is also stitched, but I filled it with illustrations and words that make me happy and that I hope will make my recipient happy. And this particular book I've actually mailed to Creativebug, decorated with stamps and stickers to show you how it looks after it's been through the mail. What will you do with the pages in your art book? Don't forget that stamp.