

JEWELRY MAKING

The Ultimate Guide To
Jewelry Making for
Beginners

Learn How to make
Jewelry with Beautiful
Jewelry Designs

with Pictures



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Chanel Lee

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BEGINNERS.**

**LEARN HOW TO MAKE JEWELRY WITH BEAUTIFUL
JEWELRY DESIGNS**

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Introduction

LEARN TO MAKE JEWELRY WITH BEAUTIFUL JEWELRY DESIGNS.

There is nothing more satisfying, prideful or pleasing than making your own jewelry. It gives you the right to choose the design you want and also the choice of beads, which you feel describes your style more.

Bead stringing is a basic technique that most jewelry makers know. It is better to keep things simple when starting jewelry making and then as you build your confidence you can go into the more complex stage of jewelry making. Like I said earlier, the design you choose is the one you feel describes your personality.

Jewelry making might be a little tough for some people. If you happen to be one of them, do not worry you are not the first to be in that situation. Maybe you are having a design block. I guarantee you that after reading the chapter on “getting inspiration for jewelry design” you will become refreshed. You will succeed if you put your heart to it. Always remember to be yourself, do not try to copy others because what works for them might not work for you. Besides you will get a greater sense of accomplishment when you do something yourself and it turns out great.

In this book, we are going to cover:

- Tips on jewelry making,
- Some techniques for jewelry design, some tools used for jewelry design and
- Getting inspiration for jewelry design and lots more.

Chapter 1 - Jewelry Making Tools

These are tools used to assist you in making jewelry with jewelry wire and beads. There are different tools used in jewelry making, but since we are dealing with beginners we are only going to talk about few basic tools.

1.The chain nose pliers:

This is a tool that is used mostly in jewelry making. It is like a second set of hands. The chain nose pliers are used for gripping wires or compressing a crimp bead in the beginning of a jewelry making.



2. Wire Cutters:

Like the name the purpose of this tool is to cut the strings used in jewelry making. Wire cutters come in different sizes and strengths. The types you use depend on the thickness of the wire/string you want to use. Wire cutters are used to cut headpins, eye pins and jewelry stringing wire.



3. Round nose pliers:

This tool is similar to the chain nose pliers but they are very different. The round nose plier is used to bend wires, make loops, circles, curves, coils, spirals etc. when sculpting wire. It is a tool that is completely round and used mostly for everything. Also, you will need a measuring ruler to measure the length of the wire you want.



4. Anvil:

Is a hard metal tool used as a base when hammering wire. It can be used to flatten jewelry wire.



5. Flush cutter:

This is a tool for cutting wire. When used, one side of the wire is flat and the other side pointed.



6. Nylon Jaw pliers:

This has a soft jaw used for gripping and holding jewelry components. A nylon jaw plier is used to straighten jewelry wire or to squeeze wire components to flatten and harden them.



7. Bent chain nose pliers:

This tool is used for gripping, bending and holding wire. It leaves little marks on the wire.



8. Chasing hammer:

It is used to harden jewelry wire.



WIRES

There are different types of wires used in jewelry making for example gold, silver, brass etc. Wires are sold in different sizes. When choosing jewelry wires, it is advisable to choose one that compliments the design you want. Also, a finished piece of jewelry must be able to stand on its own when worn.

- Copper and brass wire are inexpensive, easily found, soft. It a good wire for beginners to practice with.
- Sliver wire is another easy wire to obtain; it is cheap and easy to use.
- Gold wire is really expensive and hard to obtain
- Memory wire is a strong wire that keeps its shape even after bending and twisting. It is easier to cut when it is first heated in candle flame. It can be bought in necklace, bracelet or ring size. It does not require the use of clasp.

Shapes of wires

Yes you can get different shapes of wires from round shapes to square shapes.

- Round wire is a common wire shape, and it is the standard shape used in most wire working
- Square wire is mostly used for aesthetic reasons because the corners give a different look to a finished piece of jewelry. It is preferable when doing banding designs
- Half round wire is used to connect pieces of square wire.
- Twisted wire is formed from either round wire or square wire. It is used to provide textural and aesthetic qualities to wire work.

Wire thickness is measured by gauge. The lower the gauge the thicker the wire is confusing right.

Here is a little guide in choosing wire for jewelry making:

- It is advisable to use 20G wire for earrings, 18G wires for bracelet and 18 or 16G for necklace.

- 16G half hardwire is a little stiff so it is better to buy the soft wire.

- Lastly, dyed wires or artistic wires is not recommended because the dyes may have harmful chemicals that does not go well in the human body.

Soft wires are mostly used to make spiral or round shapes and it can be used for any application like wire wrapping. Although soft wire is easy to use it has its own disadvantage too. It cannot make sharp bends easily unlike half hard wire which makes sharp angles. Half hard wire is good for making components that need to hold their shapes (clasp, jump rings, ear wires, necklace foundations, bracelet forms, etc.)

JEWELRY MAKING FINDINGS

Findings can be classified into three parts

-Functional Jewelry findings:

This is the component parts or materials used in making a piece of jewelry that serve a mechanical function such as attaching, joining, linking example include screw back, post, pin back, catches and omega clips.

-Decorative Jewelry findings:

The component parts or materials used in making jewelry that provides the beauty of the piece. In handmade jewelry these are the parts that are normally produced by the goldsmith or silversmith. There are many decorative findings commercially produced such as charms, festoons, filigrees.

-Hybrid jewelry findings:

The component parts or materials used in making a piece of jewelry that serve a mechanical function such as attaching, joining, linking, but due to their nature lend themselves to becoming decorative findings as well. So they can be either both decorative or functional findings examples are bead caps, bracelet links and locket bails.

In jewelry making, findings are also important. There are the backbones of jewelry making. These are parts that are used to join jewelry components (beads, wires, and chains) together to make it complete. Examples include head pins, eye pins, chains, jump rings, ear wires, clasps etc.

-**Head pins** are flat at one end which is used to hold beads in place, and the other end is for “looping”. For starters it is recommended to get the longer ones.

-**Eye pins** are used to attach things like chains, wires or even more eye pins. Like the head pins, it is better to buy the long ones.

-**Jump rings** are multipurpose. You can use them to attach anything to everything ranging from eye pins to head pin to chains and so on. It can be gotten in different sizes. In addition, the ends of the wires are bent together not soldered.

-**Ear wires** are made from wires. It is used to attach a piece of earring to the ear.

-**Clasps** are jewelry fasteners that are used to connect or end bracelets or necklaces.

Chapter 2 - Super Useful Tips for Jewelry Making

Here are some tips that will help you get started on jewelry making.

Choose the type of Jewelry that you are interested in.

There are many sources to choose from ranging from beads to metal to clay and so on. It is important that you choose the one you feel suit you or your personality because if you just choose a certain area you do not feel strongly about then jewelry making might become frustrating for you.

Make sure to have some basic skills

Just like when you are working on a project or learning to ride a bike, you have to have some knowledge about it. It is the same for jewelry making. Some basic skills a beginner will have are how to close a jump ring or put wire in the hole of beads. Make sure you read about it, do some research, attend a class and remember always be patience. Even if you do not get it the first time, keep trying what is that saying about practice makes perfect. Okay you get the point.

Have the right tools

You cannot fix a car without having the right tools for it. In jewelry making, there are certain tools you must have (basic tools for beginners is talked about in chapter 1).

Invest in good storage containers

Make sure to get good containers that can store your beads, pins, wires in a good way.

Know what you need

When purchasing supplies for jewelry making, you have to know exactly what you need and the difference between two items that might look similar but are different for example head pin and eye pin or round nose pliers and chain nose pliers.

Do not be afraid

Always try out new things, new designs even if you do not get it the first time. You can take classes and there are only chances for improvement. Make sure to be PATIENCE at all times, Rome was not built in a day.

Chapter 3 - Jewelry Making Mistakes to Avoid

No one is perfect in this world. In this chapter, we are going to touch on some mistakes beginner jewelry makers make. We also talked about what you can do to correct these mistakes in the table below:

MISTAKES	CORRECTION
Wire loops are not uniform	You can mark your round nose pliers. Mark where you want the loops to be made. This can be done with a marker.
Picking a project that is hard for you	Make sure to always start from the basics. Start by doing simple projects and make sure to have had enough practice
Cutting wire incorrectly	Learn how to use a wire cutter correctly
Not using a practice wire first to practice cutting	Practice on a practice wire first before cutting. You can practice on copper or brass wires.

Not following the basic steps

Measure and cut the wire to the length you want then make a loop at one end and then straighten. The basic step is a simple step

Jump ring is opened by pulling them apart

Use two set of pliers to hold the ring so that the opening is in the middle. Then pull one of the pliers towards you and the other away from you

Not releasing your grip on the wire after bending it against a peg

When you release your grip, the wire relaxes back to its normal position. So by releasing your grip after bending the wire against a peg it enable the wire component not to spring out of shape.

Chapter 4 - Jewelry Making Techniques

There are different techniques used in jewelry making. This is the chapter some readers have been looking forward too. In this chapter we are going to tell you how to make some basic jewelry. As a beginner, you might get confused with what to start with not to worry the steps here are easy and self-explanatory.

MAKING A “P” LOOP WITH WIRE

- 1.You need a wire and round nose plier
- 2.Use the plier to hold a segment of the wire (very close to one end of the wire).
- 3.Hold the wire firmly with the plier. Then push the wire around the jaw of the pliers as far as possible until it cannot be pushed further.
- 4.You will notice that the loop has a very small opening where the rounded wire does not touch the straight wire piece. To close the small gap, reposition the wire in the pliers jaw so that you can and firmly grasp the wire.
- 5.Push the wire so that the gap is closed. The “P” shaped loop should have straight wire segment that connects to the rounded “P”.

CUTTING JEWELRY WIRE

1. Make sure to always hold both ends of the wire when cutting it. It is advisable to wear safety glasses when cutting a wire in case the wire goes flying to your face.
2. A good technique to use especially when cutting jewelry wire from a coil or spool is to cut it in a way that the flat side of the cut remains on the spool or coil. If it is cut this way, the wire you cut to work with will have a flat end and also a sharp end. Also remember that cutting tools are sharp so always be careful with it especially when little kids or babies are around.

BEAD STRINGING

1. Gather the beads you want to use and also the plan of your design.
2. Gather the tools you will need round nose pliers, wire cutters, chain nose pliers (flat nose and chain nose pliers), end findings and clasps.
3. Measure the length of the wire you want using a ruler. Then trim it using the wire cutter.
4. Start stringing on the first crimp. Pass one end of the beading wire up through one of the crimps, positioning the crimp about three inches from the end of the wire. Make sure to pass it back down through the crimp, pulling the short wire until a small loop forms. Make sure the loop is large enough to take the jump ring you will attach later.
5. Use the plier crimp that has the round/notched indentation to grasp the crimp but do not squeeze down.
6. Use your fingers to separate the wire strands so that the two wires are parallel to one another. Hold the wires apart to keep them from crossing.
7. Squeeze down the crimping pliers to make the first indentation in the crimp.
8. Reposition the crimp in the jaws of the pliers. Using the other crimp pliers

(the double-round indentations). Turn the crimp from its original angle.

9.Squeeze down the crimping pliers again. Make sure the crimp is secured.

10.Trim the excess beading wire from the wire tail using wire cutters.

WIRE WRAPPING TECHNIQUE

For this you need beads and wire (about 24G) of your choosing.

1. The tools needed are wire cutters, round nose pliers, curved nose pliers, needle nose pliers.
2. Start by threading the beads, and then make a loop using the round nose pliers then use the curved nose pliers to wrap the main wire that the round nose is holding twice.
3. Make sure to trim the remaining piece of the wire end. When trimming, trim close to the main wire using the wire cutter. Then use the small needle nose pliers to press the cut end.
4. After doing the first loop, slide the next bead threaded on the wire against the first loop.
5. To make the second loop, hold the main wire firmly with the round nose pliers use your free hand to wrap the wire over the top jaw of the round nose pliers and around the portion of the main wire that is between the pliers and the bead. Wrap the wire twice.
6. After the second wrapping, trim the wire close to the main wire.
7. Thread the next bead and repeat the steps on looping till you reach the length of bead you want.

8. Then attach the clasp. You can attach it by forming the number 8 with the round nose pliers. Place it in one of the loops, and a loop from the string of beads is placed in the other.

9. Lastly, wrap the wire three times around the figure 8 and press using the pliers and then trim out excess wire.

MAKING NECKLACE WITH POLYMER CLAY

You will need clay, a pasta machine or roller, cutting tool (knife), wax paper, jump ring, chain

1. Put the clay into the machine and roll it till you get the desired softness you want
2. Cut the edges of the clay to give it a smooth looking (this is optional)
3. Using an object of your choosing, (you can use a clay mold or maybe a stick anything you want the clay to take the form of).
4. Wrap the object with a wax paper or anything that is okay to be put in the oven.
5. Then wrap the clay around the object. Use a toothpick to smooth the ends
6. When you feel you have gotten the shape or design you want remove the paper and stick
7. Then paint the clay with any color of your choosing
8. Using a plier, open the jump ring and loop one end of the chain through it.
9. Then attach the clasp to the jump ring and place the chain through the opening of the colored clay
10. Close the jump ring and your chain is ready to be worn.

MAKING A BRACELET WITH CHARMS (CHARM BRACELET)

You need a round nose plier, head pin, clasp, jump rings, beads, chain, any charm of your choice

- Start by opening a jump ring (remember the correct way to open a jump ring was talked about)
- Add a charm to it then add the chain and close the jump ring.
- Take a head pin and insert it through the bead
- Use the plier to cut out the excess pin after insertion
- Make a loop using the round nose plier
- Add the chain via the loop and close the loop
- Take another jump ring and add a charm
- Attach the jump ring and charm to the chain
- Then insert a head pin through the pin and make a loop
- Attach the bead to the chain.
- Keep doing this until you feel you have enough charms and beads on the chain
- To add the clasp, place both one side of the clasp and the end of the chain on a jump ring



- Do the same thing with the other end of the clasp
- Make sure you close the jump ring
- Your charm bracelet is ready to wear.

MAKING BANGLES WITH WIRE



You will need wire cutter, glue, needle nose pliers and jump rings, any beads of your choice

- Take a wire and measure out the size of your wrist. Remember to leave excess because of the jump ring you will attach later
- After cutting the wire with the wire cutter, straighten the wire out with your hand
- Loop the wire through the hole of the bead of your choice.
- Make sure to keep the wire straight all the time.
- If you looped more than one bead, put a drop of glue in between the two beads and allow it to dry.
- To attach the circle hook, use the needle nose plier to curve up one side of the wire at the end (just a little curve).
- Then attach the hook and using the plier again, press down on it so the hook does not come off.
- To wear the bangle, loop the other side of the wire through the circle hook and voila! You are ready to go.

MAKING WIRE WRAPPED PENDANT

For this you will need wire cutter, round nose pliers, wire (20-22G), chain nose plier and any pendant of your choice

- Pull out about 12inches of wire from the spool. Using wire cutter to cut it.
- Then run the wire through your fingers, this makes the wire easier to work it.
- Run the wire through the hole of your pendant, bring it up and use the round nose plier to twist it.
- Trim the excess tail. Then using the round nose plier, place it on top of the wire to form a loop.
- Use the chain nose plier to grasp the loop, use your other free hand to wrap the wire around the stem.
- Trim the excess wire. Then you have your wrapped pendant with a loop. You can attach a chain to the loop to wear.

SIMPLE WIRE RING

To make a simple wire ring, you will need; wire cutters, hammer, either wood or iron.

- First start by measuring and cutting 17cm of wire. *if you want a bigger ring cut a longer wire.

- Then you curl up one end of the wire to form a swirl and curl the other end a little bit.



- Then use the hammer to make the wire flat from the swirl to the other end. Get out the item you want to use to form the ring like a nail polish or a bottle neck and wrap the wire around it.

- Finally, after getting the ring off the form glue it to any base of your choice and your ring is ready to wear.

BEAD NECKLACE WITH CHAIN

To do this you need round nose pliers, a chain of your choice (gold, brass, silver etc.), beads, wire cutter, eye pin and clasp.

- This design can be done by beginners it is simple and quick.
- First place the eye pin through the beads then bend it.
- Using the wire cutter, create a loop.
- Then loop the chains onto both sides of the eye pin on both sides cut the top of the chain and attach the clasp. Your necklace is ready to wear.

Chapter 5 - Jewelry Designs

Jewelry designs ideas can come from everywhere. You can get an idea when looking at a magazine, different color combination, different logos, when watching TV etc. You can merge to different designs from things around you (rug patterns etc.) to create your own designs. We are creative in our own way. It is easier for some people they can just get various designs by looking at the ground. While others need time to think go places, look at different patterns, color, read different magazines, to get some sort of inspiration.

To discover your creativity in jewelry design depends on you. How you view fashion, what interest you? There different patterns when it comes to jewelry making and these are:

1.Repeat

This is a repetitive or repetition of a pattern; black, white, black, white, black etc.

2.Symmetrical

A pattern that is identical on both sides. It is usually started from the middle. It is a mirrored type pattern equaled in balance and proportion.

3.Asymmetric

A pattern that is different on one side and also different on the other side.

4.Random

Is an unpredictable pattern, it is aimless and irregular.

A Jewelry style is what a person thinks of fashion and since fashion is unique so is a person's Jewelry style. It is used to express oneself. It can be classic, simple, big, sassy, fun, chic, festive, brass, current, bold or retro. Many things influence your choice of style varieties; options, choices and interest play a role.

We cannot talk about styles without talking about trends. Trends come and go but style remains the same. Trend and style goes together. When creating a jewelry design think about the trends you see today, trends you still remember from the past and also the trends that you like to follow it will help when creating a jewelry design.

Another thing to consider is color. Color is everywhere. In the sky, land, change of season, football clubs are represented by different colors. So it is an important factor in jewelry design. Also the type of jewelry you design depends on the occasion you want to use it for church, work, movies, dinner, parties etc. Adding beads to jewelry design can go a long way. You may have seen a bead somewhere that you thought was nice and can decide to incorporate it into the design you are working on.

Remember to spend within the budget you have. That is why it is always good to know what you want in order to avoid over spending or the trouble of having to return things back to the store. Do not go and get stuffs from the store if the design you want is still in thinking process. The more you create jewelry designs the more ideas will flow into your mind.

GETTING INSPIRATION FOR JEWELRY DESIGN

Inspiration is all around us. If you look and observe closely you will notice it. It can be a bit hard to notice if you are over whelmed. So the best thing for you to do is to take a break, clear your head and try and relax your mind. There are several places, things etc. you can be inspired from **Nature**: If you are someone who enjoys the great outdoors. You enjoy laying on the grass, listening to birds make beautiful music, you love watching the night stars, flowers, rocks, water or even the clear blue sky. You can find a jewelry design from any of this. Inspiration for a design can come to you from the things that surround you. It might come from the way a butterfly flew, how a rock is formed, the shape of a cloud, the color of a flower.

Color

As discussed before, if you look everywhere you will find color. Notice that each color has different shade you can find this by looking at different shades of flowers or going to a color store and browsing around.

Magazines

read lots of magazine that talk about decoration ranging from fashion magazine, crafts, and women's, to home décor magazines. It will speak to you and give you an idea or ideas in a jewelry design.

Substitute

like the name suggest substitute a part of a design with something else like for example think what will it look like with wood, brass, gold, stone, concrete, plastic instead of just plain silver. Substitution also works with color instead of using the same color for everything, try using a different color or mixtures of colors.

Combine

Try combining ideas that does not normally go together. Try different materials with each other till you feel you have found the one that resonates with you.

Adapt

Something you noticed in nature or somewhere. Like for example you are in a festival and the lantern used are red and gold Chinese lanterns which symbolizes bold and wealth. If that resonates with you, you can create a jewelry design similar to that.

Eliminate

Try removing parts of a design for another design. Instead of adding more stone how about you remove the excess unnecessary parts.

Modify

Try modifying some parts of your design. Like small portions that contribute to the design try making it the big portion instead.

Rearrange

Try something different by switching the design, ideas, or materials around. Maybe the way the beads are arranged or the stones try doing it in a totally different way.

When going out for inspiration either via bus, walks or anything remember to always carry a notebook and a pen to sketch or write down the ideas as it comes to you so that you do not forget or make mistakes when you are finally ready to start your design. There are quite a lot of techniques available to us out there that can generate good ideas for a design. It can come when you do not even expect it. Also, remember that all these things take patience while some might be very lucky in the inspiration department as it comes quickly to them others might not so remember not to get frustrated or down because eventually it will come to you and who knows that might be the best design you have ever made.

Conclusion

So, in this book we have talked about a lot of things to help you get started with jewelry making. The key to everything is determination, so if you put your heart into it you will definitely succeed.

As a beginner in jewelry making, it is important that you start at the first level because you will learn a lot of things do your research, read books, watch video, attend beginner's classes and get some jewelry making supplies. These are things you need to start the jewelry making process. Just like any other handworkjob, you have to get some supplies first. Always have an idea of what you think you need when going shopping for jewelry making. Make sure you have the right name of the tools, so that you do not over spend or buy the wrong things. That is why it is advisable to do some research first and also, knowing the measuring of what you want. Like either a 20G wire or 40G. Doing all this thing will help you develop a good foundation in jewelry making. Learn how to cut wires correctly, learn the proper tools to use for the occasion for example you cannot use a wire cutter to make a loop you have to use a round nose plier.

Also, as you progress remember to always experiment and try out new things because in doing so, you will gain experience. Remember the key to everything is PATIENCE. So even if you try out a new idea or a new design for the first time and it does not turn out to be what you want do not give up. Keep trying till you get it. Jewelry making is a lot of fun once you understand it and you also get to create and wear something that defines your personality more. Even if you feel you are out of designs remember we talked about different ways you can get inspiration.

GOOD LUCK!!!

CANDLE MAKING

DIY CANDLES: The Ultimate
Homemade Candles Guide - Candle
Making For Beginners - Master making
Luxurious, Natural Candles At Home
From Scratch



Nancy Moore

CANDLE MAKING

**DIY CANDLES: THE ULTIMATE HOMEMADE CANDLES GUIDE -
CANDLE MAKING FOR BEGINNERS - MASTER MAKING
LUXURIOUS, NATURAL CANDLES AT HOME FROM SCRATCH**

Book Description

Candles are relatively cheap and easy to find on the market today. Because of that, why would anyone want to make candles? For some, the pleasure comes from making something they find meaningful or useful. Others want to create a homemade product to gift a friend, colleague or family member.

This guide will take you through the journey of making candles while assuming you are an eager learner with no prior experience. Topics you'll learn about include:

Candle types

Waxes

Wicks

Fragrances and dyes

How to make container, votive and pillar candles

By the end of this guide, you'll be able to make three types of candles and have the knowledge and skills to make many more.

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Introduction

Candles used to be a vital part of people's lives, especially before the advent of electricity. People around the world would use candles to conduct activities during the night, whether that be reading, sitting up late with friends or taking care of sick family members. We needed light, and still do, at all times of the day.

Today, candles are not as necessary, but they are still a common presence in our lives, whether at birthday parties, weddings, holiday events, fine dining or prayers. People like candles because of the calm and celebratory presence they exude, because of the curiosity or reflectiveness generated by the dancing flames and because of their beautiful colors and aromas.

Candles are relatively cheap and easy to find on the market today. Because of that, why would you want to make candles? For some, the pleasure comes from making something they find meaningful or useful. Others want to create a homemade product to gift a friend, colleague or family member. Regardless of your reason, having one will make this process worthwhile.

In this guide, we'll make candles at a relatively low cost, using a mix of appliances you already have and those provided by the industry. We'll primarily be making them in the kitchen, or someplace with a stovetop. This guide will assume that you are an eager learner of candle making with no prior experience. It will prepare you with knowledge about candle types, wax, wicks, dyes and other basic materials needed for candle making.

I hope you will enjoy this guide and find it gives you hope to make candles.

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Chapter 1 - Candle Types

When you are asked to imagine a candle, what is the first image that comes to your mind? Did you image a long stick of wax sitting on a small plate with a flame atop? Or perhaps a round soap-like object burning in a cup? Candles come in a variety of shapes, containers and styles that are crafted with different methods. Several common types of candles, which you'll see at weddings, restaurants and decorative events, are container candles, votive candles and pillar candles. I would recommend starting with these types for the beginner candle-maker.

Container Candle

The container candle is such named for its use of a container. The wax fills the container in its entirety, taking the shape of the container. Common types of containers for this candle include heat-resistant glass and ceramic pottery, because these materials tend to do well under exposure to heat. A small wick appears at the center, and it can be burnt until all the wax has melted into viscous pool. The use of glassware that protects and encapsulates the fire of the candle makes this a generally safe, steady type of candle to have around the house, on shelves, on tables and so forth.



Pillar Candle

The pillar candle distinguishes itself as a candle that can burn while standing on its own. The candle usually comes in a round, cylindrical shape, although it can also come in square and hexagonal shapes. It is generally molded, meaning that you carve and craft the shape of the candle. A heat-resistant plate or stand is often placed underneath this candle to catch any molten wax that drips off, although if it is wicked correctly, there shouldn't be much drip.



Votive Candle

The votive candle is like a hybrid between the container candle and the pillar candle.

They are generally small, shaped in a square or cylinder, and rise about 2 ½ inches, the length of a battery cell, and 1 ½ inch diameter. The votive candle is generally placed in a container larger than itself, so that it burns initially like a pillar candle, but then appears more like a container candle as the wax melts to fill the container.

The candle received its name from its common use as a votive offering in Christianity. Traditionally, it is burnt at altars and churches as an act of prayer. The candle can also be burnt during many other occasions, including during dining and holiday gatherings.



Chapter 2 - Knowing Your Materials

This chapter covers a variety of materials that you'll need to know about before beginning to make candles. To make this as unintimidating as possible, this chapter is broken up into sections and will contain subheadings and some pictures to guide your learning.

Wax

Wax is the basic material for making candles and varies depending on the type of candle you want to make. The melting point of the wax helps you decide which wax is suitable, as different types require different melting points. Among the three types in this guide, container candles have the lowest melting point of wax, votive candles come in second and pillar candles have the highest melting points, which is necessary because they need to stand on their own and cannot become a messy pool. The following are the recommended melting points for each type:

130°F (55°C) or lower melting point of wax is most suitable for container candles because melted wax is easily contained.

129°F - 142°F (53°C - 60°C) melting point is suitable for making votive candles.

134°F - 147°F (56°C - 63°C) melting point is suitable for making pillar candles.

These melting points can be found in each of the wax materials outlined below, although each will also have specific properties that suit certain candle types more than others.

Paraffin

Paraffin wax is the most common type of wax used in candles around the world. Imagine a small pillar candle, and you'll likely imagine a candle that is white and smooth, made of paraffin wax. It is synthesized by industrial methods of removing the waxy substance from unrefined petroleum. The abundance of petroleum, compared to natural oils, beeswax or animal fats, paraffin has allowed paraffin to reach the popularity it has today. Paraffin is available at a variety of melting points and is used in candles of all types.

Soy

Soy wax is a vegetable-based candle wax made as a “natural” alternative to the paraffin waxes. The process of making this type of wax is coincidentally similar to making trans fats: by hydrogenating soybean oil. Soy waxes that are made of 100% soybean oil are best used as container candles as a result of their low melting points. They can also be blended with other waxes, such as palm or paraffin, to create wax blends of a variety of melting points, properties and fragrances, giving you benefits from multiple wax sources.

Palm

Palm is a vegetable-based candle wax and another natural alternative on the market, made in the same way as soy waxes are. Palm wax tends to have very firm qualities, making it a good candidate for votive and pillar candles, although some containercandles have been found to use palm wax as well. Its texture produces a lovely “feathered” design in candles.



Wax blend

Wax blends are commercial wax products that blend a variety of waxes to create a wax with specific characteristics and qualities for your needs. Wax blends will often recommend a type of candle to be used for will be labeled with melting point and will note its fragrance retention, or the ability to produce fragrance as the candle is being burned.



Wicks

When you light a candle, you probably instinctively go for the papery like tip that sticks out of the candle. This is called the “wick.” It is the part of a candle that holds the flame when you light it with a match. In a way, the wick functions like a pipe, carrying melted wax to the flame to keep it burning consistently. An improperly made wick or one that carries melted wax inefficiently can cause the flame to quickly go out, or more dangerously, to flare and burgeon wildly.

There are three main types of wick that are sold in stores. It’s important to choose the right one to match the type of candle you’re trying to make, as well as the type of wax you’re using.

Flat

Flat wicks are knitted or plaited and made from three fibre strands that have been braided together. These tend to burn consistently and curl into the flame, allowing the flame to burn cleaner. Because of their ability to burn consistently, they are great to use with pillar or taper candles where the flame is exposed to the surrounding air. Flat wicks may cause problems when used with votive or container candles because of their curling properties, which can lead to damage of the container that holds the candle if the flame curls into it.



Square

These wicks are braided or knitted in similar styles as flat wicks but are larger and rounder to allow them to deliver more fuel to the candle. The square wick is the preferred style for candles made of beeswax to prevent clogging of the “pipe,” which is more likely to happen when melted beeswax is transmitted through smaller wicks. Square wicks are also a good choice when using palm or soy wax, as these types of wax are viscous and clog easily as well.



Cored

Cored wicks use a rigid material for their core, often of zinc, tin, paper or cotton. The material keeps the wick standing upright so that the flame remains in place as it burns. Unlike flat or square wicks, cored wicks will not curl. As a result, they also burn less consistently; flaring or dimming a little more frequently than the other two types, but the flame will not curl into the container. For this reason, cored wicks are popular choices for container, votive and pillar candles. Before the mid-1970s, cored wicks were also offered in lead. Lead wicks have been banned in the United States since 2003, and studies have shown that tin and zinc are safe metals for burning.



Twisted

Twisted wicks are generally low-quality wicks compared to the previous three. This is because the wicks are made by twisting strands of fiber together, resulting in a loose construction. They are not recommended for moderate to long-burning candles, such as pillar, container or votive candles, but they are frequently used for the birthday candles. If you've ever seen a birthday candle before, you've seen how quickly they seem to burn and shrink within a minute of the candle's being lit. The flame of the candle is also unsteady, flickering and flaring at the slightest wind. In contrast, the flames of candles burnt on cored, flat or square wicks are more consistent and less vulnerable to unintentionally blowouts.



Vessels and Holders

Many candles, especially of the container and votive type, require a vessel to contain the candle. Pillar candles do not require one but can benefit from the decorative appeal which holders and vessels give to their look. There are many options of vessels and holders for each type of candle.

Container Candles

For container candles, you'll need to choose a vessel to keep your candle in. Glass and ceramic are particular popular media for container candles because of their heat-resistant properties. A conventional piece of glassware for container candles would be an apothecary jar, but you can even use used tomato-paste jars, jelly jars or other containers you can get at grocery stores. Just be careful to use glassware without cracks and is standard glass—meaning not mixed with plastics or other materials. Sometimes the container is accompanied with a glass or metal lid, but this is not necessary. Other common options include square and hexagonal shaped glass or ceramic jars.



Votive Candles

Votive candles are commonly placed in small pieces of glassware or ceramic. These include glass cups slightly taller than the candles themselves. Votive candles tend not to have lids traditionally, so as to allow the flame to be seen clearer during a prayer or offering.



Pillar Candles

Pillar candles don't need glassware or ceramic holders, but they can use candleholders, which are stands that are made from a variety of materials. Stands can be made of ceramic, glass or even wood. Their main purpose is decoration and they come in diverse shapes, from pedestals to trident-shaped holders.



Molds

Molds mostly apply when making votive and pillar candles. Because these candles take certain shape of their own, they need to be sculpted into this shape from the wax. Molds are the most common way of doing this.

Mold with Wick Pin

You can choose a mold that comes with a wick pin, a thin, metal rod those substitutes for the wick that will be threaded into the candle after its completion.



Mold Without Wick Pin

Other molds do not have a wick pin but may have a wick hole that marks where the wick should be centered. If you choose this type of mold, you have the option of using a wick-setter tool or making a makeshift setter yourself. Whichever one you use will be satisfactory for the recipes in this guide. For the purpose of making the recipes more accessible, they will show you how to create a makeshift setter.

If you're looking to use a wick-setter tool, a reliable one is the EZ wick-setter, which can be bought from suppliers online with instructions on how to use them. The wick-setter tool will be even more helpful for more advanced wicking, such as setting double or triple wicks on a single candle.

Fragrance additives (optional)

There are endless scents that can be added to the wax of your candle. When the candle burns, the fragrance in the wax is released and the scent permeates the air. Just a sample of the fragrances on the market includes almond cake, butter pecan pie, cinnamon stick, lilac, jasmine, honey, muscadine, unwashed linen and tropical fruit salsa.



Using phthalate-free oils or DEP

One important health consideration when choosing fragrance oils is the presence of phthalates, a type of chemical. A number of phthalates, including Dibutyl Phthalate (DBP) and Diethyl Hexyl Phthalate (DEHP), should be avoided due to their classification as carcinogens. The only safe phthalate that should be considered is Diethyl Phthalate (DEP), which has not been restricted by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration), the IFRA (International Fragrance Association) and other organizations for regulation and safety. You can try to avoid phthalates altogether by looking into phthalate-free fragrance oils. Many of them will have a label letting you know that they don't contain this chemical in their products.

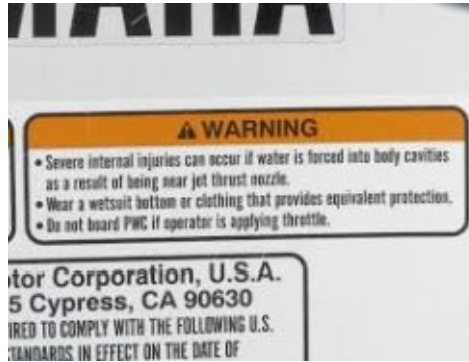
Dye additives (optional)

Dyes add color to the candle and can be found in crafting stores. You can use liquid or solid dyes. Only a small amount of dye is needed to color a substantial amount of wax, and the amount you add is up to you—how light or dark of shade you want for your candle. The concentration of dyes should be labeled on their products and will give you an indication of how much dye you might use.



Warning labels (optional)

At the end of your making your container or votive candle, you may choose to add a warning label onto the bottom of your vessel. You can buy these online or in craft stores without much trouble.



Lab Equipment

Making a candle is like doing a small-scale experiment in the lab but doing so in your kitchen. You'll need some equipment arranged before you take the first step toward making your candle.

Source of Heat

For most people, this will be a kitchen stove. A source of heat that you can regulate is recommended.

Double-boiler system

This is a term for a large, low-edged pot of boiling water with another container inside of it to melt the wax. For the outer pot, you can choose to use an ordinary saucer or frying pan. The container inside, it's recommended to have a pouring pot. You'll be boiling, mixing and pouring wax out of this pot.



Example of an "outer pot"

Pouring pot

A pouring pot can come in different sizes, the most important decision in deciding is to determine how much candlewax you want to make and the size of your outer pot in the double-boiler system. For the purposes of this guide, which makes single candles at a time, a small pouring pot holding 1 lb. of wax will work well.



Example of a pouring pot, a basic metal pot with a spout for pouring.

Scale

A scale will be necessary to weigh the wax you need for your candle. Any accurate scale will do, but a digital scale will make measuring more convenient, as it can give you units in a variety of standards, such as ounces, pounds or grams.

Thermometer

Candy thermometer (optional)

A candy thermometer is also known as a “cooking” thermometer or a “sugar” thermometer for its use in measuring the temperature of sugary solutions. You can also use this for monitoring the temperature of your melting wax solution, which is similarly viscous in texture.

Digital thermometer (optional)

A digital thermometer gives you a digital reading of the temperature. These can give an accurate reading in a spectrum of solutions, including wax solutions. With a metal tongue for reading the temperature, these are more durable than the glass used for candy thermometers and can be more expensive, too.

Wick Setter Materials

These materials are only necessary if you choose a mold without a wick pin and choose to forego an EZ wick-setter. They will also be used in the step-by-step section of this guide. To set the wick by homemade means, you'll need a few tools:

A wick bar - a long metal bar with a slit in the middle for holding the wick.

Hot glue –for gluing the wick to the bottom of containers.

A thin hollowed out pen or a thin straw – to help center the wick in the container and set it straight.

Chapter 3 - Safety First

After assembling all your materials and understanding their purposes, it is important to keep in mind safety before beginning to make a candle. Check to see if you've met the following safety requirements. If you discover you have doubts, revisit a previous section that it was covered in.

Before making your candle

Have you chosen non-flammable material for your container, if applicable?

Is your wick made of appropriate material and size for the type of candle you're making?

Does your wax melting point suit your type of candle?

During candle making

Has the wick been properly centered?

Is the glassware in good condition, meaning that it hasn't developed cracks from heat exposure?

After completing your candle

Will the candle be burned on a heat-resistant surface?

Are there flammable materials (like tablecloth or drapes) near the burning candle?

Meeting these requirements will provide a safeguard for you and your surroundings. Remember: working with fire always needs precaution.

Chapter 4 - Making a Container Candle

Now, that you've been briefed on the materials, safety and background for candle making, let's begin to make our first container candle. Container candles are great for the beginner because they introduce you to common steps to make all candles while having less difficult technique. At the completion of this recipe, you'll have a beautiful container candle that can be placed almost anywhere to exude a calm presence.

Materials

Stove or heat source

Oven (optional)

Wax with melting point 130°F (55°C) or lower

Candle jar or container

Wick (cored preferred)

Wick setting materials (straw or hollowed pen, hot glue, wick bar)

Pouring pot (part of "double-boiler")

Sauce pan (part of "double-boiler")

Metal cookie cutter (optional)

Metal spoon or stick for stirring

Thermometer

Dye (optional)

Fragrance oil (optional)

Knife

Paper towels

Scrap paper or newspaper

Cookie sheet or pan

Caution labels (optional)

Step 1: Calculate the Amount of Wax

We're going to start by determining how much wax we'll need by a simple formula. Using the scale, measure and record—in ounces—the weight of your container while empty, and then its weight while filled with water to the level that you would like to fill with wax. Determine the weight of the water alone by subtracting the water-filled weight from the empty container weight. Then, multiply that number by .844 to determine the number of ounces of wax you need.

Step 2: Measure out the Wax

Depending on the type of wax, especially if you use paraffin, you may need a knife to cut out the portion you need. Measure out this wax on the scale and set it aside. You may want to measure out a little extra to account for the “second pours” in Step 10.

Step 3: Set the Wick on the Container

For this step, we're going to use our wick setting materials, wick and container. Thread the wick through the straw or hollowed pen to keep the wick straight. Dab a bit of hot glue to the end of the wick and firmly press it into the center of the container. It's important that the wick is centered so that the flame burns evenly in the container. Withdrawing the straw or pen shaft from the wick set the wick bar horizontally across the jar, insert the wick into the slit and adjust so that the length inside the container is straight. Repeat this step for as many containers as you'll make for this experiment.

Step 4: Pre-Heat Containers

Keeping the wick bars in place, load the containers onto a cookie sheet or pan to place into the oven or on an alternative heated source. Pre-heat to 150F so that the jars are warm but not heated enough to melt the wicks. Pre-heating will help prevent the glass from breaking when we later pour hot wax into these colder containers.

Step 5: Melt the Wax

Create the “double-boiler” by adding 1 inch of water to the saucepan and placing the pouring pot in the pan. Make sure the fit is good, and if not, place a metal cookie cutter underneath the pot to elevate it.

Take the wax you had set aside in Step 2 and melt it in the pouring pot. Using the thermometer, monitor the temperature of the wax solution to ensure that it reaches at least 170F. Adjust the heat if necessary to prevent the solution from becoming too hot (200F or higher). Once the solution has melted, you are ready to add fragrances.

Step 6: Add Fragrance Oil

You can measure out fragrance oil by spoon or in a small container. A tablespoon amounts to .5 ounces of fragrance oil. When measuring fragrance oil in a container on the scale, make sure to take the container weight into account. It is common to add 1 ounce of fragrance oil per 16 ounces of wax. Pour the fragrance into the wax and stir.

Step 7: Add Dye

Add the desired quantity of dye to the heated wax solution. If you're using solid blocks, break them into smaller pieces to allow for easier dissolving. If you're using liquid dye, add the desired number of drops. Mix thoroughly until the wax has a consistent color.

The color of the solution will be darker than the color once the wax has hardened. To test the color of the dye, take a small spoon of wax and drip it onto a paper towel or cloth. Allow the wax to harden to get the shade of the finished product.

Step 8: Pour into Containers

Spread out the newspapers on a flat surface to prepare for pouring. Take the wicked containers out of the oven and place them onto the newspaper, keeping them closely grouped to slow their cooling. Pour the wax slowly into the jars without overfilling them. After pouring, make sure the wicks are centered and upright, adjusting them with the wick bar.

Step 9: Allow the Wax to Cool

Allow the wax to cool slowly, keeping away fans or other cooling sources from the wax. Once the top surface has cooled, you may poke some holes near the wick to prevent that area from having air pockets that can disrupt burning. Complete cooling may take several hours.

Step 10: Second Pour (optional)

As the candle wax solidifies, it may “shrink” some, creating gaps in the candle. If so, reheat any remaining wax in the double-boiler and pour over the containers again. Adjust the wicks if necessary and repeat the cooling process in Step 9.

Step 11: Trim the Wicks

After the wax has fully cooled, remove the wick bar and trim the wicks to ¼ inch from the surface. Be careful not to trim them too short.

Step 12: Add the Caution Label (optional)

Add a caution label to the bottom of your container.

Congratulations, you've made a container candle! Allow it to sit a few days before burning them to get the best scent.

Chapter 5 - Making Votive Candles

Votive candles are made in a similar way as container candles, but there are several points of differences. Instead of a container, a votive mold is used to give the candle its shape. No pre-heating will be necessary. At the end of this recipe, you should have a nice votive candle that you can burn at prayers, festivities or other events.

Materials

Stove or heat source

129°F - 142°F (53°C - 60°C) melting point wax

Votive mold

Wick (cored preferred)

Wick setting materials (straw or hollowed pen, wick bar)

Pouring pot (part of “double-boiler”)

Sauce pan (part of “double-boiler”)

Metal cookie cutter (optional)

Metal spoon or stick for stirring

Knife

Thermometer

Dye (optional)

Fragrance oil (optional)

Paper towels

Scrap paper or newspaper

Caution labels (optional)

Step 1: Calculate the Amount of Wax

We're going to start by determining how much wax we'll need by a simple formula. Using the scale, measure and record—in ounces—the weight of your container while empty, and then its weight while filled with water to the level that you would like to fill with wax. Determine the weight of the water alone by subtracting the water-filled weight from the empty container weight. Then, multiply that number by .844 to determine the number of ounces of wax you need.

Step 2: Measure out the Wax

Depending on the type of wax, especially if you use paraffin, you may need a knife to cut out the portion you need. If your wax comes in small pebbles, scoop and weigh out the amount you need. If your wax comes in tough blocks, you may require a utility knife to cut out the portion. An efficient way of cutting is to score a section and break it off with your hands. Measure out the wax on the scale and set it aside. You may want to measure out a little extra to account for the “second pours” in Step 9.

Step 3: Set the Wick on the Votive Mold

Spread out newspapers on a flat surface to place the molds on. Then, prepare the wick setting materials, wicks and votive molds. Thread the wick through the straw or hollowed pen to keep the wick straight. You should not use hot glue because the candle will be eventually leached from its mold. Instead, align the wick so that the end just touches the bottom of the mold and keep the wick centered. Withdrawing the straw or pen shaft from the wick, set the wick bar horizontally across the jar, insert the wick into the slit and adjust so that the length inside the mold is straight. Repeat this step for as many votive molds as you'll make.

Step 4: Melt the Wax

Create the "double-boiler" by adding 1 inch of water to the saucepan and placing the pouring pot in the pan. Make sure the fit is good, and if not, place a metal cookie cutter underneath the pot to elevate it.

Take the wax you had set aside in Step 2 and melt it in the pouring pot. Using the thermometer, monitor the temperature of the wax solution to ensure that it reaches around 180F. Adjust the heat if necessary to prevent the solution from becoming too hot (200F or higher). Once the solution has melted, you are ready to add fragrances.

Step 5: Add Fragrance Oil

You can measure out fragrance oil by spoon or in a small container. A tablespoon amounts to .5 ounces of fragrance oil. When measuring fragrance oil in a container on the scale, make sure to take the container weight into account. It is common to add 1 ounce of fragrance oil per 16 ounces of wax. Pour the fragrance into the wax and stir.

Step 6: Add Dye

Add the desired quantity of dye to the heated wax solution. If you're using solid blocks, break them into smaller pieces to allow for easier dissolving. If you're using liquid dye, add the desired number of drops. Mix thoroughly until the wax has a consistent color.

The color of the solution will be darker than the color once the wax has hardened. To test the color of the dye, take a small spoon of wax and drip it onto a paper towel or cloth. Allow the wax to harden to get the shade of the finished product.

Step 7: Pour into Votive Molds

Let the wax cool to 170F-180F. Pour the wax slowly into the votive molds without overfilling them. After pouring, make sure the wicks are centered and upright, adjusting them with the wick bar.

Step 8: Allow the Wax to Cool

Allow the wax to cool slowly, keeping away fans or other cooling sources from the wax. Once the top surface has cooled, you may poke some holes near the wick to prevent that area from having air pockets that can disrupt burning. Complete cooling may take several hours.

Step 9: Second Pour

As the candle wax sets, it will “shrink” some and you will be able to see a “sink hole” around the wick. It is common when making votive candles to do a second pour. Reheat the remaining wax in the double-boiler, this time to 190F for better blending of the waxes, and pour over the molds again. Pour just slightly higher than the mold’s edge, as the wax will shrink again. Allow the wax to settle for several hours until completely cool.

Step 10: Remove Candles from Molds

If the wax is completely set, you should be able to easily remove the candles from the molds by pulling them up by the wicks. If you have trouble removing them, place the molds in the freezer for 5 minutes and repeat this process if necessary. Take care not to leave them in the freezer for too long, as the wax can fall apart.

Step 11: Trim the Wicks

Remove the wick bar and trim the wicks to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the surface. Be careful not to trim them too short so that they burn properly.

Step 12: Add the Caution Label (optional)

Add a caution label to the bottom of your candle.

Congratulations, you've made a votive candle! Choose a small glass container that fits your candle before burning it.

Chapter 6 - Making Pillar Candles

Like votive candles, pillar candles also require special molds. The process for making this type of candle is more complex because of the precision needed to fix the wicks. Note the use of a wick pin in this recipe and the lack of homemade wick-setting materials as were used in the previous recipes. By the end of this guide, you'll have a pillar candle that can burn on your desk without support.

Materials

Stove or heat source

134°F - 147°F (56°C - 63°C) melting point wax

Pillar mold with wick pin

Mold putty

Wick (braided, flat or cored)

Wick bar

Pouring pot (part of "double-boiler")

Sauce pan (part of "double-boiler")

Metal cookie cutter (optional)

Metal spoon or stick for stirring

Knife

Thermometer

Dye (optional)

Fragrance oil (optional)

Paper towels

Scrap paper or newspaper

Caution labels (optional)

Step 1: Calculate the Amount of Wax

We're going to start by determining how much wax we'll need by a simple formula. Using the scale, measure and record—in ounces—the weight of your container while empty, and then its weight while filled with water to the level that you would like to fill with wax. Determine the weight of the water alone by subtracting the water-filled weight from the empty container weight. Then, multiply that number by .844 to determine the number of ounces of wax you need.

Step 2: Measure out the Wax

Depending on the type of wax, especially if you use paraffin, you may need a knife to cut out the portion you need. If your wax comes in small pebbles, scoop and weigh out the amount you need. If your wax comes in tough blocks, you may require a utility knife to cut out the portion. An efficient way of cutting is to score a section and break it off with your hands. Measure out the wax on the scale and set it aside. You may want to measure out a little extra to account for the “second pours” in Step 9.

Step 3: Set the Wick on the Pillar Mold

Spread out newspapers on a flat surface to place the molds on. Then, prepare the wick bar, mold putty, the pillar mold and the wick pin. The wick pin, if not already built into the pillar mold, should be fastened to the bottom-center with some mold putty. Insert the wick pin into the wick bar to keep pin center-aligned and straight. No wick is necessary at this step, because the pin will substitute in its place until near the end of this process. Repeat this step for as many votive molds as you'll make.

Step 4: Melt the Wax

Create the “double-boiler” by adding 1 inch of water to the saucepan and placing the pouring pot in the pan. Make sure the fit is good, and if not, place a metal cookie cutter underneath the pot to elevate it.

Take the wax you had set aside in Step 2 and melt it in the pouring pot. Using the thermometer, monitor the temperature of the wax solution to ensure that it reaches around 180F. Adjust the heat if necessary to prevent the solution from becoming too hot (200F or higher). Once the solution has melted, you are ready to add fragrances.

Step 5: Add Fragrance Oil

You can measure out fragrance oil by spoon or in a small container. A tablespoon amounts to .5 ounces of fragrance oil. When measuring fragrance oil in a container on the scale, make sure to take the container weight into account. It is common to add 1 ounce of fragrance oil per 16 ounces of wax. Pour the fragrance into the wax and stir.

Step 6: Add Dye

Add the desired quantity of dye to the heated wax solution. If you're using solid blocks, break them into smaller pieces to allow for easier dissolving. If you're using liquid dye, add the desired number of drops. Mix thoroughly until the wax has a consistent color. The color of the solution will be darker than the color once the wax has hardened. To test the color of the dye, take a small spoon of wax and drip it onto a paper towel or cloth. Allow the wax to harden to get the shade of the finished product.

Step 7: Pour into Pillar Molds

Let the wax cool to 170F-180F. Pour the wax slowly into the pillar molds without overfilling them. After pouring, make sure the wicks are centered and upright, adjusting them with the wick bar.

Step 8: Allow the Wax to Cool

Allow the wax to cool slowly, keeping away fans or other cooling sources from the wax. Once the top surface has cooled, you may poke some holes near the wick to prevent that area from having air pockets that can disrupt burning. Complete cooling may take several hours.

Step 9: Second Pour

As the candle wax sets, it will “shrink” some and you will be able to see a “sink hole” around the wick. It is common when making pillar candles to do a second pour. Reheat the remaining wax in the double-boiler, this time to 190F for better blending of the waxes, and pour over the molds again. Pour just slightly higher than the mold’s edge, as the wax will shrink again. Allow the wax to settle for several hours until completely cool.

Step 10: Remove Candles from Molds

If the wax is completely set, you should be able to easily remove the candles from the molds by turning them upside down and tapping on the bottom. If you have trouble removing them, place the molds in the freezer for 5 minutes and repeat this process if necessary. Take care not to leave them in the freezer for too long, as the wax can fall apart.

Step 11: Insert Wicks

Set aside the wick bar and gently remove the wick pin from the candle. Take a wick and thread it through the space left by the pin.

Step 12: Trim the Wicks

Trim the wicks to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the surface. Be careful not to trim them too short so that they burn properly.

Step 13: Add the Caution Label (optional)

Add a caution label to the bottom of your candle.

Step 14: Try your Candle

Be sure to keep track of the melt pool of your pillar candle while burning it. This is the best way to test the success of your candle.

Congratulations, you've made a pillar candle! If you like, you can press on the edges around the upper surface of your candle to soften them.

Conclusion

Making candles is a simple yet patient venture. If you've tried out a recipe, you know that waiting for candles to cool before doing a second pour can take a whole afternoon or two. But the rewards are fulfilling.

You've finished with a long-lasting candle that can burn for many hours that you've made by yourself. Hopefully, you have a product with the color, fragrance and other qualities that you like - because you picked them. And even if your experiment turned out less fortunate, hopefully you found the journey itself worthwhile. The knowledge and skills you've gained from making something on your own are valuable in itself.

I hope you've enjoyed this guide and will continue to try making candles.

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CONTAINER GARDENING

The Ultimate Container Gardening Guide

DIY - How to Grow Air-Cleaning House Plants,
Flowers and Organic Vegetables at home



Marie Williams

CONTAINER GARDENING

THE ULTIMATE CONTAINER GARDENING GUIDE: DIY - HOW TO GROW AIR- CLEANING HOUSE PLANTS, FLOWERS AND ORGANIC VEGETABLES AT HOME

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Introduction

Plants continue their dominance in our lives. Besides being a source of food for us and animals they also happen to be the source of elegance that completes a home. Today, a house is never considered complete until it has a number of plants not only on its outside but also in the inside. Build a house and use the best architectural designs available today, give it the best wall colors and wall papers, observe the best practices in interior and exterior designing, furnish it the best way you know how but if all that does not include a number of plants - flowers to be more specific - the house will still feel dead, empty. A few plants will always give that life that completes an elegant house. Having good knowledge and applying a few indoor and outdoor planting makes even the simplest built house look and feel much more exquisite.

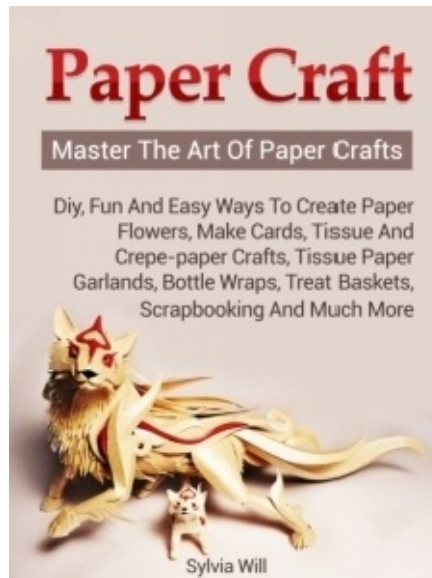
The biggest problem we have today is space. The increase in population, cost of living and cost of land has seen many people end up without room or space where they can put plants to add that beautiful touch to their houses. This has seen a need for alternate ways and means of beautifying houses therefore resulting to the emergence of artificial plants to serve this purpose. Artificial plants are good for the look of the house but they don't come close to what real plant do. Container gardening practice has therefore emerged and will provide long lasting beauty to a home while also providing food in form of vegetable for the family.

With container gardening you will be able to create a beautiful flower garden both indoors and outdoors therefore improving the look of your home. There is so much you need to learn concerning container gardening including the best plants to use as flowers and the best plants for container planted vegetables. To achieve the best results in container gardening there are a number of things that one needs to look into very keenly. This includes container choice and design, soil types, best plants for indoor and outdoor planting and also the procedures and practices that help you nurture a beautiful and productive organic plant.

This book will guide you on these practices focusing on beauty, health (safety) and food as the main principles of Indoor gardening. The reasons why people make container gardens is to achieve beauty for their houses, improve the air in their homes and also get food from the plants. After reading this book you will be able to grow air cleaning house plants to

replace the artificial ones and also get vegetable gardening tips that will not only provide you healthier vegetables but also improve the appearance of your house's exterior.

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CHAPTER ONE

Choosing the Best Plants for Container Gardening

The process of making and maintaining healthy container gardens starts with selecting the best flowers, vegetables or simply organic plants to use for your organic home gardening. The type of plants you decide to grow is highly determined by the space available. This helps you assess the size of containers you will be able to use which in turn helps you decide the size of plants you have to put inside or outside your house. There are many plants you can put in your home garden but of course keen decision making has to be gone through to ensure the plants grow well. You have to make sure the flowers or vegetables you decide to plant do well in the space available. This is determined by the roots and height of plant growth. To help you decide the plants that best suits your home gardening here are a number of plants that do great in container gardening.

Vegetables for in-house and outside container gardening

Beans

Beans do great in both indoor and outdoor planting. The best thing about them is that they don't require very large planters/containers. The size of the container may be determined by the number of plants you wish to put in one planter. They don't require too much maintenance for them to grow. You can combine a number of bean varieties in one container.

Carrots

The size of the carrot plant height wise and the fact that it is a root plant makes them a great choice. In a two gallon container you can grow as many as five plants as long as they long enough for the carrot root. The number changes with carrot varieties. You may want to consider combine the short and long varieties.

Tomatoes

Tomatoes planting vary with variety. There are those that grow too long and require cages or suspenders to offer support. Most people prefer the dwarf varieties that produce small sizes of tomato berries. For tomatoes you may want to choose a large container to grow them outdoors.

Squash

The best thing about squash varieties is the fact that you can grow them anywhere. A one gallon container will be enough for squash. Their versatility makes them a great choice. They don't even require support.

Parsley

For an indoor planter parsley will be great choice. It doesn't require big containers and will do well during winter too. You can grow them indoor, in your balcony or any small space remaining between other plant containers as it does not need much space.

Onions

Just like Parsley onions will only need a small space. There are a number of varieties to choose from but the best are the leafy qualities as you they continue to produce more are you pluck and use the parts.

Herbs

There are number of herbs that will grow just like an onion or parsley. The best thing about many herbs is their small space requirement and simple keeping. You can choose from dill, mint, rosemary etc. With a larger container you can grow a number of them combined together.

Lettuce & Eggplant

If you have space then lettuce will be another great choice. For lettuce you may require a five gallon container for them to do well outdoor preferably. Another plant that will require the same is the eggplant.

Cabbages

Cabbages are among the most common plants you will find in a home container garden. Most people favor them because they don't have long roots and therefore one plant will not require a large or long container. The only issue with them is that the part above soil will take up some space. Combining them with kales at the edges of the container or around them makes them work better.

Kales

Just like the cabbages, kales will never fail. Long kale varieties can be combined with other short types of vegetables including herbs to maximize use of space. They don't need support and they mature very first. Still, they have a very long life span so you enjoy them longer than many other vegetables.

Pepper

Peppers do great in container gardening. A pepper plant grows long and therefore is good for someone looking to do combinations. In their container you can put a number of short herbs.

Broccoli

For Broccoli just get a four gallon container for each plant. Be it the DeCicco or the Green Comet, they are a favorite for container gardening.

Others

The list of vegetable plants you can grow in container gardening is very long. The choice you make has to be based on the space available and the season during which you are doing your gardening. Other plants you may want to consider for this type of gardening include Radishes, cucumbers, Basil, Zucchini, Strawberries, Cantaloupe, Oregano, Chives, cherry, Potatoes, chard, Asian greens, Spinach, garlic, turnips, beets, Peas and many others. The best thing about vegetables is the fact that they can be combined in one container.

Air-Cleaning indoor plants and flowers

Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera is famous for its characteristics as an essential oil. It is also a very popular air cleaner and will grow well in an in house container. It however requires sunlight for it to flourish. A strategic position would be near a window.

Ferns

The Boston fern and Kimberley queen are considered the top ferns you can choose from for indoor plants due to their air purification capabilities. You can trust on them for Benzene, formaldehyde and Xylene removal. They are easy to maintain and their water intake is not wanting. With a container with a good reservoir they can go long without re-watering.

Chinese evergreen

This plant also known as the Deborah is a favorite in container gardening because it produces blooms and red berries as it continues to clean air. It is easy to maintain and will do great in almost all seasons.

English Ivy

The ivy will not only remove formaldehyde from your home but will also provide beauty to your home structures. It is a climbing plant so you can place its container on one end then guide it towards a place you want it to decorate.

Red-edged Dracaena

As the name suggests they have red edges which make them beautiful adding a touch of green and red coloring to your home. They grow long and they are good for the removal of xylene, formaldehyde resulting from lacquers, varnishes and gasoline.

Golden pothos

The golden pothos is gaining popularity every day. It is one of the easiest plants to care for and withstand harsh conditions for a long time.

Philodendrons

The philodendrons and golden pothos look very much alike and still have the same qualities. They are a great air purifier and their keep make them great for Container Gardening for beginners especially for indoor purposes.

Chrysanthemum

This flower will remove benzene and other pollutants found in paints, glue and detergents. It just requires you to position it in a place where there is bright light. You may need to put them in direct sunlight for the buds to open.

Peace lily

The lily does really great indoors and will grow and maintain its healthy appearance during all seasons. It will rid your house of benzene, formaldehyde and other cleaning and personal care product emissions. They are beautiful and easy to maintain. They however need to be place away from children and pets.

Gerber daisy

This flower requires light for it to flourish. It is a great trichloroethylene and benzene remover. You just need to make sure you locate it in a position where it will get enough light.

Tulips

Tulips are beautiful, don't take much space and are great air cleaners. They just require constant watering and feeding and regular gardening practices to remove the flowers that dry off to keep them looking attractive.

Gerbera Daisies

This flower is one beautiful flower that does great at formaldehyde removal and other air pollutants. They require proper attention just like tulips. They don't require big containers so they are great for people who need to keep shifting plants to change the look of their rooms.

Palms

There is a variety of palm trees to choose from for indoor container gardening. Palm trees are beautiful and the dwarf varieties don't take too much space and are easy to care for. You can use dwarf date palms, parlor palms, bamboo palms, lady palms and areca palms for indoor air cleaning.

Warneck dracaena

This plant is another favorite that removes pollutants in oils and varnishes. It has stripped leaves that add to the beauty of a home. It does not require direct sunlight for it to grow well.

Azalea

This is a very beautiful flower for indoor container gardening that will eliminate formaldehyde. It grows well in areas as cool as 60 degrees and above.

Weeping fig

They can be a bit hard to maintain compared to other container plants for indoor purposes but as long as you water them regularly and give them light they won't fail you.

Spider plant

This plant is preferred by most people who are not too keen on maintaining plants. It is very resilient meaning it will survive abandonment. It has rich foliage and produces small flowers which make it a good plant for battling carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, xylene and benzene.

CHAPTER TWO

A guide to containers for gardening

After recognizing the types of plants you are going to use for your organic gardening the next thing you think about is the containers to use. Quite obviously, the size and type of container will be very much influenced by the size of the plant. What matters is the height to which the plant will grow and the type and size of its roots. There is also the issue of whether the plant will be kept inside or outside the house. Other people will make mobile gardens whereby they can shift flowers from one point to another to bring a new look to their rooms. In such a case, a small flower container is recommended. The final issue that a gardener ought to consider is whether or not there is going to be combination of as number of plants in one container which helps them decide the size of the container they are going to need.

There is no limit to the types of containers that can be used for container gardening. As long as they have an area where you will put the soil and water then they can be used as a planter. The best containers for indoor planting are the ones known as the self watering containers.

These containers are great because they don't require watering as the non self watering require. They have a reservoir at the bottom which enables them to store water for the plants you just need to keep adding water after certain duration depending on the size of the container, the size of the plant and the type of whether. They can also be used for outside containers. For the containers that do not self water it is important to ensure they are checked regularly to ensure the plants don't dry up due to lack of water. Drainage is an important factor to consider. When soil has too much water it becomes water logged something that kills plants. For this reason is important that you ensure that planters have drainage holes to drain excess water from soil. This is just a small hole that the water will get out through.

The most common containers for home gardening include barrels, grow-bags, baskets and boxes. To actualize gardening containers you can use the following materials:

Clay

The best thing about clay is the fact that it can be molded into any shape. With clay or terra-cotta you can design any types of shapes and sizes of pots and urns that can be put inside or outside a house. They are very attractive and can be painted into any color to improve their appearance. Pots are however very breakable and so maximum care should be practiced during their handling. It is preferred that you keep them away from frost which damages them.

Plastic

Plastic containers are a favored choice for many due to their weight which favors their mobility. Any plastic container without use in your home can be easily turned into a gardening planter.

Wood

Wood does not get too hot during hot days and neither does it become too cold therefore preventing damaging of plants during extreme weather. They also do not burn or wither plant branches and leaves something that comes with heat conducting containers when parts of a plant touch the container. They are easy to make but they rot unless they are protected with a rot-resistant.

Concrete

The greatest advantage that comes with using concrete containers for your gardening is the fact that they last longer than most of the other materials and are not easily damaged by changes in the weather. Its heaviness though affects its mobility and so you are not able to make very large planters with it especially if you have a need to keep shifting the containers.

Polyurethane foam

This is another very light and long lasting material. They are not easily cracked or chipped and they protect plants from hot and cold temperatures so they are good for outside gardening too.

Glass

Glass though not favored by many due to its breakability is still used for indoor planting. It is recommended though that a container made using this material be colored.

Meta

Metal is another material used for making containers for gardening but due to its heat conducting capabilities demand the need to have an inner lining probably polythene/plastic to protect the plants from heat.

Container gardening planters tips

Size

Large containers are better than small containers. They have enough space for the plants to develop and provide a larger surface area for moisture and other nutrients. In them you can be able to combine a number of different flowers that helps create a mix of colors. You can also combine different vegetables or plants that provide benefits to each other. Use small planters for indoor purposes and for plants that need to be moved from one point to another.

Color and texture

Do not leave your containers after you after you make and shape them. Color them. There are many colors that will improve the appearance of the containers. Orange, blue, white, green etc. Choose a color that goes well with the flowers of the plant. Use different colors for different containers to make them look cool.

Hanging planters

Planters made from light material can be hanged or suspended using a strong thread or rope from a high position in the balcony, corner of a room or in the garden outside. This is great for improving appearance of a place and also works great if there isn't enough space. Vines are great with hanging planters.

Window boxes

A window box provides a very beautiful planter as it improves the appearance of the house and the view is excellent whether you are outside or inside the house.

Standing gardens

A container with stands is very attractive and easy to manage. Below it you can put a plant that does not need too much sunlight or isn't affected by too much shade or does not grow too tall. They also do not damage the floor especially if they are put in a pavement.

Wheeled planters

If you intend to have a big planting container that you would want to move from one point to another may be for shifting the look or change of weather you might want to consider putting some wheels on it. You can also use a plant caddy

Plant protectors

There are plants protectors available in the market that make a planter feel like a greenhouse. If you are growing vegetables or plants that are too sensitive to extreme weather or want to protect them from pests, just get a plant protector.

Fence tags

You can plant a number of plants along your fence. They work the same way a hanging basket works. You can pin them to the fence or use a tag than positions them high on the fence. It is great for flowers to decorate the fence.

Use a wall

You can improve the appearance of a wall by attaching a number of containers on the wall. Use a ladder to water them. They can be used for flowers or vegetables if the wall is on the side or behind.

Vertical containers

Having your container face sideways rather than above so that the plants grow sideways is beautiful especially for short growing plants flowers.

Racks and holders

To add on space use racks, rails and holder with stairs and sided branches. This makes an area that would have held one plant be able to hold more plant containers. Designing them into a pattern also makes a place look more beautiful.

CHAPTER THREE

Planting and caring for container gardens

With your plants and containers ready for planting the next thing you should think about is preparing the garden. This will involve choosing and adding soil and other nutrients. The next important thing after containers is soil. There are a number of soil types but there are those that will do better than others in container gardening as a result of their nutrient content, their aeration and capillarity capability.

What you need to know about soil

It is recommended that you do not use garden soil for container gardening because garden soil in a container becomes too clogged which results to the death of the plants. I agree with this but not completely. There are instances where garden soil will do just great. It depends on the country you are in and the characteristics of soil in your region. For those people in countries where their land contains loam soil that is used and works well for agricultural vegetation then you can go ahead and use this soil for container vegetation. However, you may want to combine the soil with a lot of composite to improve its aeration and drainage. Do not use it to plant vegetables or organic plants that are going to take more than two seasons. After harvesting the produce go ahead and change that soil. If you can, use garden soil only if you are going to use baskets and sacks as your planters. There is a cheaper version of potting soil which looks like the artificial container gardening soil. It is almost like garden soil known as bagged soil or compost. These soils are like garden soil just a bit improved and should never be mistaken for potting media.

Container gardening soil also known as artificial or potting media is a soil-less media made from other materials but possessing soil qualities that facilitate plant growth. Potting soil has very good aeration and drainage and can be use for a number of years before it becomes fully spent. It is made using a number of materials including but not limited to peat moss, barks, vermiculate, coir fiber with addition of other nutrients. When you go to the market to purchase potting soil to ensure you get the best quality look for the following ingredients for the soil Aged bark sometimes called composted forest products, vermiculate, peat moss, lime and perlite. A good soil is one on which a wetting agent is added. The wetting agents improves the ability of the soil hold or stay moisture for as long time. Some soils though expectedly costly will contain a fertilizer that helps the plant grow during the first few months. You will need to give them fertilizer after a while though as this does not last forever. Better potting soil products will also have pesticides that help protect the plants.

When selecting potting media choose the coarse type especially if it is for organic plants. For plants that will grow within a short period especially the vegetables finer soil products are better. Because of the cost of potting soil people have opted for the combination of various soils which is alright but you should never forget that this lowers the quality of potting soil and the duration that the soil would last productively. You can combine potting

soil with compost, sand and garden soil. Be careful not to choose garden soil from an area infested with insects or pests. Ensure you choose safe soil. Reuse the potting soil after harvesting the vegetables or other organic plants unless the previous plants did show signs of insects and pests infestation. When reusing potting soil it is recommended that you first remove it from the container and go through it removing all the roots from the previous plant. Never reuse a soil on which you planted tomatoes to plant other tomatoes etc – observe rotational cropping strategies and when combining crops in one container ensure that you follow the right mixed cropping measures.

Finally, when filling the container with soil do not add it to the brim. Reaching the soil level to the top of the container will only make watering hard as water will be lost. Leave an inch or two between the edge of the container and soil to provide a section for holding water before it goes down the soil. Filling soil in an indoor container will cause spilling of the soiled water in the house which could be very damaging. Something else, due to the cost of potting soil you may find that if you have a very large container then it would be expensive to fill them with soil. Just use a non biodegradable material at the bottom of the container to hold soil up therefore reducing the volume. Use aluminum or plastic just ensure that it will allow drainage.

Caring for the plants

Having completed the preparation and planting of the organic vegetables and flowers you are halfway down the road. The next thing is the caring of the plants. Care for the plants involves two main procedures; watering and feeding.

Watering container gardens

Watering of the plants is not hard and depends on the type of plant and soil used. During the early stage of the plants you may need to water the plants almost twice a day especially if the containers are not the self-watering ones with a reservoir. The idea is to always ensure that the soil remains moist all the time. If you are doing outdoor gardening the process is not quite complicated as all you need is to just pour out water into the container and if the area is big enough you may even use pipes and water jets. Another common method is drip irrigation. Some people just fix a bottle with water into the soil therefore keeping the containers in supply with water for a period. For the indoor containers, the process of watering should be done carefully and this is because any water spilling out of the containers may be damaging to your furniture, walls and carpets. It is recommended if the containers are in a high position you ensure that you use a ladder or position yourself in a place where you will be able to see water level as you add.

Feeding container gardens

Basically, this is the addition of nutrients and mostly organic fertilizers. Some potting soil will come with fertilizers and so you may not need to start feeding the plants at an early stage. Just consult the labels on the bags to know when you should start adding fertilizers. There are many types of fertilizer and many methods of application. There are those applied in liquid form and others that come to be applied in their solid state. For the solid ones, be careful not to burn the plants leaves and branches when applying. There are also the slow releasing fertilizers, these fertilizers are great because once you apply them you may not need to add for a long period as they don't get washed away or spent out fast. If you don't get the slow-releasing fertilizers then you need to keep adding a little regularly.

Weeds, insects and pests control

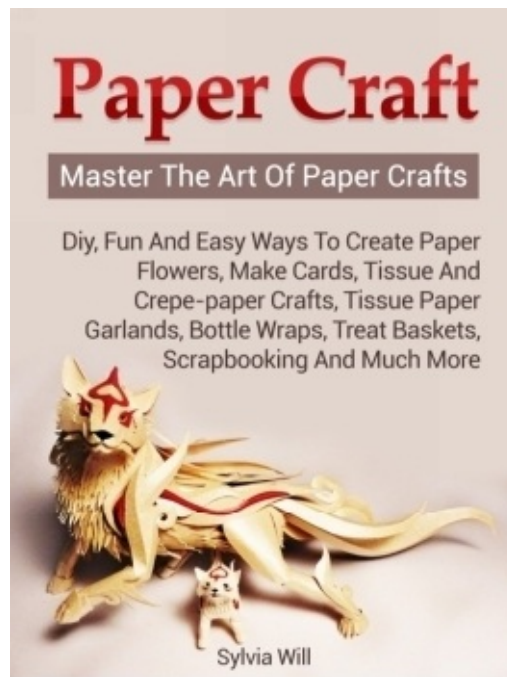
Just like the usual gardens, container gardens also get infested with weeds and pests but not at big rate as the normal gardens would. They require pest control measures be taken. The most common disturbers of container gardening include weevils, aphids, spider mite and diseases like impatiens downy mildew, and leaf spots. Take the right control measure time to time and ensure you use hand weeding. Never use anything more than a hand to weed a container even if it has one big plant. Use your hands to pluck out the weeds to avoid damaging of the plant roots.

For plants like tomatoes and other high growing plants don't forget the use of cage supporters and threaded guiders that provide a place for the branches to climb. Some people will guide the climbing plant through a mesh wire or a grill hole so even though the plant container is placed on the ground the plant climbs and grows over the grill or mesh wire which supports it branches. This also works for like the strawberries.

Conclusion

Container gardening is not as hard as people perceive it and it can really help to improve your health and the appearance of your homes. It doesn't matter that you don't have a piece of land or a big back yard. As you have seen plants can be planted in balconies, patio, windows, walls, pavements and even over fences. If you adopt the right skill you will be able to create attractive gardens. Just remember all you need to do is design a container in the shape you desire, color it so that it meets the color specifications that match with your furniture and hose decorations then finish with adding plants or flowers that reflect the same. If you need a snow look just use white colored flowers and use a container that is painted white. For complex color combinations just pick plants that produce differently colored flowers and combine them in the same container and if not combining then position differently colored flowers next to each other or form color patterns with them. Change plants with seasons and events at home by having a number of differently colored containers at stock somewhere to be shifted as season or events change. If you are a beginner or don't have many plants then just move plants in one room or position to another and so on. Don't ever forget the five rule procedure for container gardening: Select Right plants, Shape and color containers, Use the best potting soil, Combine considerably and care for plants (Feed/water/weed). With those five you are bound to achieve healthy and attractive container gardens. Wish you the best as you container garden.

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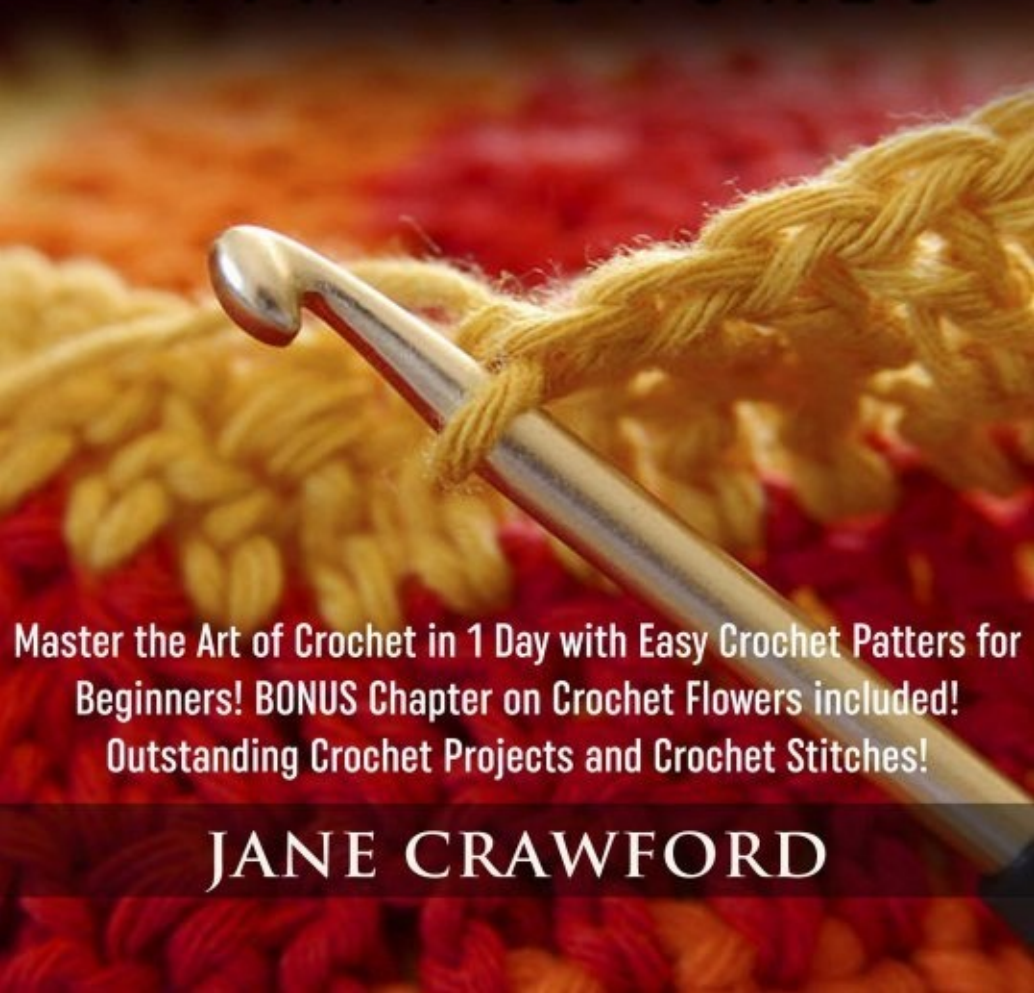
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INTRODUCTION

The things covered in this book are some simple that you are going to enjoy doing and it is also easy to learn as a beginner. Tips, pattern, stitches and many more are mentioned. You will also get to learn about the tools used. Remember to involve your friends as you start crocheting as it is always good to have someone to learn with because you can exchange your ideas with one another. In this book you will learn:

Tools for crocheting

Tips on crocheting

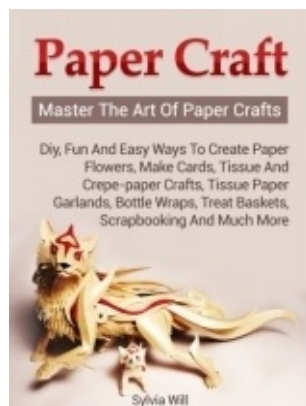
Abbreviations used in crocheting

Basic things you will need to learn before you start working on any project and

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Chapter 1 - TOOLS FOR CROCHETING

HOOKS:

When starting crocheting, you will not need too many hooks just a few. Hooks come in different widths. Since you will not be doing very advanced crocheting for now, you will not need the large hooks called Afghan hooks. They come in lengths that range from 9-20 inches which is about 22.86-50.8cm long. They are mainly used in projects that must hold lots of stitches on your crochet hook. So instead of getting those ones get the smaller length hooks, whose widths are approximately a quarter to half of your index finger's widths. At the store, these hooks are sometimes labelled as standard crochet hooks.



YARN:

You cannot start crocheting without yarns. Since you are just in the simple basic level, it is recommended you start with yarns that are light coloured for early simple projects. A cheap yarn you can start with is light coloured plain acrylic. If you use a darker coloured yarn, it might be hard for you to see the mistakes as you crochet. Since you are a beginner, you are bound to make mistakes. So for your first projects, try using white, pink, yellow, light blue, light green, light orange. Avoid using black, dark brown, navy blue, gray, dark red etc.



SCISSORS:

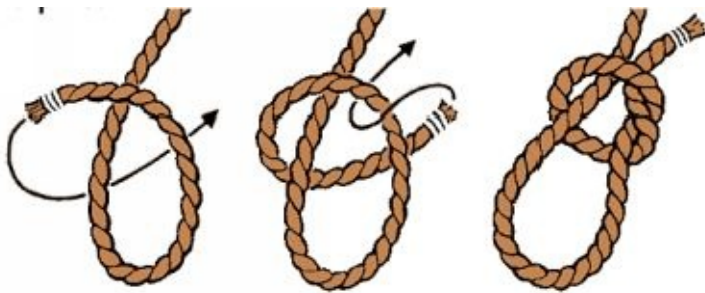
Scissor is one item that you will be using as you go along with your crocheting journey. You will need it to cut, trim and finish yarns. You do not need any special or specific type of scissors. Another thing you might need to have is a needle and thread that match the colour of the yarn you are using to work on a project, because some project requires you to attach to pieces together and you can use the needle and thread to sew them or you can use a different colour of yarn to attach them together.

VIDEOS/BOOKS:

Videos and books like this about crocheting can be very useful when you are just starting out in crocheting world. Getting a book that has pictures included in it is recommended because it is easier when you have visual demonstration. One problem that arises is that you are learning this on your own so you have no one to make suggestions about how a stitch should go but only yourself. It is okay there are ways in which you can have someone with you. You could enrol in an art class that offers crocheting or have a friend who knows about it teach you. Having someone who supports you and offers you help when you are just starting out is very good and also one of the best crocheting tool!

Chapter 2- LET'S BEGIN CROCHETING

How to Make a Slip knot:



Step 1:

Make a slip knot: Start making a slip knot by making the yarn lie down and then loop it. Make sure the short piece which is the tail is on top of the long yarn. The next thing to do is to flip the whole thing down onto the longer yarn. Hold the middle yarn between your thumb and forefinger and gently pull out the middle yarn. Keep holding the tail while pulling the loop to tighten it.

Step 2:

Tighten the Loop using your left hand, pick up the loop and then slide the hook into the loop. Make sure to tighten the loop around the hook. But do not make it too tight

Step 3:

How to Hold the Thread: use your index finger to twist the long side of the thread around your pinkie. Take hold of the short side which is the tail, using your middle and ring fingers. Use your right hand to hold the hook. When you hold the hook and thread this way, you keep the tension on the thread and there will be enough space to move the hook. Remember that there are lots of ways you can hold your hook and thread. Find the one that you are comfortable with that works best for you.

Step 4:

Begin the Chain: To do this, twist the thread around the hook and then pull it through the loop.

Step 5:

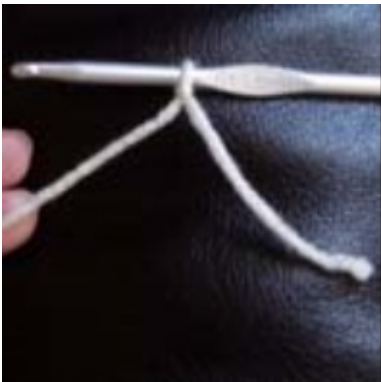
Finish the Chain: Remember not to make the loop too tight and to do the second loop, pull the thread through the second loop and keep doing this till you have a chain.

Step 6:

Begin the First Row: To begin the first row of single crochet, insert the hook in the second chain from the hook. Two loops will now be around your hook.

Step 7:

Crocheting the Chained Row: use you left hand to hold the yarn using the hook and pull it through the first loop. You will be left again with two loops on your hook. Catch the yarn using your hook again and the pull it through the two loops.





Repeat the steps above until you get to the end of the chained row. If you want to crochet more rows, chain one stitch at the end of your row and turn the project over to start the next row.

Step 8:

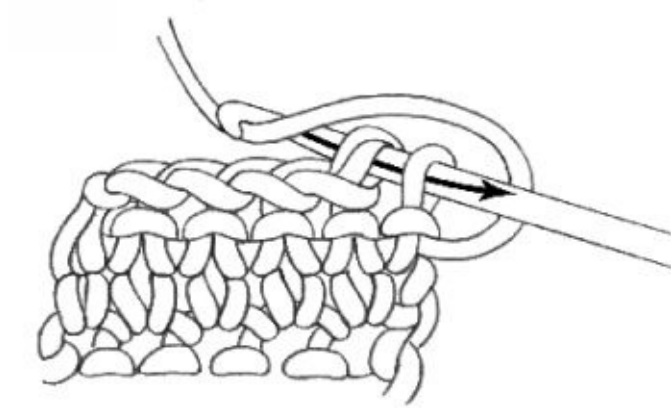
Finish: cut the long side of the yarn and pull it through the loop to finish.



How to make a crochet slip stitch:

Slip stitches are very useful in crocheting and you will use them very often. Slip stitches are used to finish a row, join elements and also used as a finishing edge (stitches and details). sl st is the abbreviation for slip stitches. Below are pictures on how to do a slip stitch.

Making a slip stitch:



1. Insert the crochet hook into the spot you want your slip stitch to be,
2. Then hook the yarn and draw it through the spot and through the loop on your crochet hook at once. .
3. If you are crocheting a hat, bag and other stuffs that have circular patterns you will notice that you mostly start with 3 rows of chains and then a ring and then a slip stitch.

How to make a single crochet stitch:

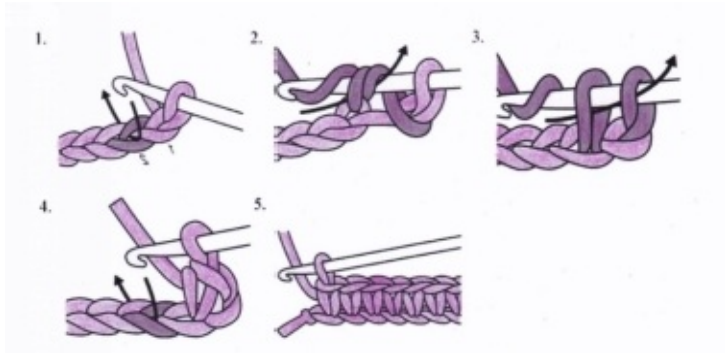
Single crochet stitch is the most popular stitch because it is used to create the body of a project. You can also use it as a base for other stitches as well. The abbreviation for this stitch is *sc* (see last Chapter for abbreviations).

IMPORTANT:

If a number is after the abbreviation in a stitching instruction, that means you need to make that number of stitch in the next stitch. To explain better, *sc 3* means you should make a *sc* in the nearest stitch and then another *sc* in the stitch that follows and then another *sc* in the stitch that follows if you count the numbers of *sc* you will see that it is 3.

If a number is before the abbreviation, that means you need to make that number of stitch in the nearest stitch. For example *2 sc* means make 2 *sc* in one nearest stitch so instead of making an *sc* in one stitch and then another *sc* in another stitch you make both *sc* in the same stitch. The maximum number that is usually 2 *sc* but only on rare cases 3 *sc*

To begin making a single crochet (SC)



Begin by inserting the hook in the stitch of the previous row. It will be a beginning chain if it is your first row.

Put the yarn over the hook

Then draw up the loop you will now have 2 loops on your hook

Put the yarn over the hook again and draw it through both loops at once.

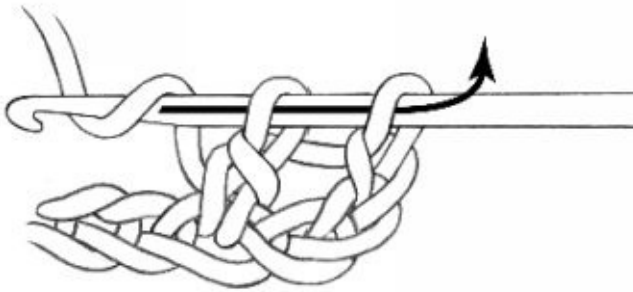
You will notice that you only have one loop left on your crochet hook.

You are done making the single crocheting stitch.

You can make as many sc as you need till the end of the row

Make a ch 1 (chain stitch) on the next row and continue making sc stitches till the end of the next row. And then finally, slip stitch square.

How to make a double crochet stitch:



Single crochet stitch is used as a base in this stitch but its adding one more level to it. The abbreviation for this stitch is dc

Begin by yarn over before inserting the hook in the stitch of the previous row.

Put the hook in the stitch of the previous row

Then yarn over again and hook the yarn

From the left, draw the yarn through the first loop

Then yarn over the hook again and at once draw the yarn through the first two loops on the left.

Do the yarn over the hook one last time and draw the yarn through the remaining two loops at once.

You have completed the double crochet stitch.





Creating the Starting Chain

After you have done your slip knot on your hook, what you need to do next is to create the start chain

Once you have your slip knot created and on your hook, you need to create the starting chain, which will be the same in any crochet project. This gives you something to work from on the first row.

So begin by yarn over the hook

Hook the yarn and pull the loop through the hook

Now you should have one loop on your hook

Repeat the process and continue doing it until you have a start chain long enough for the project you want to work on.

Once you have your chain, flip your project around so you will now work from right to left.

Chapter 3- TIPS ON CROCHETING

1. Break for hand and finger stretching: As someone who is just starting crocheting, it is fun and exciting and when you start working on your first project, you just want to keep going and you might forget that it is important you take a break because you might be watching your favourite show on TV or listening to your favourite music while crocheting. Remember to take a quick break to stretch your hands and do some finger rolls. If you do not do this, you might get slight cramps. So remember to always make a mental note to stop for a bit and stretch your hand and do some wrist rolling.

2. Watch your posture: Another thing to consider when crocheting is your posture. If you are sitting in a position where by every now and then you have to look down and look up (especially if you are watching TV). This is not a good posture for crocheting because eventually, your shoulders will get tired so watch out for your posture. Try to find a posture that is good for where your muscles will not get tired easily because of too much put on them.

Taking care of the Yarn: If your yarn is proving stubborn and does not want to go through the needle's eye, you can dip the tip of the yarn in clear nail polish and twist it tight while it is drying. You can now easily make it go through the needle's eye just remember to cut off the nail polish tip later. This also works for putting the yarn through a small bead hole that you can't get a needle through.

3. Tension matters: The position at which your yarn stays in in your left hand matters. Because as you pull the yarn through each loop for every stitch you make with your right hand. What matters is how tight or loose the yarn is been held in your left hand. So you need consistency when holding a yarn. If not you will get a piece that has two rows in the middle really tight or really stretched depending on how tightly you held the yarn. As a beginner you are not expected to quickly know how to hold a yarn right but as you practice more you will get the hang of it.

4. Fake it till you make it: some people may raise their eyebrow up for this one. You do not have to quickly get the most perfect crocheted hat or scarf as a beginner. You are bound to make little mistakes as you crochet so if the current project you are working on have a few mistakes, do not fret as you get more and more practice, you will notice that the mistakes will start dwindling until there is no more mistakes. Also, as you are crocheting, if you see the mistake soon you can unravel it and start again from that point or cover it up if you are using a chunky yarn.

5. Keeping Record: Write down all the types of yarns and hooks you already have on an index card and keep it with you. That way when you shop, you won't buy stuff you already have and waste time and money.

6. Storing your hooks: The way you store your hooks is different from the way I store my hooks and even different from the way another crocheter store their hooks. It is a matter of personal preference. You can store your hooks in a pencil box, jewellery box or hang them on a thin piece of wood. You can also use food container to store your hooks.

7. Start with simple project: If you are just learning something, you have to start with the simple basic stuff first before you get into the difficult complex ones. Same with crocheting, start with basic projects so you do not get frustrated or burn out quickly or maybe lose interest in crocheting. Always do projects that you can understand and are fun for you to do.

8. I Love crocheting: If you are the type that loves to crochet no matter where you are school, office, bus station, etc. Keep a project in a small bag that you can carry and go out whenever you want.

9. Keep a bag or basket by the couch: It is always good to be organised in everything you do. So have a small bag or basket right beside where you usually do your crocheting. Fill your bag or basket with all your crocheting needs hooks, yarns, scissor etc. so when you start crocheting you do not have to run around looking for where you might have kept the scissor or yarn etc.

10. Slow and steady wins the race: Ah! I like that saying. While it is good to be fast when you are doing some things it is also better for you to slow down so that you do not end up making mistakes or lots of mistakes. As a beginner you might have the tendency to work on your project fast because you are excited to see how it will turn out and then you end up making a lot of mistakes without even knowing and at the end your project won't be pleasing to the eyes. So remember not to rush with working a project besides will you not like it if your project turns out amazing than if it turns out wonky.

Chapter 4- CROCHET PATTERNS

Crochet flower

What you will need:

Yarn or Crochet Thread:

You can use any yarn you want but it is better to use a yarn that is smooth. For this exact flower, use medium weight yarn, cascade 220. Cascade 220 is soft smooth lovely wool and you can get it in a different beautiful

Crochet Hook

To crochet the sample flower, use a size 1 hook. This is preferable because it is a good size to use on medium weight yarn. You can use a different size of hook depending on the yarn you use, the size of the flower you want or if you use a different yarn than the cascade 220.

Tapestry needle:

You need this to weave in the ends.

Instructions on starting the flower:

Step 1:

Begin by making Ch 5. (Five chains). Then join with a slst (slip stitch) to form a ring.

Step 2:

Rnd 1(round) Work 11 sc (single crochet)sts (stitch) in ring. To join the work, slst (slip stitch) in the 1st sc (single crochet) in the round.

Step 3:

Rnd 2(round 2) [ch 3 (three chains), tr (treble crochet stitch) in the sc (single crochet)st(stitch) that touches the ch-3 (three chain stitches), ch 3 (three chain), sl st (slip stitch) in same sc (single crochet)st (stitch), 1 sl st (slip stitch) in each of the next 2 sts (two stitches).] Repeat the sequence in brackets 5 more times for a total of 6 flower petals.

Step 4:

End it by weaving in the ends.

Crocheted Flower

The materials needed for this are patons bumblebeebaby-weight yarn (100% cotton),

Hook: Size F-5 U.S. or size needed to obtain gauge, Yarn needle about 3mm wide.

Create your crocheted flower:

1. Follow this stitch pattern:

Center ring: Leaving a 6-in. length, ch 6 and close into a ring with 1 slst in first ch.

Round 1: Do Ch 1, work 15 sc in ring, sl st in first sc to join.

Round 2: Do Ch 1, sc in sc, ch 3, skip next 2 sc , rep from to around, sl st in first sc to join (5 ch-3 loops made).

Round 3: Do sl st in first ch-3 loop, ch 1, (sc, hdc, 3 dc, hdc, sc) in each ch-3 loop around (note that now you will have 5 petals made), sl st in first sc to join.

Round 4: Do Ch 4; skip next 6 sts, sl st in next sc, rep from to around (5 ch-4 loops made).

Round 5: Dosl st in first ch-4 loop, ch 1, (sc, hdc, 2 dc, tr, 2 dc, hdc, sc) in each ch-4 loop around (5 petals made), sl st in first sc to join.

Round 6: Do a Ch 5; skip next 8 sts, sl st in next sc, rep from to around (5 ch-5 loops made).

Round 7: Do sl st in first ch-5 loop, ch 1, (sc, hdc, 2 dc, 3 tr, 2 dc, hdc, sc) in each ch-5 loop around (5 petals made), sl st in first sc to join and finally fasten off.



Autumn Shawl

Size of gauge does not matter. This is an easy crocheting pattern for beginners it is not complex. You can use any yarn of your

(DK weight yarn preferable) the size of the yarn should be approximately 738 yards and 11oz and your crocheting hook should be 9.00mm)

First row:

Hold two strands of the yarn together and do a ch 3, sl st in the first ch you did to form a ring. Then do ch 3, 9 dc into the ring do not join the 9 dc

Second row:

Do ch 3 then turn and do 5 dc in the first dc skip the next dc and sc in the next dc and the dc after that then do 5 dc in the next dc. Do this twice that is 15 dc and 2 sc

Third row:

Start with ch 3, turn, then do 5 dc in the first dc and skip the next dc that is do a sc in the next dc and skip the next row dc , then do 5 dc in the next sc and skip the next 2 dc twice, then do a sc in the next dc, and skip the next dc do 5 dc in the last dc this will result in 20 dc and 3 sc

Fourth Row:

Do ch 3, turn, do 3 dc in first dc, skip the next dc, then do a sc in next dc, skip next two dc and do 5 dc in next sc, skip next 2 dc and do a sc in next dc, repeat until 2 dc remain, then skip the next dc, and do 3 dc in last dc that is 21 dc and 4 sc

Fifth Row 5:

Start with a ch 3, turn, do a dc in each st across that is 26 dc

Sixth Row:

Start with ch 3, turn, do 5 dc in first dc, then skip the next dc, do a sc in next dc and skip next dc. Do 5 dc in next dc, repeat from across that is 35 dc and 6 sc

Seventh Row:

Repeat Row 4: 36 dc, 8 sc. Remember to take breaks to rest your wrists and fingers when crocheting.

Eighth Row:

Start with ch 1, turn, do sc in first dc and then skip next 2 dc, do 5 dc in next sc, skip the next 2 dc, do a sc in next dc, repeat from across that is 35 dc and 6 sc

Ninth Row:

Start by doing ch 3, turn, 5 dc in first sc, and then skip next 2 dc, sc in next dc, skip next 2 dc, 5 dc in next sc, repeat from across that is 40 dc, 7 sc

Ten to twenty one rows:

Repeat the same thing you did in row four and nine two times and it will result in 314 dc and 68 scin total

Twenty two to twenty three rows:

Repeat what you did in row four and five that will result in 47 dc and 5 sc total

Finally!

Finish it up by weaving in the ends to make it pretty. The finished Size for this will be approximately 50" (127 cm) wide and 15" (38.1 cm) long

Crocheting a beanie

There many different pattern that you can learn to crochet a beanie. Since it is a cap the first thing for you to start doing is to start crocheting from the top of the beanie using multiple stitches to form a circular shape. The number of stitches increases as you crochet around the circle to the form the shape of beanie. Once you have the beanie as wide as you will like it to be, keep crocheting without increasing the width. Then continue your crocheting till you reach your desired length. Crocheting a beanie is very easy to learn if you use the basic crochet stitches and patterns. The steps listed below are an example of a simple crochet pattern for beanie.

Materials needed for this project are:

Medium weight yarn and 3.75mm hook

For the gauge, 17 sc = 3". 8 rows = 2'

Gauge Swatch: 3"w x 2"h (7.5cm x 5cm) ch 18.

Row 1: sc in second ch from hook and in each ch across

Row 2 – 8: ch 1, turn sc in each sc across then finish off.

Finally to start crocheting your Beanie:

Round 1: start by doing ch 2, sc 10 in the second ch from hook, place marker

Round 2: then do 2 sc in each sc around

Round 3: then do (2 sc in next sc, 1 sc in next sc) around

Round 4: do (2 sc in next sc, 1 sc in next 2 sc) around

Round 5: follow up by doing (2 sc in next sc, 1 sc in next 3 sc) around

Round 6: then do (2 sc in the next sc, 1 sc in the next 4 sc) around

Round 7: (2 sc in next sc, 1 sc in next 5 sc) around

Round 8 - 9: Do (2 sc in the next sc, 1 sc in the next 10 sc) around

Round 10 - 11: Do sc in each sc around

Round 12: Do (2 sc in next sc, 1 sc in the next 10 sc) around

Round 13 - 17: sc in each sc around

Round 18 - 19: Do a (2 sc in the next sc, 1 sc in the next 15 sc) around

Round 20 - 31: lastly, do a sc in each sc around

Finish off. The finished size for this is 5.5inc (14cm) long, 7inc (18cm) wide.

Autumn Shawl



You will need 2 balls of Bernat Satin yarn in the following colours:

E: Rouge

D: Cameo

C: Amber

B: Buff

A: Mocha and a 5.5mm hook

Instructions:

Stripe Pattern: Work 2 rows of each color in following sequence: A, B, C, A, D, E. These 12 rows form Stripe Pattern.

Shawl is worked widthwise.

Start by using A do ch 227:

Row 1: on the right side(RS) do 1 sc in the second ch from hook. 1 sc in each ch to end of ch. Then do 226 sc. Turn.

Row 2 and alternate row: do a Ch 2 and 1 hdc in each st to end of row. Join B. Turn. The First 2 rows of Stripe Pattern are completed.

Row 3: using B do ch 1 and 1 sc in each of first 3 hdc. *(Pull long loop, 1 sc in next foundation ch two rows below – long sc made) twice. 1 sc in each of next 2 hdc. Repeat from * to last 3 hdc. 1 sc in each of last 3 hdc. Turn.

Row 4: using C, do Ch 1. 1 sc in first hdc. *Long sc in each of next 2 hdc two rows below. 1 sc in each of next 2 hdc. Repeat from * ending with 1 sc in last hdc. Join A. Turn.

Row 5: With A, ch 1. 1 sc in each of first 3 hdc. *Long sc in each of next 2 hdc two rows below. 1 sc in each of next 2 hdc. Repeat from * to last 3 hdc. 1 sc in each of last 3 hdc. Turn.

Row 6: As 2nd row joining D at end of row. Keeping continue of Stripe Pattern,

repeat rows 5 and 8 for pat until work from beginning measures approximately 24 inc [61 cm], ending with a wrong side row and then fasten off.

To finish: With the right side facing join A with sl st to left corner of side edge. Work in sc across side edge of Shawl. Fasten off. Repeat across other side.

Chapter 5–CROCHET ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
[]	work instructions within brackets as many times as directed
()	work instructions within parentheses as many times as directed
*	repeat the instructions following the single asterisk as directed
* *	repeat instructions between asterisks as many times as directed or repeat from a given set of instructions
:	instructions after (to the right of) the colon indicates the total stitch count for the row
alt	Alternate
approx.	Approximately
beg	begin/beginning
bet	between
BL	back loop(s)

bo	bobble
BP	back post
BPdc	back post double crochet
BPsc	back post single crochet
BPtr	back post treble crochet
CA	color A
CB	color B
CC	contrasting color
ch	chain stitch
ch-	refers to chain or space previously made: e.g., ch-1 space
ch-sp	chain space, the space made by the chain
CL	cluster
cm	centimeter(s)
cont.	continue
dc	double crochet
dc2tog	double crochet 2 stitches together
dec	decrease/decreases/decreasing
dtr	double treble
FL	front loop(s)

foll	follow/follows/following
FP	front post
FPdc	front post double crochet
FPsc	front post single crochet
FPtr	front post treble crochet
g	gram
hdc	half double crochet
inc	increase/increases/increasing
lp(s)	loops
m	meter(s)
MC	main color
mm	millimeter(s)
oz	ounce(s)
p	picot
pat(s) or patt	pattern(s)
pc	popcorn
pm	place marker
prev	previous
rem	remain/remaining
rep	repeat(s)

rnd(s)	round(s)
RS	right side
sc	single crochet
sc2tog	single crochet 2 stitches together
sk	skip
slst	slip stitch
sp(s)	space(s)
st(s)	stitch(es)
tch or t-ch	turning chain
tbl	through back loop
tog	together
tr	treble crochet
trtr	triple treble crochet
WS	wrong side
yd(s)	yard(s)
yo	yarn over
yoh	yarn over hook

CONCLUSION

So as you have read crocheting is simple easy to learn just make sure to have a friend or someone you can practice or do some crocheting with it is enjoyable that way as a beginner. Also, follow the tips on crocheting and another thing to note is the abbreviation. Crocheting has its own set of abbreviation so make sure to learn what they mean and luckily they are not much so you can quickly learn them because that is what you will be using when you start crocheting. Make sure to give your hands rest as your crochet. After you have mastered basic projects, like the ones in this book, do not be afraid to go on to other projects.

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DIY Cleaning and Organizing

The Ultimate DIY Guide on House Cleaning, Organizing and Productivity. Learn Smart and Easy Tricks on How to Clean and Organize Your House in 3 Days with a Bonus House Cleaning Checklist



Linda Williams

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Introduction

Cleaning and organizing can be fun for some people while for other it is an agonizing task. The thing that makes cleaning hard for some people is because they pick a day in a month to do all the cleaning in the house and before they are even half way done, they become tired. The key to cleaning and organizing is to have a method begin at one spot end at one spot. Not going back and forth in a room or cleaning a room the wrong way.

Yes there is a right way to clean a room and we are going to talk about that later on in the book. You will enjoy living in a clean organized house way better than in a dirty cluttered environment and hey your friends will also be able to visit and eat in your house. I am sure some of you have been to people's house that you are not sure you can eat or even drink water there it may be because the house has a foul smell or the kitchen looks untidy. You can also give this book out to that type of friend ha-ha.

Chapter 1 - 5 EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION STEPS

GET RID OF THINGS THAT ARE NOT USEFUL ANYMORE

Like you might have noticed if you want your house to be organized you have to get rid of all the stuffs you do need anymore. Before you start getting rid of things, make sure to form an attack plan.

One best way to make your house free of clusters is to make an inventory and once you have highlighted the things you can downsize, you can get to work. After getting rid of the clutter that you do not need, you will realize that it is now easier to organize everything else.

LOOK FOR BETTER WAYS TO ORGANIZE YOUR THINGS

The next thing to do after getting rid of all the stuffs you do not need is as before form an attack plan. Make sure everything you have left has a home. If you are not sure where to put something, you can put it in the cluster bucket and decide on where to put it later after arranging other things.

KEEP IT CLEAN

So after getting rid of your clusters and organizing what else is left you are feeling pretty tired now and at that moment you decide that you do not want to go through it again. So what to do you have to do to maintain it? You keep it clean and make sure it stays organized. This might be a bit hard for some people but instead of maybe having that special day where you clean and organize the whole house try cleaning it for 15 minutes every once in a while.

You will get to perfection with just that little effort and you will be surprised by it. Whenever you leave a room, take whatever item that does not belong in that room with you. You do not need hours to clean or organize things if you try this 15 minutes method. A few minutes is all you need and once you get used to it and it is part of your routine, you will not even notice that you are doing it.

FOOTWEAR SHOULD BE IN THE FOYER

Keep your shoes in a rack or a mat. Make sure that where your shoes are kept is on a movable surface so that the floor underneath can be cleaned. Stackable shoe shelf is known to be inexpensive and it is also good for wet shoes or boots as it provides plenty of air circulation to let it dry. Whether your foyer is formal or informal, you can still find a pretty shoe rack or mat that will suit your needs. In a formal foyer, you can use the mat that is kept inside the closet under the coats. In an informal foyer, you can get decorative baskets or wooden or metal shoe racks to hold and keep your shoes and boots.

COAT STORAGE

If your entry way falls into the category of not having a closet, it is no big deal because many entry ways do not have a closet and the few that do have a free standing furniture that provides extra coat storage. With the use of coat racks, hall tress, hooks and pegs you can hang your coats, scarf, mittens and gloves. Your scarf, mittens and gloves can be hung to air them out. You can also keep them in a basket if you want. Remember to use a cloth pin for the mittens, scarf and gloves if they are many people using the entry way

Chapter 2 - EFFECTIVE CLEANING TIPS (DO IT FAST)

Learn to clean your house in the same order every time

Start by working with one room at a time, starting and finishing from the same spot. That way you do not have to run back and forth when cleaning. You also have to be consistent in cleaning if you want it to work as part of your routine. The routine is the method you use to clean and it is also a permanent steady method. The speed you use in cleaning comes from your method not by hurrying up. Because, if you have no start or finish point when cleaning, you will just end up wasting a lot of time.

Clean top to bottom, left to right

One other effective way to clean is by starting from the top. Let us assume you have a ceiling fan and under it is a table. You will not start cleaning the table first before the fan because you know that the dust from the fan will still fall to the table and then you have to redo it again. Same thing as cleaning left to right that way you do not have to go running from place to place and working from top to bottom and left to right, ensures that you do go back to cleaning places you have already cleaned.

Use squeegee for a streak free finish

Squeegee is the next best thing to get if you cannot get the shine you want from Windex and paper towels. To use squeegee to get a streak free window, drop a dish of soap in a gallon of water and wipe it with a cloth then use a squeegee to finish it off. Start from top to bottom of the window and wipe the blade each time at the bottom. You can also use a glass cleaner and a microfiber cloth in place of a squeegee. But make sure not to clean the windows in circular motion as this will leave streak mark instead, clean using horizontal strokes and move from top to bottom. Lastly, refrain from using newspapers or paper towels when cleaning a window as it will leave a residue.

Keep the tools needed at an available place

This ensure that you will not waste time going back and forth to get the product you need when cleaning. You can do this by placing your products in a bucket or caddy and just take it along with you to the spot you want to start cleaning from. Some people might recommend pouring the cleaning product into a small bottle if the original bottle is big for you to carry around. I will not recommend this because someone else might mistake the small bottles for something else and it may be hazardous. You can avoid a big cleanup by doing little things like getting a shower cleaner and spray anytime you have a shower and then rinse it then you walk away. You do not have to scrub or wipe anything. Also a shower cleaner is not really expensive.

You can dust without spraying

Using a duster is a great way for cleanup. You can use it to dust picture, blinds, nooks and other areas that might not seem reachable using a cloth. Note if the place you are dusting has heavy build up, use a cloth or vacuum and then make sure to dust the place with duster every week or so after that.

Deal with kitchen grease

There is no way to avoid grease stains in the kitchen. But not to worry, there are many ways to battle grease stain. You can use baking soda and water for tough stains, remember to scrub lightly or you can use a cleaner with orange oil in it or you can use a dish washing detergent that fights grease. Mix it with water and test it on a small spot first to make sure that it does not affect the finish.

Lemon cleaner

Some of you might know this trick about using lemon to remove any rust stain on your patio, porch, garage floor and driveway instead of using acid. Put some fresh lemon juice on the stain and allow it to sit for about 10mins if the stain has been there for long (weeks or month) scrub with a hard bristle brush and rinse with clean water.

Battle bathroom mold

Hydrogen peroxide is not only used for cuts you can use it to battle the mold in your bathroom. Spray on mold and allow it to sit for 3 to 5mins and it will kill the fungus causing the mold. You can use a fan while showering to keep the mold from coming back. After showering, use a squeegee to do the water on the tile and shower door. You do not want the mold to haunt your bathroom.

Defeat mineral deposits

If you are having problems with your faucet due to mineral deposit from hard water, use white vinegar on a cloth and clean the faucet. Do not use a brush as this will scratch the faucet. The use of vinegar will also make you faucet sparkle.

Keep stainless-steel shining

Do you know the enemies of stainless steel? It is fingerprints, watermarks and smudges. If you have mineral oil you can use it to clean any stainless steel surface or you can get the product for it and apply it to a cloth a wipe the surface down once a week. With mineral oil, toothpaste is kept from sticking to the sink and it is easier to wipe.

Have fun with magic erasers

I am sure most of you readers have heard about Mr. Clean magic eraser. This eraser will help you get stain off when nothing else will. So keep some in your bucket of products when cleaning as they will come in handy. You can use it to clean walls, any floor surface (wood, tile, and laminate) and it is also cheap.

Clean the microwave

Insides of microwave may prove tough to clean at first especially if baked food has been sitting there for days or longer. But there is a trick that can help you clean the microwave easier and faster. But before I tell you that I am going to talk about a few other things first oh just kidding I am not going to leave you in suspense. The trick is to put a cup full of water and heat it up in the microwave. The moisture from it will help loosen the things on the sides, top and bottom of the microwave. Then clean with a damp cloth.

Vacuum in rows

If you want an effective vacuuming, all you have to do is to vacuum in a straight row and then move over and start again at the front of the room. Make sure to vacuum places that tend to get dirty quickly at least once a week. If you are having trouble with the cords while vacuuming just place it over your shoulder.

Speed-clean regularly

Clean more often if you want to cut down your cleaning time. After a major cleanup, from time to time like 15minutes everyday do a light clean up. Pick up trash, clean the table, floors and kitchen. Doing this keeps your home looking nice and cleaned. If you keep this up, the day]you are supposed to do your major cleanup you will find out that you do not have much thing to clean and this will save you from an agonizing job.

Chapter 3 - TIPS AND TRICKS IN CLEANING YOUR KITCHEN AND BATHROOM

Kitchen

In The Kitchen

When cleaning your kitchen, always begin from the right side of your stove, and then move clockwise around the room. Since the stove is mostly the dirtiest part in the kitchen, ending your cleaning with the stove prevents you from spreading grease and dirt to other cleaned part of the kitchen. Soak pans, pots and knobs in warm soapy water before you start cleaning so after cleaning, they will be much easier to clean.

Sanitize the Sink

Now this is a hard to believe fact but do you know that your dirty kitchen sink contains more bacteria than the toilet seat. That is why it is always good to sanitize the sink. To do this use a disinfectant wipe that has an EPA label on it. Another method you can use to disinfect is to clean the sink with soap and water first then spray vinegar and then hydrogen peroxide (do not mix the vinegar and peroxide together). To make your sink sparkle if it is stainless, use mineral oil on a cloth to bluff it. This will prevent water and mold buildup and it will keep the sink looking clean for long.

Clean Dishwasher

Use baking soda on a damp sponge once a week to wipe of food stains, crumbs or stuck on food around the dishwasher edges. Use dishwasher magic which is a product that kills e coil to clean inside by running an empty cycle with it. During the cold and flu season, add bleach to the regular dish cycle to kill bacteria if you are worried about the bleach do not fret the rinse cycle will rinse it off and make sure it is sanitized enough to use.

Love Your Oven

The oven is the heart of your kitchen so keep it clean you can use an oven liner that can be wiped with paper towel, or put in a dishwasher the type you can reuse over and over again use the non-stick type.

Smelly Disposal?-Disinfect it: If you want to get rid of odour use a slice of lemon, salt and few ice cubes. The lemon takes the smell away and the salt and cubes wash off any residue.

Crumple Paper Towels or Microfiber cloth

Use a microfiber cloth instead of paper towels because the cloths can be washed and reused while a paper towel can only be used once and then disposed. You also can save little money from buying a microfiber cloth. But the choice is yours whatever makes cleaning easier for you.

Clean as You Go: An easy way to do the dishes or keep a spot clean is for you to fill up the sink with soapy water when you start dinner. After using a plate or pan just dump it in the sink and it will be soaking as you eat. That way, once you are done with all your munching, it will be easy for you to clean the plates and pans also clean any stain immediately do not allow it to sit there for days.

Remember the Sponge

Sponges can be a breeding ground for bacteria. Some people still use a shredded and smelly sponge and this is not very hygienic. Disinfect your sponge by squeezing out the water remnant and then microwaving it on high every night. Replace your sponge if it is old and worn out.

Bathroom

Make Doors Shine: You can use lemon oil (rub a teaspoon on the door) or rain X glass treatment to stop water build up on the glass shower doors. Use the rain X twice a month.

Tame the Toilet: Use a teaspoon of Tang Drink Mix in the toilet bowl. Let it stay on for a few minutes. The citric acid acts like a scrubber it is also non-toxic. After a few minutes, use the toilet brush to swish and then flush. If you are worried about toilet water splashing at you, push the toilet brush in and out of the trap before you start cleaning the bowl. This method lowers the water level.

Corral Strays

Use Drano or liquid plumb to keep the shower drains free of hair strands or other things that will clog up the drain. Pour boiling water down the drain to make sure it stays problem free. Use a damp towel paper to get rid of the hair strand on the floor every morning.

Use Bedtime as Clean Time

Wipe down the tub, toilet and mirror and throw out things causing clutters. Remember to do the sink and floors too.

BONUS Chapter - TIPS AND TRICKS ON ORGANIZING YOUR LIVING ROOM, BATHROOM AND KITCHEN

LIVING ROOM

CONTROL UNCONTROLLABLE CORDS

I am sure no one is a stranger to uncontrollable cords that we encounter behind our entertainment center. Well there are things in the market we can buy to help with it. Like the cable yoyo it coils up to six feet of cord and with the adhesive backing, you can stick it to any surface. Or you could use a cable caddy which sticks onto a desktop or behind a TV consol. It has space for many cables. Since your cords will still dangle freely you can use a cable zipper to enclose them.

HELLO WASTEBASKET

Trash is inevitable in every household so make sure to get a trash can to cut down on the clutter. Some people think that having a trash can in a room is unattractive and it might make the room smelly. If you are one these people try getting a can that fits the décor of the room and buy some trash bags that counters smells and also have a lid so you can close the trash especially if you plan on throwing food.

KEEP FLAT SURFACES CLUTTER-FREE

The family room is the place you will expect to see a lot of clutter because it is a place that most people gather. So you will often find books, magazines, papers and brochures accumulate there. You can get a stackable file cart if you have no floor space to keep the papers and books. You could also use a drawer. Make sure the rest of your family follow in keeping the surface clutter free by putting the books, magazine etc. where it is supposed to be. You can quickly sweep through every surface and pick up papers to put into the bin and then sort them out later.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SPACE BEHIND THE SOFA

The space behind the cushion can be very useful in putting extra pillows, candles, or blankets that might add clutter to the living room. You can also put a low bookcase behind your sofa. Keep it organized.

DISPLAY PICTURES IN A CREATIVE WAY

If you love pictures like me and have a lot of small photo frames that clutter the family room, you might want to consider getting an album as this is a great way for you organize and store all your photos. You can use a digital frame if you do not use film. If you are a scrap booker, organizing your pictures by dates or occasions in picture boxes is a great idea because you can keep them in one central location on a bookshelf. Remember to also use the vertical space on the walls and not just a mantel or side table.

BATHROOM

CONTROL HAIR ITEM CLUTTER

Getting a plastic tub that can be placed under the sink is great for keeping your hair gels, dryer, curlers, sprays etc. Also quickly go through all of them and take out the ones you do not need or use anymore and give them out to a friend or charity. When you want to fix your hair, you can take the plastic tub out and get what you need without creating a mess.

ADD CREATIVE TOWEL STORAGE

Your towel rack not big enough for the entire family? Add hooks to the bathroom. They are cheap, easy to mount and with them you can create space for every member of your family to hang their towel. Also the bathroom floor will remain dry and not damp.

ORGANIZE YOUR MAKEUP

Bathroom drawers tend to store all most everything in a bathroom and this end up with the drawers and other things becoming disorganized. Getting an expandable makeup drawer, that can fit in a shallow drawer and takes the place of large makeup packs. Diverse size compartments will sort out lipstick, blush and eye shadow so you never need to scoot around to discover what you are searching for. As you arrange your cosmetics, make certain to discard anything that smells or is lapsed. An old cosmetic contains microscopic organisms that can aggravate your skin.

USE THE SPACE OVER YOUR TOILET

Extra toilet paper, toiletries and even towels can be kept over the toilet bath furniture.

There is always space for organization around the house even in small bathrooms. If toilets seats are not kept down, you can get a unit with cabinets or closed shelves to store toiletries.

KITCHEN

EMPTY CABINETS

Go through everything that is in your cabinet and discard the things you do not need again or give out the things you do not use frequently. Most kitchens do not have enough space for storage so the key for this to work is for you to only keep the things you love using.

ORGANIZE THE CABINETS

Now that you have groups laid out on the floor, decide where each item should be stored. Cooking and baking pieces should be kept close to where you do food preparation. Utensils should be in the drawer nearest to the preparation area as well. Glassware should be kept near the sink or refrigerator. Your coffee or tea station that includes sugar, milk, mugs and filters should be near the water source if this is possible that way, you do not have to go back and forth the kitchen for what you need just to make your favorite beverage.

GROUP LIKE ITEMS

Put items that go together in the same place. Like your entire cooking utensil put them together, sort all your items for baking and put them together. The dishes you use, the ones visitors use, the holiday ones even the ones that you use like once or twice a year group them according.

USE TRANSPARENT CONTAINERS TO STORE ITEMS

Use containers to reorganize the insides of your cabinets. Assemble together things like packets of sauce mixes, gravy mixes, seasoning, cereal and hot cocoa envelopes, then put them into small plastic containers to avoid them being dispersed all over the cabinet. Use clear plastic shoeboxes to store food that is in tiny boxes such as gelatine or pudding mix.

STORE CONTAINERS AND LIDS TOGETHER

Some people make the mistake of discarding lids knowingly or unknowingly. The way to prevent this or even to prevent looking for where you kept the lid to a particular plate is by storing lids and containers together. You can put the lids on the container or store them in a larger container that way you know where it is kept. Or you can opt to storing them on a wire rack by their side.

MAKE USE OF VERTICAL SPACE

Place hooks underneath cabinets to hold mugs above the countertop, or hang a stemware rack in the same spot for wine glasses. This will free up considerable cabinet space. You could also hang adhesive hooks on the inside of cabinet doors or pantry doors to hold tools such as measuring cups, oven mitts or other kitchen appliances. Contemplate using wall space or a ceiling rack to hang pots and pans. Keep in mind that any space you can use to hang something will free up flat space inside a cabinet.

USE LAZY SUSANS

Lazy Susan hahaha (I find the name funny). This can be very useful for your oils, beverages, spices, vitamins, medications and other cooking ingredients. You can use it for leftover food, jars of pickle etc. All you have to do is just to rotate it to get what you want simple!

USE DRAWER DIVIDERS

Drawer divider is a great place for you to store your cooking utensils. It allows you to find a little spot for each item and you also know where that item is in case you need to use it.

SORT PAPERS

You can use a magnetic box that hangs onto the side of the refrigerator for takeout menus, coupons, notepad, papers or other things that you know tend to accumulate on countertops. Each type of paper should have its own section in the sorter.

CLEAN OUT THE REFRIGERATOR

Cleaning out the refrigerator might seem a bit hard for some people especially if you are not used to it. An easy way for you to start getting used to it or to do it is for you clean it out on the same day you have to take out your trash to the curb. You can start by having a trash can nearby and putting two trash bag in the can so that when the one onto fills up and you remove it, you already have the other one ready in the can for you. Then you can start sorting out your foods. Check the ones that will expire soon, have expired already or have stayed too long in the refrigerator and throw them out immediately. After doing this, only the good edible foods will remain and this will only take a few minutes of your time. How you arrange your kitchen is up to you. It depends on your personal work style. Remember that as you are arranging your kitchen in a way that is more efficient and smooth for you. So make sure you spend time organizing and decluttering your kitchen because you will enjoy making use of it this way.

Chapter 4 - CLEANING SUPPLIES

In the market today, there are many different cleaning products out there that can make house cleaning easier. To keep your house clean, there are few basic tools and cleaners that are a must have to make your cleaning more easy and efficient. As you might have come to realize, not every cleaning product is required at your house like for example if your house the wall to wall carpeting type the products you will need is different from the ones with the hardwoods all over.

Dusting Supplies

Cloths (Microfiber ones) to use for general and complex dusting

Dusting spray and furniture polish

Vacuum cleaner (dusting attachment for high ceilings, walls etc.)

Trash

Trash is something that can be generated even from the smallest household. We all already know the tools needed to take care of trash

Trash cans (for every room and Lou or area in the house)

Trash cans liners (these can be reused grocery sacks, or store bought liners)

Baking Soda

Recycling Bins (labelled for easy sorting)

General Surface Cleaning

Every surface in the home gets dirty. You can use a good all-purpose cleaner to clean spills, smudges, sticky spots, or stains. If you want an extra cleaner for other general cleaning around the house you can use

All-Purpose Cleaner

Kitchen Cleaner or Wipes

Bathroom Cleaner or Wipes

Sponges, Paper Towels, Cleaning Cloths

Scrubbers

Special Surfaces

In most homes, there are surfaces that need a little more extra care than the others and if you happen to have one of those surfaces, and you try cleaning them with the normal general cleaner, you might notice that the surface may fade over time. So it is better to use the products that is applicable to the surface like for example:

Oven Cleaner

Stone Cleaner

Glass Cleaner

Dish Soap

Dish Detergent

Wood Polish

Laundry Soap

Upholstery Spot Remover

Leather Cleaner

Laundry Stain Remover

Laundry Additives

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Soft Scrubbing Cleaner

Air Freshener

Bleach

Silver or Metal Polish

Storage and Organizing

No matter how clean your home is, you still need to organize and store items. Organizing and storing in your home properly can make a big difference on how neat and orderly your home will turn out to be. Although, storage and organizing needs contrast but you can still consider the following:

Storage containers it might be plastic, clear, and stackable with handles

Labels or a label maker

Filing system

Floors

The floor is usually the most place that gets dirty. Things is spilled on it and smeared throughout, foot prints. The cleaning product or supply you use on the floor depend on the type of floor you have whether it is wooden or tilled. If you have a lot of people living in your house, then your house will probably have different floor types and it will need different supplies to clean the floor. Some of these are:

Broom

Dustpan

Vacuum Cleaner

Mop

Mop Bucket

Mopping Solution for floor type

Polish

SOME DIY CLEANING PRODUCTS

You can make a multipurpose cleaner, window cleaner, toilet bowl cleaner, furniture polish, and floor cleaner at home.

All-purpose cleaner : ½ tablespoon of dish soap, 2 tablespoon of borax, ½ table spoon of baking soda, 2 cups of hot water. Mix it all together and put in an empty spray bottle.

Window cleaner : 2 cups of vinegar, ¼ cup of vinegar, ½ tablespoon of dish soap. Put it in an empty spray bottle and use of your window.

Toilet bowl cleaner : ½ cup of baking soda, 1 cup vinegar this is for the medium size bowl.

Furniture polish: ¼ cup of vinegar, a few drops of olive oil and as before put it in an empty spray bottle

Floor cleaner: 1 gallon of water, ¼ cup of dish soap, ¼ cup of vinegar and then a bucket. Your floor will be sparkling clean.

Conclusion

Lots of information to take in right but now are you not glad you did. Yes these are the secret to cleaning and organizing your home. One of the most important things to remember is to clean the home at least every 15mins every day. That way you get used to it and you also get to avoid the big cleanup day. Remember always keep the family room, kitchen and even bedroom organize that way you will know where to get something in case you need it. Also store your cleaning products in a safe place. I use safe for those who have babies or little kids. Some people lock up their cleaning product or use products that are not toxic to the health.

Remember to always wipe of stains or spills as soon as they happen so you will not forget. Also, make use of the space around your house to store things like the back of the sofa to store extra blankets, pillows etc. As you read this book and follow the rules, I am sure you will be much happier in your clean home.

GOODLUCK!!!



DIY CHRISTMAS GIFTS and IDEAS

28 Amazing Easy to make Homemade
Christmas Gift Ideas and Home
Decoration Ideas for Winter!



BONUS
DIY Mason
Jar Christmas
Gifts Included

Mariam Gill

DIY CHRISTMAS GIFTS AND IDEAS

28 AMAZING EASY TO MAKE HOMEMADE CHRISTMAS GIFTS IDEAS AND HOMEMADE
DECORATIONS IDEAS FOR WINTER. BONUS DIY MASON JAR CHRISTMAS GIFTS
INCLUDED

Book Description

This book, DIY Christmas Gifts and ideas, is the ultimate guide to Christmas decorations, gifts and ideas. It will provide the reader with information to help them prepare for a colourful Christmas. It will advise the reader on the various ways they can decorate outdoors and indoors of their houses to reflect the Christmas spirit. The ideas in decorations provided in this guide are all home made. They will enlighten the user on how they can customize their homes using readily available resources including metallic, plastic and wooden pieces that can be curved or shaped to fit the many Christmas spirit features. It will also provide users information to help them create custom gifts for their loved ones. The plans and ideas are simple and cheap. After reading this book the user will be able to create a colourful Christmas that they will enjoy and cherish for the rest of their lives. The topics to be covered in the book include:

DIY outdoor decoration for Christmas

DIY indoor decoration for Christmas

Homemade Christmas gifts

DIY Mason jar gifts and decorations for Christmas

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Introduction

Christmas is a great time but how good the time becomes depends on how well you prepare for it. Basically, preparation for Christmas involves decoration and gifts and anything else you do to make the season colourful and memorable. Recent times have been faced with a number of factors that have contributed to hardships in preparation for Christmas. Such challenges include financial difficulties, location, time and even availability of the resources one needs to make the season a success.

There is the nativity set ups, snow and snow men, reindeers and many other things that are key to a Christian Christmas setting. If you are not well located geographically, access to snow is hard. For example, many countries in Africa do not get snow and even if somebody worked hard and brought snow home, to be able to make snow people, place it strategically and have it there for the entire season is next to impossible.

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Christmas is always a great time to spread the love. The love is depicted in colours, gifts and coming together of people from all fronts with an ultimate goal of sharing, being with loved ones and basically making merry. It is a time for people to relax, appreciate life as they give thanks to God for the marvels they have experienced in their lives. There are four things that are always in everybody's mind during this time. These are family and friends, gifts, decorations and religion.

Improvisation comes to the rescue here. DIY is the only choice that most of us have. The good thing about DIY is that it is cheap, fun and most of the resources we need to erect or improvise these things that we need for Christmas are easily available. It does not matter if you need indoor or outdoor Christmas paraphernalia. DIY alternatives are available for wall hanging, outdoor and indoor stuff and even gifts. These DIY options will save your Christmas this time around.

Chapter 1 - Christmas DIY Indoor Decorations

Decorated paper ornaments

The paper ornaments will make your Christmas tree look much better. All you need is border punches, differently coloured paper strips and staples. Punch out patterns in the paper strips and then staple the papers together. Staple them in a way that they will take the shape of an ornament. You can improve the appearance of the ornaments by spraying or sticking shiny strips or pieces into the papers with glue. This will make the ornaments shiny. Hang them on your Christmas tree or any other position in around the house.

Dead shrub/branch Christmas tree

This is a great option for people with small space or looking to be more creative about the Christmas tree. All you need is a shrub or a branch from a dead tree without leaves. Fix the tree on a plastic or metallic container filled with moss or sand. Cover the container with a colourful wrapper or piece of cloth. Hang your bulbs, stars, ornaments and any other hangings you would like to add on the tree.

Scrabble letter ornaments

Scrabble letters are great ornaments if hanged forming holiday phrases. They can go on the DIY indoor tree or anywhere in the shelves. You can hang them by a thread or glue them across on a wall. Use a power drill to drill a small hole then use either a green or red thread to join and hang the letters. Examples of words you can form are JOY, CHRISTMAS, WELCOME, NOEL etc.

Ladder Calendar

A ladder is a very creative way of displaying your Christmas season calendar. You can make a small ladder using wood or simply get a small one from the store. Paint the calendar with your favourite color or may be one that matches with your furniture. Hang numbered envelopes for each day and event cards on the ladder. Use differently coloured envelopes to make it look better. You can also hang ribbons and shine ornaments on this advent calendar.

Peppermint wreath

Don't worry anymore about a wreath. All you need is a hot glue gun, three peppermint bags and wreath form (white foam).

DIY fireplace

So you have your idea of the homemade stockings or sock you will use for the season but you have no idea where to hang them because there is no fireplace in your house. All you need is a big picture of mirror frame. You can stick together a rectangular or square frame and have it mounted on the wall. Be sure to paint it with white and red paint or simply have shiny ribbons or led bulbs mounted on it. A person not looking to have the entire rectangular frame can just mount a single piece of wood across. You can place other Christmas decorations and phrases on the frame.

DIY holiday vignette

Old book's covers provide a rustic touch to your holiday display. If you have old books lying around and without probability for future use, simply pluck out the covers and use them in combination with other wrappers. You can throw in a few ornaments, LED lights and evergreens around the entire thing to improve the appearance of the vignette.

Homemade candle holders

For this you need mason jars, fake berries, scented or unscented candles (coloured look better). Put a small holder for candle wax at the centre of the big Mason jar and the surround it with the fake berries and spruce. Use ribbons or twine bow to wrap the mason jars. Christmas candy stripped ribbons will perfect the look of the mason jars when they are lighted at night.

Multi-holiday vintage wreath

It is possible you have some old fabric lying around. It is time to put them to use. It may be velvet or any other type of fabric. As long as it is coloured, has flowers or stripped then you are good to go. Grab yourself some foam core board and cut out a wreath shape the size you want for your wreath. Cover the wreath the way you prefer with a fabric of your choice. Glue or sew buttons onto the covered wreath with alternating colors. You can spiral around some thread or folded pieces of cloth to minimize the number of buttons needed. To complete it, just make a bow from the old fabric or a handkerchief and attach them to the bottom of the wreath. Hang it on your wall and use it for any holiday.

Tropical tree

Who said that a Christmas tree has to be red and green coloured? You can make a change this Christmas. Simply get a dead small tree with plenty of braches. Plenty of DIY paper snowflakes and stars and LED lights. Use turquoise or gold colors for ribbons or any other decorations you want to add on the tree. Just don't anything green or red in color.

Advent calendar made of magnet

The best thing about this magnetic calendar is the fact that not all parts of it need to be made of magnet. Mounting the metal frame, rack, plate of any shape on a piece of magnet will make it attract other pieces of metal you wish to use for different dates. Color and number the shapes however you like and stick them on the board. Use different shapes for different days and add more pictures and decorations on them to make it more colourful

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Chapter 2 - Christmas DIY Outdoor Decorations

Moss wreath

You will need moss, wreath shaped foam, pine cone, glue and berry. Glue the moss all around the wreath shaped foam. Accent the wreath with a decorative pine cone and embellish it with berry. To complete the look, use a red ribbon around the wreath or simply use it to hang the wreath. Let the ribbon be excessive so that it falls almost all the way behind the wreath.

Wreath made from yarn balls

The things you need to make this wreath are yarn, hot glue, wreath shaped wire and styro foam balls. Wrap the yarn around the balls in different directions to make yarn balls. Using hot glue stick the balls onto the wreath shaped wires. Green color or any other color close to that will make the wreath look great. To finish it off glue red coloured balls or ornaments into the wreath interchangeably or coil red ribbons around the wreath to give it the Christmas touch.

PVC Candy Canes

Candy canes are an important decoration if not a favourite delicacy for the kids. Christmas is all about gifts and among the gifts you expect from Santa is candy. Candy canes act as a signal that Santa is around or candy is in plenty. Beyond that, it is an important decoration for Christmas. You do not have to get the actual big candy for this Christmas. Just get some red ribbons, PVC pipes and white paint.

If you manage to get white PVC then, good for you. Paint the PVC white and let it dry. Coil the red ribbons around the PVC. If you wish, you may want to use fire to curve the PVC at the top before you paint it. Position the PVC candy stick on both sides of the door to complement the Christmas mat and wreath on the door.

DIY plastic, wood or paper snowflakes

Many countries will not have access to snow this Christmas due to their geographical positioning and changes in weather or season patterns. However, this does not mean that you cannot complete your Christmas look with snow. Snowflakes can be made using almost any available material as long as it is simple to shape and color. Whichever material you choose to use, cut it into the shape of flower, star or any other shape you feel fits your idea of snowflakes. Color them white and then use a white string or thread to suspend them from any place around and inside the house. The only thing you have to make sure is that they are not too spaced out and position them at different levels. Clothes pins also make great snowflakes.

Cement, wood, plastic presents

It's common thing to put a heap of presents either by the door or in the back yard. Nowadays, these presents are never the usual boxes containing gifts inside. If they are placed outside the biggest possibility is that they are there just to make the place look festive. Give the impression that there is a heap of gifts but actually work as a Christmas decoration. You just need a brick, a square or rectangular piece of wood or any plastic box not having any use. You can even use old books. Wrap them with wrappers and ribbons or paint them. Decorate them however you want to achieve the impression of a gift then heap them somewhere or simply place them by the fence. You will not worry about them being stolen or destroyed.

DIY snow people

So you want to erect snowman but you have no idea how to do it because you have no access to snow or even if it is available how to make it stay for the entire season. It is simple. Think wood or plastic containers. For wood you just need to get a piece of log and try to shape it into a head or simply just shape it so that you have it look like the parts of the body from the neck to the waist. You don't need to have hands as you can just fix branches or pieces of wood to look like limbs.

Spray or paint them white and then use black paint to make impressions of buttons or any other protruding organs of the body. For the head, just find a pumpkin or any other container and fix it at the neck of the log. Use a plastic cone shaped cup to make a nose and color it black. If you choose to use plastic containers, just use bucket. Place them inside each other and place them upside down. Color them white and add the black finishes for the nose eyes and other organs you want. Roll an old scarf around the neck and you are good to go.

DIY nativity set

Complete your decorations and Christmas preparations with a DIY nativity set. For this you can choose to either use wood or modeling clay (or any other available 'shapeable' material). It is a fun thing to do on a free weekend or day just before Christmas. Curve the wood or shape the material to obtain the people and animals in a nativity set. A man, woman, an infant, sheep or cows and then a few visitors to the birth area will be great. Make them small if you want an indoor set. This set can also work outside by the window or in the balcony.

Color them creating the impression of clothes and colors of people. Find an old box or carton laying around position it where you want the set to go. Arrange the pieces in the container and ensure they are firm so that they won't be blown down. You can use glue to stick them. You can throw in some plastic plants. Shape papers into stars and finish them with glossy or shiny material to reflect light. In one end of the container, fix a rainbow shaped plastic or paper and give it rainbow colors. Find some LED lights and put them in the corners of the container or a small coloured car bulb to provide light to the set. Remember to cover the outside of the box to make it Christmassy.

Chapter 3 - DIY Christmas Gifts

Christmas being one of the most famous and worldwide celebrated holiday brings people together from different parts of the world. It provides a sweet time for family gatherings to enjoy together and recap for the year. Christmas holiday is held in order to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the saviour of the world. The only son of God who brought forth the redemption of our lives through believing in Him and accepting him as our saviour and our Lord. He is the way the truth and the life and no one goes to the father unless through Him. This special day is well respected by all Christians in every country and they hold it with the highest level of honour and degree to which it deserves. It's a merry day.

It's a norm, a lifestyle and a way to kick the Christmas day by offering gifts to our friends, relatives, the orphans, paying homage to the street children, spending time with the sick and elderly in the society. Love marks the beauty of this auspicious holiday. The joy of giving, the joy of being part of a great family is quiet overwhelming and most people spend their pennies to make the joy be felt by everyone around them.

Finding the right gift can be very hectic and troublesome and at times breathe taking. Living in a society where everyone lives like a single family, all having positive expectations for a special gift from you different from whatever you offered them last time. This task is tough than making a decision for the whole country on a very critical issue. Not forgetting your own family and kids makes it eventougher and almost steals the little peace of mind you should be enjoying during the holidays.

The problem explodes when you remember that your kid has got several close schoolmates and teachers living in down town, all looking up to you to extend a hand to them. As we say, holidays have never been good friends with our wallets; this one really strangles your wallet almost to death though the best part is that this comes with satisfaction and unlimited happiness form generosity!

This is where now the DIY saves the day. Engaging your creativity and ability to innovate quite beautiful Christmas gifts for your loved ones. This DIY are pocket friendly, time saving, mind opening, freedom, pride of innovation, personal touch and also gives you a chance to prove to the world that you have something special to show to the world.

In a way through this regular expertise, one develops not only to make the friends satisfied but also exposes you to business world that may at one time bridge you to the destiny in a move you never expected.

Over the very many years I have lived under the sun, several types of gifts have been offered to me during the holiday amongst them being the DIY Christmas Gifts. DIY stands for Do It Yourself. This gifts have got a supernatural effect on anyone who receives them. They show love, they show that someone took his precious time to honoryou with a gift. DIY have become commonly common to very many people in all areas. I still keep some of this gifts as souvenirs.

Examples of DIY Christmas Gifts

Lucky to have you gift collection

This is a great season to tell someone you love how much they mean to you and remind them of the great times and things that have made your life with them great. To make this DIY gift you will require candy, cakes, chocolate or any other sweet thing that you think they will like and printable paper and wrappers. With your candy ready, print multiple quotes or texts on the printable piece of paper using a computer and cut it down to small square pieces enough to fold the candy. You can also opt to hand write the pieces using a pen. Wrap the candy or the delicious small gifts for the loved ones with the notes and use another wrapping above the quoted paper. It is advisable that you have another wrapper (nylon) between the candy and the printable paper to prevent contact which would either destroy the notes or the candy itself. With about thirty pieces of candy you are fine. Feel ok to add more if you feel you need to add more reasons you are lucky to have that person. Put them in a box and wrap them with an appropriate wrapper for the season then finish with a final ribbon forming a knot at the top of the carrying box.

Memory Calendar

Make your own customized calendar for the next year and gift them to a loved one. All you need is a color printing machine, twelve picture printable papers and photos from the entire year either saved in a computer or already printed. The printed photos can be fixed using glue or can be scanned to the computer. Calendar for the next year is easily available as a search through the year will bring thousands of them. Should you choose to write one yourself, it won't be hard as there programs like excel that will help generate the pattern for the days to get the accurate date for each day.

Using word processing software, arrange the calendar so that it occupies half the page of the A4 size printing paper (preferably photo paper). To get enough space, reduce the margins of the paper to about 0.2" but leave a gutter for attaching the pages. You can either put the calendar dates at the bottom then the images on above or the images on the bottom or center it then surround it with the images. Use different sizes and shapes for the images and throw in captions with the date for the memory and any details you wish to add. It may be the names of people on the image or the location. Print more but larger images on the back side of the paper or leave it blank and use glue to pin already printed photos or decorated and texts.

Print the papers and use spiral binders to bind the pieces together into one calendar book. Add a stronger paper for the covers. An embossed paper will do. The calendar can be stood against the wall with the current month page opened or you can use cloth hangers with clips to hand them on walls (hangers with clips/pegged hangers).

Creative Gloves

As we all know that this is a festive season for all individuals, make him or her a very attractive decorative oven glove to use during this and other oncoming holidays. For your friends with mad love for the kitchen, substitute their torn and obvious gloves with a bit of pretty fabric and your sewing skills! Make him/her treasure the kitchen by satisfying his/her glove needs. The output shall always be great. Motivation makes it!

Wrapping

Given a gift, obviously the first thing you notice is the wrapping, ensure that the wrapping is very appealing and quite attractive. Wrapping your gifts requires a special attractive wrapper in order to win the taste of the recipient. Give them the chalkboard look for once! The gift wrap and chalk ink markers are available at craft stores, to your taste, give it the best shot! Wrapping can be as personalized as the actual gifts. The array of white, black and gold combinations are really exotic colors that will actually set ablaze the recipients love for the gift.

Sleighs (candy)

There is nothing sweet to kids and youngsters than offering them delicacies, snacks and chocolates. We all know that feeling when your little one declares that he or she wants to hand out gifts to the whole class; it's adorable that they want to give, but it also spells trouble for you! These quirky candy sleighs are the perfect solution; they are cheap and easy enough to make a whole bunch in no time, and your little one can also get involved in the process so that you aren't the one doing all the work. Make your kids and your neighbouring kids be your guest from today to the rest of your lives.

DIY recreation Dough

Sometimes baking for yourself the favourite cakes is safer, sure, and to the level you want it to be than buying an already prepared one. Sure, play dough isn't all that expensive, but if you make it yourself then you know exactly what goes in it (so that it's safe and non-toxic). Plus, you can make it smell yummy, and you can make a whole lot! Just make sure to store in an airtight container. Give your Christmas the heavenly appeal through homemade play dough. mmmmh yummy!

Simple Clutch

There is nothing sweet like honouring a female friend with a very beautiful unique clutch. The best part of it is that they will fall in love with the clutch bag and show it off to her friends with time. Most of the women can never have enough of these little clutches, their love for clutches are insatiable; using them as money and phone holders. Go find a really pretty, elegant, quirky or fun fabric to make a lovely handmade zippered clutch for one of your girlfriends, mom, or daughter. Make her feel loved and appreciated by offering a simple handmade clutch bag that no one in all generations have given her.

‘ Scarves’ and other ‘swing on-s’

Give her the yearly smile she never had. Make use of that old t-shirt. Using just an old t-shirt, and a pair of scissors, you can make this stylish multi-strand scarf within 10 minutes. You can even use two different colors to liven it up even more. A very simple process involved: quiet cheap but very impressive.

Hand bands and belts

Groom your male and female friends with a paracord bracelet. If you have an outdoorsy man in your life, perhaps you could make him this really cool paracord bracelet. It's thick and chunky without being overbearing, and if he ever finds himself in a tricky situation, he could actually use it to help build a shelter. Over years, for men who prefer not to use wrist watches are going for this bracelet that in all occasions its outstanding, appealing and comfortable.

Won by every beautiful outfit, the flower belt sprouts a beautiful appearance to a beautiful woman wearing it. This gift should go down really well with any of your 'fashionista' friends; making it isn't really complicated, but they'll be so impressed with your handiwork! The most amazing thing is that it blends with both trousers and full dresses according to the taste of your women. Make her several flower belts that marry her outfit to the dot; a very creative way for complementing your lady's outfit.

Rack/book organizers

Every man in this generation atleast owns several electronic gadgets and hence book-organizer would be very helpful for these times. This tech travel organizer is just so outstanding get a second hand vintage book from any book shop around and make one for your friends around. Make them own one during this period

DIY Lighted snowflakes and Star lanterns

Lastly consider making your neighbour's sitting room a palace. It's easy to develop a Star Paper lantern. These star lanterns are absolutely gorgeous and different in sizes to suit his/her house painting. All colors of materials are available in every craft shop and hence no struggle in making several for your friends.

Advantages

1. It is cost-effective.
2. It can be personalized
3. Becomes a treasure

As you shower your friends with this DIY gifts, don't forget to have one gift for yourself. Keep it in the best position you will see each day and appreciate your handiwork. The beauty of the DIY gifts begins with you.

Chapter 4 - Mason Jars Ideas and Projects

Most of us are aware of the beautiful jars by the title Mason Jars that to an extent happen to be the world's common Christmas gifts. They have several uses that are quiet satisfying to the recipient. Mason jars have been all the rage for a long time. They are used to preserve the harvest, and passed jars, canning recipes. They are used by families to preserve family traditions. Vintage mason jars are both decorative as well as functional.

Advantages of the mason jars

Most are transparent hence flexible for many purposes

Glass is used to make them hence un-reactive with compounds stored.

Help reduce the global warming effects by reducing garbage.

Some are re-usable

Substitute kitchen utensils to some extent

Cheap and affordable all round.

Some are used for planting vegetables hence profitable

Can easily be replaced once they wear out or during breaking

The jars can be manipulated to different colors complying to owners interests.

Mason jar projects

Marking this eve colourful and a success, it's essential to give the festive season a different taste by making your own mason jar DIY alternative. Let me take you through the process of making one or two!

Making a Basic Fairy Jar

Arrange to take the project in the evening. This project requires glow sticks. However, glow sticks only glow for a certain amount of time, so it would be best to do this project in the evening when it is already dark. This reduces the chances of wasting the sticks.

Find a suitable jar for the fairies. Jars vary in sizes and shapes and hence you can use any jar size you want, the smaller the jar is, the more glow. A larger jar will have less intense glow, requires more glow sticks. A better consideration is a bulb-shaped glass bottle with a cork stopper that is both economical and appealing. Consider using a tinted mason jar

Purchasing the glow sticks .With the various glow sticks in the market, it is advisable to use the 6-inch glow sticks will have better results than the bracelets or necklaces, which do not glow for very long. The larger the jar is, the more glow sticks you will need. You will need two to three glow sticks, depending on the size of the jar. Consider purchasing a long-lasting glow stick.Consider purchasing multiple colors of glow sticks.

Activation of the glow stick . Hold the glow stick with two hands, and bend it in half this produces sound similar to “snap.” This will shatter the glass tube inside the glow stick and hence releasing the chemicals that cause it to glow.

Hold the glow stick over the jar and cut one of the ends off using a craft knife wearing a pair of gloves to avoid skin irritation

Pour the contents into the jar . Turn the glow stick upside down and pour the liquid into the jar. You may have to shake the tube a little bit to get the entire liquid out.

Sprinkle in some glitter. You can use any type of glitter you want, but iridescent glitter will give you the best results because it will allow the glow to shine through. Consider using shaped pieces of glitter, such as flowers, hearts, and stars. Consider mixing super-fine glitter and chunky crafting glitter in different colors for an interesting effect.

Add some filler. The glow stick fluid will cause the glitter to stick to the sides of the jar, but you can make the glitter appear as though it is suspended inside the jar by adding filler, such as white tulle or organza. You can also use clear, iridescent cellophane. Simply cut a piece of your chosen filler, and scrunch it inside the jar. You want it to be big enough so that it fits loosely into the jar, but not so big that it completely stuffs the jar.

Close the jar tightly and shake it. Be sure the glow stick material and glitter coats the inside walls of the jar.

Decorate the jar. You can make your jar extra special by painting the lid or even covering it with some glitter or pretty fabric. Read the section in this article on decorating your jar for more ideas.

Finally, take the jar into a dark room . The glow stick fluid will shine during daylight, but it will be even brighter and more effective in a dark room.

'Re-powerble' Fairy Jar

Select a clear jar.

Clean your jar

Buy some glow-in-the-dark paint

Choose your painting tools

Prepare your paint

Make little dots inside the jar.

Let the paint dry before putting the lid back on.

Activate the paint

Consider decorating the jar.

Use the jar.

Decorating Your Fairy Jar

From the fairy jar we made in the previous process, it is necessary to decorate it in order to achieve the required taste. The following systematic procedure is followed:

Add filler

Add a fairy inside the jar

Paint the lid

Add glitter to the lid

Cover the lid with some fabric

Embellish the lid

Tie a ribbon around the neck of the jar

Use a coloured jar

Add fairy-shaped silhouettes

CONCLUSION

Being part of the big family, share love, generously extend your smile to the people near your world. Make this Christmas a DIY gifts season. Let someone feel that you care, that they are part of you, make the orphans know that someone still exists dearly in their lives. Make your loved ones enjoy this hidden beauty and make them look forward to other Christmas seasons. Make flower belts to your friends and let them shine this Christmas.

Stand in the gap to decorate that room using the mason jars with the respective purposes. Don't forget the star paper for lanterns. Make your room a living palace. A handmade product is much more appealing than a gift from the shops. They have emotional attachment and influence. The beauty of the Christmas lies in your capacity to make a different special and a unique move. Share love, share DIY Gifts, share the Mason Jars! Wish you merry Christmas and a happy new year.

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DIY Pantry

Life Saving DIY Pantry Tips

The Ultimate DIY Pantry Guide to
Lemon, Baking Soda, Peroxide and
Essential Oil.



Clara Williams

DIY PANTRY

**THE ULTIMATE DIY PANTRY GUIDE TO LEMON,
BAKING SODA, PEROXIDE AND ESSENTIAL OIL. LIFE
SAVING DIY PANTRY TIPS.**

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Introduction

People experience many different problems at home and often find that the remedies to these problems available in the market are either not cost friendly or safe. Buying most of these things in the market will most of the times leave your pocket itching. What is worse is the fact that these remedies that you get at such costs may be harmful to you and your family. Other times they don't even get to do a better job at what they are intended for. This is because there is no guarantee or prove that they are made using the ingredient shown at the label. This book is guide to stocking up of a pantry. It covers a number of things you will need to ensure you always keep in your DIY pantry and why.

When designing and stocking your DIY Pantry there are a number of things that you should always ensure that you have. The next time you set out to design or stock your pantry ensure that hydrogen peroxide, baking soda, lemons and essential oils like Grape fruit oil, Bergamot oil, Rosemary oil, Chamomile oil, Tea tree oil, Citronella oil, Eucalyptus oil, Coconut oil, Cinnamon oil, Peppermint oil, Lavender oil, Orange oil, Lime oil, Ginger oil and Oregano oil are not left out or ignored. This is because there are plenty of ways in which they will come in handy. Besides being used as a must have ingredients you will also find that they can be used as perfect alternatives in case you find yourself missing certain ingredients.

Most probable problems we experience at home include appetite lack, unhealthy foods from the market, unsafe spices and flavourers in the market, air fresheners, deodorants and disinfectants from the market that do not guarantee safety and effectiveness and most of all their availability at unreasonable costs. The best solution to these problems is doing it yourself. It is cost effective, easy, safe and fun. After reading this book you will have many DIY options that will be great alternatives for manufactured products. It will provide you knowledge on things that are great in your DIY pantry.

Chapter 1 - DIY Pantry Guide to Lemon

Lemons are probably one of the most amazing fruits created. Despite their sour taste they still remain irresistible due to their benefits and uses. That lemon in your DIY pantry will be used for more than a hundred purposes – from meals, drinks, desserts, etc. This is due to their health benefits, flavour and circumstances in which they can be used. Lemon peels contain crude protein, phosphorous, calcium, copper, iron, zinc, sodium, potassium and some chemical parameters in feedstuffs. Nearly the entire fruit can be used for health benefits. They are most known for their Vitamin C content. With 53 grams of Vitamin C, one lemon provides more than 60% of the daily recommended allowance for this nutrient. Lemons also contain a range of other vitamins and minerals.

DIY Uses of lemons

The diversity of applications for lemons far exceeds general knowledge. Lemons contain potassium which controls high blood pressure and reduces the effect of nausea and dizziness.

DIY insecticide

Lemons are an efficient tool for making your DIY home insect control alternative. They can help to keep insects out of the kitchen by squirting some lemon juice on door thresholds and windowsills. You can squeeze lemon juice into any holes or cracks where the ants keep getting in. Finally, scatter small slices of lemon peel around the outdoor entrance. Lemons are also effective against roaches and fleas.

DIY depression and stress reliever

Lemon water can also prep up mood and also relieve you from depression and stress. Long distance walkers and world travelers as well as explorers look upon the lemon as a Godsend. When fatigue begins, a lemon is sucked through a hole in the top. A quick acting medicine it is as it gives almost unbelievable refreshments.

DIY antiseptic and disinfectant

When cleaning, play tools, house equipments, appliances or even the entire home including bathtubs, sinks etc just add lemon to the water of the tool you use to clean with. Lemon is a great and cheap antiseptic its acidic and chemical composition is a safe yet cheap method of controlling germs. When you get injuries just apply lemon to the injured part. It helps to prevent infections.

Used for cooking

Potatoes and cauliflower tend to turn brown when boiling but you can change that by squeezing a teaspoon of fresh lemon juice in to the cooking pot. Lemon can also be used to prevent rice from sticking on the sides of the cooking pot by just putting a few drops of lemon juice in the pot.

DIY blood purifier

Commercial deodorants are full of scary, harsh chemicals. Luckily, dabbing a little juice in your armpits works just as well than the store bought stuff. Consumption of a lot of junk food or food with a lot of preservatives and artificial flavours builds up a lot of toxins in the body but daily consumption of lemon water helps to purify the blood.

Reducing inflammation and preventing kidney stones

Lemon is a diuretic meaning that it assists in the production of urine, which helps the body to reduce inflammation by flushing out toxins and bacteria while also giving relief from arthritis and rheumatism. Lemon also helps prevent kidney stones through regular consumption of lemon juice mixed with water. It increases the production of urinary citrate, a chemical in the urine that prevents the formation of crystals that may build up into kidney stones.

DIY Room freshener

You can also freshen and moisturize your room using lemon. If you have a wood burning stove, place an enamelled cast-iron pot or bowl on top, fill with water and add lemon peels, cinnamon sticks, cloves and apple skins. This creates a fresh scent all around and moisturizes the whole room. The next time you run out of room freshener or are looking for ways to save, rely on lemons as a cheap source of room freshening.

DIY Skin improvement

You can also zap zits by naturally dabbing lemon juice on blackheads to draw them out during the day. You can also wash your face with lemon juice for a natural cleanse and exfoliation. Your skin should improve after several days of treatment.

DIY toothpaste and Mouth wash

Lemons are a great ingredient for making homemade toothpastes. To maintain clean white teeth use lemon. You can also boost the effectiveness of store bought toothpastes by adding a little of this oil during brushing sessions. You can also make an impromptu mouth wash by rinsing with lemon juice straight from the bottle. The juice can also be swallowed for longer-lasting fresh breath. The citric acid in the juice alters the pH level in the mouth, killing bacteria that cause bad breath. Rinse after a few minutes because long-term exposure to the acid in lemons can harm tooth enamel.

DIY dandruffs remover

If itchy, scaly dandruff has you scratching your head, relief may not be further away. Just massage two table spoons of lemon juice into your scalp and rinse with water. Then stir one tea spoon of lemon juice into one cup of water and rinse your hair with it. Repeat daily till dandruffs disappear. You can also use it together with your usual shampoo for better results

DIY Headaches and hangover reliever

Hangovers and the headaches that come with it can ruin your day. They reduce your productivity. After a long night out just use lemon and you are good to go. Lemon juice with a few teaspoons of hot tea added is the treatment for headaches and hangover from headaches. Itchy elbows are bad enough. For better looking elbows, mix baking soda and lemon juice to make an abrasive paste, then rub it into your elbows for a soothing, smoothing and exfoliating treatment.

And that is not just it, there are plenty more ways you can use lemon. When it comes to cooking it can be used as a source of flavour for almost all types of dishes. You can add it almost all meals you make at home and you can be sure the food will taste extra better. What is better is that it will help you improve on appetite and since it is great with weight loss, it will help you eat more for more energy while at the same time ensuring you don't become over weight. The following are the benefits that come with lemons in your diet

Health Benefits of lemons

Increasing peristalsis and treating scurvy

By giving one to two ounces of lemon juice diluted with water every two to four hours, scurvy is treated. Lemons also increase peristalsis in the bowels, helping to create a bowel movement thus eliminating waste and helping with regularity. Add the juice of one lemon to warm water and drink it first thing in the morning.

Liver detoxification

The lemon is also a wonderful stimulant to the liver and is a dissolvent of uric acid and other poisons as it also liquefies bile. Fresh lemon juice added to a large glass of water in the morning is a great liver detoxifier.

Restoring body's pH

Lemons are acidic to begin with but they are alkaline forming on body fluids helping to restore balance to the body's pH. The lemon peel also contains the potent nutrient tangerine which has been proven to be effective for brain disorders like Parkinson's disease.

Treating high blood pressure

When there is insufficient oxygen and difficulty in breathing, lemons are very helpful when taken. Blood vessels are also strengthened by the vitamin P in lemon thus prevents internal haemorrhage. This also makes it useful in treating high blood pressure.

Improving eye disorders and treating cancer

The symptoms of eye disorders, including diabetic retinopathy have been shown in research to improve due to the rutin found in lemons. Lemons also contains 22 anti-cancer compounds including naturally occurring limonene oil which slows down or halts the growth of cancer tumours in animals and flavonol glycosides which stops cell division in cancer cells.

Lowers ischemic stroke risk

Eating higher amounts of citrus fruits may lower ischemic stroke risk for women. Those who ate the highest amounts of citrus had a 19% lower risk of ischemic stroke than women who consumed the least. Also, the antioxidant vitamin C, when eaten in its natural form or applied topically can help to fight skin damage caused by the sun and pollution. It also reduces wrinkles and improve overall skin texture.

Chapter 2 - Why you must have Baking Soda in Your DIY Pantry

People under estimate the power of baking soda by limiting its use to home baking needs and in fridges for odour absorption. However, baking soda is a great DIY element that can be used as a cheaper alternative for many things that cost you money and time. Baking soda is something that you should put top of the list when deciding what goes where in your DIY pantry. It should never be left out. Here are some of the great ways you should use baking soda either as an alternative for other things or just for convenience. What is better is the fact that it is simple and very safe to use. With baking soda in your pantry you can rest assured that you have a guaranteed cleaner, personal care, deodorant and baking ingredient.

Great DIY uses for baking soda

Toothpaste and mouth cleaning

The next time you run out of toothpaste or simply want to use a homemade alternative for a quick toothpaste you can rely on baking soda. You just need to mix it with 3% hydrogen peroxide which happens to be another great DIY substance. This is a good enough toothpaste replacement for non-fluoride off the counter one's. It's cheap and easy to make. When having mouth odour problems just add two teaspoons in a glass of water and swish it in your mouth. After rinsing you will have a fresh odourless mouth.

Home and appliance DIY cleaning

When it comes to cleaning baking soda works as a great DIY substance. Greasy dishes, pans and pots can be washed using baking soda. It can also be mixed with detergents commonly used as it eases the process of removing the greases and foods from the dishes. Just add two spoons. You can also leave them to soak in water containing baking soda to make the job easier. You can use it for cleaning your bath tubs, sinks, tiles by just sprinkling some into the surfaces and scrubbing. Ovens and microwaves can also be cleaned using baking soda as it does not leave foul smell on the inside off the microwave. To ensure your silverware are clean and shiny use baking soda. Tea and coffee pots are hard to clean and will sometimes leave a certain taste that is carried on to the next beverage prepared on them. Soak with baking soda for around twelve hours and above before cleaning them. This kicks out the stains, smell and taste. For your floor just add half a glass of baking soda into water and use that to clean the floors, furniture and even cars.

It is also a great laundry solution for washing clothes, curtains, baby clothes and diapers. You can add it to your laundry together with other detergents or on its own. For curtains you can add baking soda to a sponge and wipe them clean. It not only leaves your clothes feeling soft and gentle but also smelling fresh and clean. Grease and oil from the garage can be easily removed by using this great DIY cleaner. Cleaning your batteries, gardening and landscaping tools using baking soda will help reduce their rate of corrosion therefore making them last longer.

Fruit and Vegetable Scrub

The most effective and safest method for cleaning vegetables and fruits is the use of baking soda. Just use a sponge to scrub the dirt off the fruits and vegetables then rinse them.

Skin and facial scrub

Mix baking soda and water in the ratio three is to one to form a paste. Rub the paste on your skin or face gently. You can let it stay for about five minute then rinse it with water. This will give your skin an invigoratingly exfoliated touch.

Deodorant and air freshener

Sometime the deodorants we use are very strong that they corrode our underarms leaving them stingy. You can skip these deodorants by using baking soda as a solution for odour and sweating prevention. You just need to pat some deodorant in your armpits.

Apart from it being used as a deodorant for human beings, it can also be used for plenty other air freshening roles. These include removing odours from refrigerators, recyclables, drains, dishwashers, garbage disposals, trashcans, carpets, vacuum cleaners and even cars. Another use is freshening of pet boxes and cages, shoes, linens, toys and stuffed animals.

DIY Antacid

The next time you experience heartburns preventing you from having fun and there is no antacid close to remedy the problem. Just rush to your pantry and lick a $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of baking soda. It is effective and safe.

Great DIY remedy itchy skin and insect bites

Gently rub a paste or salve of baking soda on the itchy part and let it rest for a few minutes. It neutralises the acid produced by the insect therefore comforting and leaving your skin or affected part feeling better.

DIY Homemade Hand Cleanser and Softener

Never worry about running out of hand cleanser. You can always use baking soda for this purpose which will leave your hands clean and soft. It will also remove any smell.

DIY Bathing and feet soothing

Simply add a half glass of baking soda into your bath tub and get into it. It will leave you skin clean, acid free and feeling soft. It will also be effective for soothing your feet where you just add a few spoons into the water then spar you feet in it.

DIY Hair care

Mixing your shampoo with baking soda when cleaning it ensures that any residue left behind by your hair care products is completely removed leaving your hair clean, strong and manageable. Hair brushes and combs can also be cleaned using baking soda.

DIY fire extinguisher

Small home fire accidents can be controlled using baking soda. Sprinkling baking soda on a fire will put out the fire as it the heating of the soda produces carbon dioxide which does not support combustion. In case of small fires just throw some baking soda into the fire and it will put out.

Chapter 3 - DIY Pantry Guide To Hydrogen Peroxide

Hydrogen peroxide is colorless only a little more viscous than water. It has powerful oxidizing properties, which allow it to work as a bleaching agent. The same oxidizing agents allow it to react with bacteria, viruses, spores and yeast, making it a great DIY disinfectant. Here are the many ways in which Hydrogen peroxide can be useful in your household.

DIY wound Cleaner and disinfectant

This is one of the most obvious uses if you have hydrogen peroxide at home. The 3% solution you can buy at the drug store can be applied directly to minor wounds to clean away dead tissues. It can halt minor bleeding and can help to clear up infections from setting in.

Get rid of acne and boils

If you have infected acne, you may be able to speed up the healing process by applying a little hydrogen peroxide to the infected sites. It will act just the same way it does on wounds, helping to kill the unwanted bacteria and clean the acne.

Cures cancer sores

If you have cancer sores in your mouth, you may be able to get them to go away faster by swishing some hydrogen peroxide in your mouth. Combine it with water so that you don't cause any blistering or irritation in your mouth then swish it around for half a minute or so, then spit it out and rinse with fresh water.

DIY bad breath mouth wash alternative

One great alternative to mouthwash to stop bad breath is hydrogen peroxide since it kills the unhealthy organisms in your mouth that cause bad breath. All it takes is half a minute of swishing to get bad breath go away. Just swishing with hydrogen peroxide every once a week could mean you are good to go for the rest of the week.

Treats colds

There is no cure for the common cold and hydrogen peroxide is no exception no that rule. Common cold can be treated by putting drops of hydrogen peroxide in the ears. This can also help to clean any infection or blockage in the ears. You can also use hydrogen peroxide in your ears to take on an ear infection

DIY ear wax clearer

Ear wax is not an infection but it can certainly drive you crazy when it blocks up the ear so much you have trouble hearing. Try adding a couple drops of olive oil and then follow it up with a couple of drops of hydrogen peroxide. Keep your head tilted for a few minutes. This reportedly relieves a significant amount of pain.

DIY teeth Whitener and toothpaste

Peroxide acts as a bleaching agent. That means that swishing it around in your mouth helps to bleach teeth leaving them sparkling white. You can use it to clean your teeth or simply use it in combination with common toothpaste to boost their effectiveness.

Clean contact lenses

Contact lenses can gradually accumulate a build-up of proteins over time. Hydrogen peroxide is the active ingredient in many lens cleaners as it is since it kills all germs and disinfects the lens.

DIY Stain Remover

Hydrogen peroxide is the best stain lifter if used fairly soon – although blood stains as old as 2 days have been successfully lifted with Hydrogen Peroxide. Although it will bleach or discolour many fabrics. If a little peroxide is poured onto the stain, it will bubble up in the area of the blood. After a few minutes the excess liquid can be wiped up with a cloth or paper towel and the stain will be gone.

Washing/Laundry

You can also add a cup of hydrogen peroxide instead of bleach to a load of whites in your laundry to whiten them. If there is blood on clothing, pour directly on the soiled spot. Let it sit for a minute, then rub it and rinse with cold water. Repeat if necessary. Peroxide is a perfect alternate solution to keep those clothes white. Also, when chlorinating clothes, they tend to wear out faster – peroxide won't do that.

In the bathroom

Fill a spray bottle with a 50/50 mixture of 3% hydrogen peroxide and water and keep it in every bathroom to disinfect without harming your septic system like bleach or most other disinfectants will. After rinsing off your wooden cutting board, pour or spray hydrogen peroxide (and then vinegar) on it to kill salmonella and other bacteria.

DIY Hair Lightening

Peroxide is a bleaching agent and is used for lightened hair. Dilute 3% Hydrogen peroxide with water (50 / 50) and spray the solution on your wet hair after a shower and comb it through. You will not have the peroxide burnt blonde hair like the hair dye packages, but more natural highlights if your hair is a light brown, faddish, or dirty blonde. It also lightens gradually so it's not a drastic change

Tooth Ache

Hydrogen peroxide is not a pain-killer; however, as an anti-viral, antibacterial and anti-fungal agent, it is effective at treating the pathogen that is causing the infection. By swishing it in your mouth a few times, it kills all the bacteria causing infection in your teeth.

Vegetable Soak

Use as a vegetable wash or soak to kill bacteria and neutralize chemicals. Add 1/4 cup of 3% hydrogen peroxide to a full sink of cold water. Soak light-skinned (light lettuce) 20 minutes, thicker skinned (like cucumbers) 30 minutes. Drain, dry and refrigerate. Prolongs freshness. If time is a problem, spray vegetables (and fruits) with a solution of 3%. Let stand for a few minutes, rinse and dry.

Chapter 4 - DIY Pantry Guide to Essential Oils

A great DIY pantry is never complete if it lacks essential oils. This is because essential oils will be used for so many purposes at home. It ranges from cooking, cleaning, air freshening, disinfecting etc. The best thing about essential oils is that they are cheap and safer than most of the things we use at home for which the essential oils are used as alternatives. Healthy living is vital in our lives and essential oils are great at providing that. Here are a number of essential oils that you should keep in your pantry for your DIY purposes.

Tea tree oil

Tea tree oil is known for its tropical antiseptic and infection reducing benefits. It helps to prevent lice naturally. It also reduces itchiness from rashes as well as reducing the rashes on your skin. Tea tree oil also naturally cures bad breath. Tea tree oil can also be used to heal burns by applying some of it on the burnt area; it prevents the burnt area of the skin from blistering.

Citronella oil

This type of essential oil is popularly used as an insect repellent. It also prevents colds and helps treat colds, fevers and headaches. Citronella oil is used in aromatherapy since it provides relief from anxiety and a light feeling. It can also provide relief from menstrual cramps and muscle spasms. It also helps inhibit inflammation in the liver, stomach and the digestive system.

Eucalyptus oil

This is a pure essential oil and has practical and industrial uses as well as healing properties. It is taken orally for pain and inflammation of respiratory tract mucous membranes. This oil also exhibits antibacterial activity against tooth decay causing bacteria. As a stimulant, it helps eradicate exhaustion, mental sluggishness and rejuvenates the body by stimulating mental activity by increasing blood flow to the body.

Coconut oil

When combined with glycerol it helps in reducing cold sores. It is also used to relieve the pain caused by the black fly's bite. It is also used as a make-up remover as it gently removes all the make-up on our face and has no side effects. This oil can also be used to remove chewing gum that has stuck anywhere including your hair. It is also used to soften bath water since it also produces a lovely aroma and leaves your skin soft and healthy.

Cinnamon oil

It can be used as an additive in soaps and a flavouring to seasonings. With its strong germicidal properties, it works as a non-toxic natural disinfectant. It also works as a mouth wash for people with dentures. You can also get rid of fungal infections. It also acts as an insect and bed bugs repellent.

Peppermint oil

This essential oil is used for indigestion as it helps in expelling gases from the stomach. It also provides effective relief from many respiratory problems like nasal congestion and the most common cold and cough. It is also often included as an ingredient in natural chest rubs to help with congestion. It can also be used to lessen tandem symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to noise and light.

Lavender oil

It can be used to ease sore or tense muscles, joint pain and rheumatism, sprains and backache and also to lessen pain following needle insertion. Lavender essential can be used to treat various skin disorders. It has the ability to help form scar tissues which are essential in healing of wounds, cuts and burns. It is also used to keep your hair healthy by killing lice, lice eggs and nits. This oil also helps stimulate the production of bile and gastric juice which may help treat stomach pain, indigestion, flatulence and diarrhoea.

Orange oil

Orange oil is good for soothing dry, irritated or acne-prone skin. It helps the shedding of dead skin cells, reduces wrinkles and brightens dull complexions. It can also be used to protect wooden furniture. You can also use it in a mouthwash for gingivitis or mouth ulcers or apply directly to the gums. Orange oil can also be used as a heart tonic since it reduces the heart rhythm. Swelling can be reduced by using orange oil as it stimulates lymph.

Lime oil

You can relieve stress, exhaustion and anxiety by diffusing a few drops using a vaporizer. This also helps boost your immune system especially after an illness. It treats bleeding cuts and wounds by putting two drops in a cold compress and pressing it on the affected areas. You can also mix a few drops of the oil to your favourite shampoo to remove oil, dandruff and moisturize your skin.

Ginger oil

When used topically, it can help relieve aches and pain as well as promote normal blood circulation. Ginger oil can also help revitalize and re energize our body, mind and soul. Ginger oil's antiseptic and carminative properties can help treat food poisoning as well as intestinal infections and bacterial dysentery.

Oregano oil

It is used to treat foot or nail fungus. It also helps boost the immune system, works as a shield against toxins, helps prevent tissue damage and encourages healing. It inhibits the growth of cancer cells. Oregano oil also inhibits inflammation and is also beneficial for conditions including osteoporosis and metabolic reactions.

Chamomile oil

It is used to treat irritation from chest colds, slow healing wounds, and skin conditions. It can also be used to treat stomach upsets. It can also be used as a tea to treat sleeping problems and menstrual pain. Chamomile is also used on the skin to reduce swelling and fight bacteria.

Rosemary oil

This oil can be used to help in vaginal infections. It is also a disinfectant and is often used as a mouth wash helping remove bad breath. It has also been found out to decrease the level of cortisol, a hormone released during the body's flight-or-flight response to stress. It is also used to relief pain. The scent of the oil has been shown to provide relief from throat congestion and also in treating respiratory allergies, colds, sore throats and flu.

Bergamot oil

This essential oil helps alleviate symptoms and complications of bacterial infections. It also has an anti bacterial effect on shingles and chicken pox. It also has amazing antifungal properties when used as a tropical remedy for infections brought by Candida fungus strains. It is also used in aromatherapy preparations since it helps lessen stress and anxiety levels of patients prior to surgery.

Grape fruit oil

It helps curb hangovers, headaches, mental fatigue and depression. Because of its anti microbial properties, grapefruit oil can help treat and prevent infections in wounds and cuts. It may also help eliminate microbes that develop in the gut, kidneys and excretory system. Like other citrus oils, grapefruit oil has antidepressant properties that provide a relaxing and uplifting feeling. It also has stimulating effect on the brain making someone more alert.

Conclusion

A perfect pantry should be attractive enough to give those who look at it an urge to taste what is made using its contents. Looking at a pantry should never have you losing your appetite. It should be appealing enough to have you salivating. The pantry should be a perfect reflection of the healthy living you envision. Besides being clean it should also be well organised to ensure ease in tracing of ingredients and other props stored there for preparation of meals and other purposes. The organisation should also be safe for the people that will have access to the kitchen and the pantry itself.

Another important characteristic that a pantry should possess is availability of all ingredients. When stocking up a pantry the owner should keep track of all things stored there ensuring that they are well maintained and restocking done regularly. There is nothing worse than realising that a certain ingredient is missing just when you get into preparing an important meal. It can ruin an entire day. Knowing meal trends for a home is important as it really helps in knowing what should never lack in a pantry.

It is possible to live healthy at a very low cost. Keep your environment, food and yourself safe and healthy by using the above DIY life saving tips. Your life is important and you can protect using very cheap and safe methods. Wishing good luck as you enjoy the fruits of your DIY pantry.

Disclaimer:

The book is for information purposes only. Please note that the author is not responsible for the results of your use of the methods described in this book. If you have any health problems please see a practitioner before applying some of the methods in this book.

INDOOR GARDENING

The Ultimate Indoor Gardening Guide

Best Way to Grow an Indoor
Vegetable Garden - Grow Vegetables
and Herbs!



Brenda James

INDOOR GARDENING

**THE ULTIMATE INDOOR GARDENING: BEST WAY TO GROW AN
INDOOR GARDEN- GROW VEGETABLES AND HERBS.**

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INTRODUCTION

Whether you are a typical vegetarian or just a person who enjoys fresh green vegetables, having an all year round, all weather supply of fresh vegetables could be a dream. Having your own reliable source of vegetables could be a dream come true for some people. Due to several factors that make outdoor gardening hard, if not impossible; such as extreme unfavourable weather conditions, little outdoor space or no space at all, outdoor gardening may continue being just a wish.

Some people have never considered indoor gardening as a possibility, while others lack the necessary knowledge and skills to set up an indoor garden. This book provides useful information on all matters relating to indoor gardening. In the following very deep and informative chapters, you will learn the essentials of indoor gardening.

- 1.) Introduction to indoor gardening.
 - 1.1) Tools and equipment needed
 - 1.2) weather conditions for an indoor garden
- 2.) Crops and vegetables to plant in an indoor garden
- 3.) Taking care of your plant crops.

In these chapters you will learn all the essential requirements for a productive indoor garden. It is my assurance that this book will be worth reading. If you desire to transform your indoor space to a productive garden, this is where to start. It is of great importance to know that you do not need to be an agriculturalist to do this.

Through this book you will learn not only how to make farming fun but also sustainable and productive.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO INDOOR GARDENING

Paul is a high school teacher by profession, his wife Jessy on the other hand works in a fast food restaurant. They lived a normal life like many other modern families, and just like many other families, pizza, burgers, fries and frozen foods were the order of the day. A day would not go by without one or two of these. They knew how unhealthy their lifestyle was but stopping was out of the question.

It wasn't until they had a heart attack scare that they changed their eating habits. Their daughter Merlin, one day after school she came home as usual took a burger and slumped onto the couch in front of the television. When Jessy arrived home from work later that day, she went to take a shower. Paul arrived a little while later to find Merlin on the floor gasping for air and could hardly speak.

They were scared and the only thing that crossed their minds was that their daughter was having a heart attack. They rushed her to the emergency room and were relieved to learn that it was only an asthma attack. This incident however worked out to be a wakeup call for the family. They considered it a close call and decided to change their lifestyle.

They started with cutting the consumption of junk foods and introduction of healthier alternatives. This as expected was not easy and at times some of the veggies could not even go down their throats, but with persistence they got used to it. Jessie subscribed to a weekly newsletter that provided useful insights on foods to avoid. Most of these foods, according to the newsletter, were responsible for rising cases of cancer, heart diseases, obesity and other illnesses.

The need to grow their garden grew as a result of having to drive every day to the market, which was quite a distance, to get fresh vegetables. The health guide warned against using too much frozen food. The only outdoor space they had was allocated for the car park and the remaining little space was not enough to grow even a handful of vegetables.

After doing some research, Paul learnt how to grow an indoor garden. With the help of a book he had borrowed from a friend, it took him six days after getting all the required tools and equipment, to build an indoor garden. Two years down the line they have learnt a lot through experimenting and reading articles and books. They can now afford a year round supply of fresh vegetables to supplement their healthy diet.

Advancement in plant and agricultural technology has made it possible and easy to grow a garden indoors. This is very important since it is more economical in terms of cash and reliable. Indoor gardening is not limited to food crops; there are other plants that can be grown indoors for their attractiveness. There are so many plant crops you can grow indoors with the right weather conditions. If you have some space indoors for a garden, make use of it and you will reap fresh rewards and also make your friends 'green' with envy.

Some people venture into indoor gardens only during the seasons when the outdoor conditions are unbearable, while others due to lack of outdoor space make indoor gardening an all-time thing. No matter your reason, the secrets on successful indoor gardening are useful to anyone who wants to give it a try.

Chapter 2

REQUIREMENTS FOR AN INDOOR GARDEN

Lighting equipment

Light is very important for the growth of any plant. Without lights plants cannot grow and if (by chance) they do, they are likely to be weak and have stunted growth. It is therefore important to provide artificial lighting to supplement the natural light in any indoor garden. The only light plants can absorb is the red and blue light.

Grow lights are considered among the most essential requirements for an indoor garden. This is because they aid in the plants processes such as photosynthesis. Different plants have different light requirements. There are different types of lights to choose from. These lights vary in cost, effectiveness and efficiency.

Incandescent lights are the least effective. They produce more heat than light and lead to very high utility bills.

The most common and preferred lighting by people with indoor gardens is the fluorescent light. It is affordable and produces more light than the incandescent light. It also lasts longer and more suitable for plants that require low or medium light. However for crops with high light requirement for example, fruit bearing plants, this is not the best alternative. It does not produce enough light needed in fruit formation.

Light emitting Diode popularly known as LED light is among the latest invention in indoor garden lighting. It has bright light and compact. Its advantage is the way you can set it to produce only red and blue light. Its disadvantage is that it is very expensive for most people.

It is highly advisable when buying a lighting equipment to buy a complete set. These will eliminate the task of searching for ballasts, cords, reflectors and other parts that are compatible with it.

Ventilation

Every living thing, plants included, requires air for survival. To maintain a well ventilated indoor garden, for starters, you need a fan. Plants require a constant supply of carbon (iv) oxide for photosynthesis. Using an exhaust fan reduces excess heat and brings in fresh air. An oscillating fan produces air circulation which is very important in maintaining optimum atmospheric conditions. In case where your choice of lighting is producing too much heat, it would be important to install an air conditioner.

The third and very important requirement is the **growing medium**. These mediums provide a base where roots will be embedded. There are varieties of mediums to choose from. Some of them come complete with nutrients while others are plain with no nutrients. Examples of mediums include soil, soilless, hydroton, coco and stonewall. In order to make a decision on which medium to use, you need to have an idea on each.

Coco is made from coconut husks. They provide good aeration and water drainage capacity.

Stonewall is basically just stones made into fibres before being put into containers.

Hydroton is made from clay pellets. It has good air to water ratio and can be reused.

The next thing you need to figure out is the **container and hydroponics**. This is where you store your growth medium. They provide housing for the plant. For a beginner, soil gardening is a good choice. It only requires a container and good soil. If you decide to choose hydroponics, there are certain considerations you have to put in mind.

Hydroponics determines the type of medium to use. For example hydroponics works best with hydroton which is recyclable.

Containers can be purchased; there are different sizes that cater for different plant needs. However, if you intend to save on costs, try using containers in your house that you do not use. For example an old bucket or tin can be used. Consider the space available in the grow room and the space needed by the plant in selecting the size of container to use. Plants that grow deep roots need a container that is deep and with a lot of soil or any other growth medium of your choice.

In choosing the growing method you need to consider the space available, type of plants you will grow and the budget you are working on. For starters, using a tin and watering it is simple and cost effective. However, there are growing methods one can consider. There is the ebb and flow; which involves flooding the plants with nutrients then draining. This is done at regular intervals. The second is the drip garden system, which makes use of pipes and drip stakes. The third is the nutrient film technique; it involves slow moving nutrient film. The growing method will determine the type of container or hydroponics to use and the growing medium. There is also another method called aeroponics. It involves passing oxygenated nutrients in a solution form through pipes to the plant.

Seeds and seedlings

A garden won't be a garden without crops. It is advisable to plant crops as seeds instead of seedlings. This is so as to ensure that no diseases and pests are transferred to your garden. Using starting seeds also ensures you get a variety of good seedlings unlike when buying seedlings. Some seedlings require to be put in a nursery or a seed bed while others can be planted simply. A plant can have different varieties of the same plant, research and find out which variety you like best or one that is easier to cultivate. Also make sure you purchase high quality seeds because some seeds may not grow while others might take longer than the normal duration. Before purchasing a seed, read on the tag to make sure that whatever you are buying is a plant you will want inside your house. Apart from seeds you might also use bulbs, small plants and clones.

With the right environmental conditions, seeds will most likely germinate in a few days. After seeds have grown some might require transplanting. Knowing when to transplant is very important. When you transplant before time, the plants may take too long to set root while others may die. The same goes for transplanting when the plant is too grown. Also know the mode of propagation and the type of plants that require transplanting and those that do not.

There are certain optimum weather conditions that are necessary for plants to germinate, grow healthy and mature. Maintaining these optimal conditions especially in adverse weather can be very tricky but not impossible. Different plants may have different requirements. Even the same plant may have different needs in its different stages of growth. Knowing what your plant needs and when is very crucial. When planting seeds, use some fertilizer to provide the seed with enough nutrients needed to germinate; and for the early stages of growth.

CHAPTER 3

TAKING CARE OF YOUR PLANTS

When seeds germinate, they require a lot of light and nutrients. You need to adjust your lights so that they are closer to the plants. The duration of light also needs to be longer for example between 12 to 14 hours a day. Having a timer at this point will most definitely make things easier. Failure to provide enough nutrients and light will make the plants weak. The plants might also bend towards the direction of the light source instead of growing up straight. Light also prevents the plants from being attacked by fungi. It is good to note that plants are prone to diseases from the time they germinate, so taking good care of them is of essence.

As they grow plants develop leaves which, with the aid of chlorophyll and life, produce food for the plant. This however does not mean that you stop supplying nutrients to the plant. There are very many types of fertilizer a person can consider ranging from organic, inorganic and a mixture of both. For a beginner, choosing the right fertilizer can be pretty hard. There are two types that a person should be aware of. There is the grow fertilizer needed for the plants vegetative stages and the bloom fertilizer for the flowering stages. Base fertilizer contains micro nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, magnesium and other nutrients, it also contains macro nutrients. There are other nutrient supplements that a person can learn as he or she continues gardening.

It goes without saying that plants cannot survive without water. They need water to grow. Some need more water than others do. In most cases, plants need to be watered twice daily, in the morning and in the evening. Reusing water from the house can be a great way to save on water. It is however advisable to use clean water to prevent pests and diseases attacking the plants.

Using soapy water or water containing detergents will dehydrate the plants and make them yellow or even kill them. The amount of water and frequency of watering differs according to plant type and the season. Knowing the right amount of water required helps prevent over watering which may cause roots to rot leading to the plants death. On the other hand, under watering might make the plant to wither and grow weak. It is advisable to invest in a water gauge, an instrument used in measuring the moisture content in the soil. This tells you when it is okay to water the plant. You can use water filtration to ensure you provide your plants with water that is free from harmful chemicals and microorganisms.

Pest and disease control

In indoor gardening, there are few pests that are likely to attack the plants. However prevention is always the best option. It is not recommended to use chemicals to spray plants in an indoor garden. This may affect anyone living in the house or even pets. You can try homemade solutions to eradicate pests if chemicals pose a threat to other living things in the house. There are organic and synthetic pesticides readily available for those who want to use them. For example, burning wood and using the ash as a pesticide has been known to kill some pests.

Fungi and moulds are the most likely diseases to affect indoor plants some of the most common diseases include scab, black spot, rust, powdery mildew and Downey mildew. Maintaining an optimum humidity and air circulation is important in preventing diseases and pests. As a preventive measure it is also good to spray fungicides regularly and also use a fresh growing medium and also avoid use composite manure.

Weeding is very important. It entails removal of unwanted plants (weeds). Some weeds are beneficial as they provide shade and food to your plants. Some however compete for nutrients with your plants, when the struggle is for the fittest; the weeds win while the other plants may lose. Some weeds may prevent light from reaching the plants making them fail to produce food and they may die. Weeds come from the soil, especially if the soil is taken from outdoors and brought indoors or from impure seeds that may contain weeds.

Weeding can be done by pulling out the weeds with your hand. This should be done carefully so that you do not uproot the plants in the process. Pulling too hard may weaken the soil and the roots making it easy for the plants to fall especially if you are using a fan. Herbicides can be used to kill weeds indoors. They work selectively by killing the weeds. However herbicides are not the best solution in weed removal. This is because herbicide is made out of chemicals that can affect pets and also people. Herbicides may not kill all weeds or end up killing all plants, especially when the weed and the plant are almost similar.

Humidity inside the grow room should be optimum at all times. If you can afford it, you can get yourself a mist humidifier. A cheaper way of maintain that humidity is by the use of a spray bottle and water at room temperature. This process is called misting.

Taking your plants outdoors after the unfavourable season has passed should be done carefully. Plants taken outdoors from indoors you will need to allow the plants a period of hardening. The outdoor conditions might be too hard. Let the plants adjust slowly to the outdoor conditions. Bringing plants indoors from outdoors will also need to be done carefully. The temperature and lighting differences might affect the plant.

CHAPTER 4

TYPES OF PLANTS TO GROW IN AN INDOOR GARDEN

There are different types of plants one can grow in an indoor garden. Some of them are food crops; some are herbs while some are just for beauty. Different plants may have different growth requirements but generally plants need ample sunlight, soil moisture or water, optimum humidity and nutrients. Some plants may have additional requirements. This chapter takes you through some common plants that are suitable for indoor gardens.

Green beans are among plants that grow very fast. They need enough sunlight, moisture and nutrients. Due to their weak stems and the number of pods, these plants need additional support. You can use sticks or small twigs to support them. Support keeps the pods off the ground to prevent them from rotting.

Carrots are very easy to cultivate. They need soil in a pot (preferably 12 inches deep) and sunlight to grow. You can easily get carrot seeds online, in nurseries or in garden stores.

Basil is an amazing herb known for its anti-inflammatory characteristics. Basils are easy to plant. Basil grows best in warm temperatures and a lot of light. They need to be fertilized at least once a month. Pruning the leaves makes the plant grow more healthy leaves. It is also advisable to watch for and nip flowers as soon as they appear. Watering should be done once daily when the weather condition is rather hot; when it's humid you can water every other day.

Tomatoes, apart from being one of the most used vegetable, are also believed to prevent and reduce risk of coronary heart disease. Because of frequency of use, it is of essence to maintain a continuous supply of fresh tomatoes. To achieve this, it is recommended to plant two plants over two weeks. The seeds are to be planted 1/4 inch deep. The soil should be constantly watered but not to be made soggy. Seeds take up to ten days to germinate. After two weeks the seedlings should be ready for transplant. Two weeks after transplanting you need to apply fertilizer.

Continue watering your plants and maintaining your soil moisture. Due to differences in environmental factors, tomatoes grown indoors do not grow as tall and big as those outdoors. However, the tomatoes grown indoors are just as tasty as those grown outdoors. When the plants begin making tomatoes they need support so that the stem does not break.

Scallions, like other plants in the alliums family, have very useful cancer prevention properties. They also give a good flavour in food. Good thing with scallions is that they do not require seeds. Take a bunch of scallions tied together with a rubber band and immersed in water, remember to change the water daily. After a few days you will notice shoots forming from the scallions. At this point, they are ready for planting. The plants should be planted in a shallow pot or container and be evenly watered, do not wait until the soil is dry before watering. They should not take long to be ready.

Salad greens are a micro greens that are rich in vitamins, iron and foliate. You can easily purchase the seeds. Planting the seeds can be done in planter boxes with holes for drainage at the bottom. Make a hole with your finger four inches apart from each other and place seeds in it. Put some soil lightly on top of the seeds and water the soil and keep it moist. When the seeds germinate, pull them all out for transplanting except those that are large and firm.

Water regularly and apply fertilizer. When the leaves are big enough, take the outer leaves and leave the rest to continue growing.

Mushrooms, however labour intensive, they are very nutritious and have cancer fighting properties. They can be grown in a laundry basket if you are working on a budget or plant them in a purchased kit.

Chive is one other herb that is suitable for an indoor garden. Chime seeds are planted in holes in a pot that is almost full with soil. The soils should be 1/8 of an inch in depth. After placing seeds in the holes cover lightly with soil. Water regularly to keep the soil always moist; they are not labour intensive.

Cilantro is grown from seeds known as coriander. Use a pot or container that is eight inches deep. Fill the pot with soil only leaving one or two inches in the pot. The seeds are then simply pressed into the soil and the soil watered until moist. Put a plastic paper around the pot with a rubber band or string tied around to keep the plastic paper in place. When the seeds germinate remove the paper; when the cilantro is pushing against the paper.

Ginger is one easy herb to plant indoors. It does not need seeds. You can get a ginger in the market. Place the ginger in the soil and have it covered. Make sure that the fresh looking buds face up. Place the container or pot in such a way that it does not receive direct light. Water consistently to keep it moist but not water logged. After a few days you will notice the shoots appearing. When it is fully matured uproot it and take as much as you need, place the remaining back in the soil and repeat the planting process.

Planting rosemary indoors gives the indoors a wonderful smell as well as being used as a spice and a medicinal herb. These plants grow well in direct light of up to six hours a day. They do not need too much water; watering is required when the soil is getting dry but not too dry. It also thrives in alkaline soil. Adding agricultural lime to the soil will give it the required PH value.

Mints are tasty, medicinal and also help soothe hangovers. You need a deep pot, of up to ten inches with soil filled in it. Ensure it is in a place where there is ample sunlight. Just like other plants, watering should be done regularly after planting the seeds.

For those people who want to grow plants indoors for beauty, there are numerous plants you can plant that are beautiful, have a nice smell and generally bring colour and life to your indoors.

Pothos is a plant that absorbs toxins from the air, who wouldn't want that? They are easy to grow. The leaves variegate well with sunlight. It is best to be grown in hanging pots. Due to the nature in which they climb, it is necessary to cut it so that it does not grow too long (it is a climbing plant).

Spider plants still remain in the hearts of many home owners even after years of being a proffered indoor plant. It thrives in moist soil and a temperature range of between 60° to 70° Celsius. They look best when hanged up. Their light requirement ranges from bright to medium.

Jade plant is succulent, for those who love the look of such. It is also easy to care for and may last for very long without growing old. It has lush and thick leaves and a very attractive stem. Planting it in an attractive pot will add to its visual appeal.

English ivy has an elegance that does not age and looks really pretty when left to trail down furniture (especially wooden furniture). They thrive in cooler temperatures.

Peace lily has dark leaves, pretty curving white blooms and very easy to grow. This is the reason it is grown in so many households. It is best in humid places (rooms with few windows tend to be very humid). The temperature should be moderate room temperature and moist soil throughout the pot.

One of the easiest plants to grow indoors is the snake plant, also known as the mother-in-law's tongue. It has green variegated leaves that are pretty. They thrive in any lighting conditions and normal room temperature. Though these plants hardly flower, they have beautiful flowers when they do.

Shamrock plants have very bright green leaves and pretty white flowers. They grow in room temperature and in indirect or filtered lighting. The soil surface is required to be thoroughly dry before being watered again. For this reason, you can water your plant once every week.

There are so many other plants that you can try planting in your indoors. Most of the seeds you can easily access online while others can be bought from a garden store or a grocery shop.

They include the following:

Kale and other micro greens such as spinach grow in the same environmental conditions as the salad greens.

Chard

Onions take the same process of cultivation as does the scallion.

Lavender

Oregano

And peppers

The dos and don'ts in indoor gardening

DOS

Every plant needs attention even those that are less demanding. It is essential that you visit your plants a few times a week and observe any observable changes. Some of the signs that should be a cause for alarm include; leaves becoming yellow, weak stem, unusual spotting on the leaves and any pest. Doing this will enable you take action early so as to prevent more crops from being affected.

Rotating your plants, especially if the window is the sole source of light or when the light is not evenly distributed is needed in order to prevent the plants from growing lopsided. Phototropism is a tendency of plants to grow or bend towards the source of light. This rotation should be done regularly for example, weekly.

Use water that is room temperature to water the plants. Using hot water will burn the clothes while too cold water is likely to shock the plants making the roots to drop and the leaves will be unable to absorb the water effectively.

Cleaning your crops regularly, by removing yellow and dried leaves and flowers, is also important. This allows the plants room to grow more healthy leaves.

Don'ts

Do not add fertilizer when the soil is dry. Make the soil moist before adding fertilizer. Also it is important not to put the fertilizer (especially synthetic fertilizer) directly on the crop. Put it around the crop. Reason for this is that some fertilizer can actually burn the crops.

CONCLUSION

Any person can do gardening. Just like any other activity it requires you to be passionate, patient and committed. It is hard to have fun doing something you do not enjoy. Success for any plant type is not guaranteed, some are bound to fail, and this should not be a reason to despair. Learning from your failed crops will enable you be better and produce better in the next crops. This, if you ask around, has been the success story of many successful gardeners. The good news is that it gets better and easier with time. Be free to experiment but even while you are doing this, take into consideration the plants' needs.

For a beginner, I will advise you to use items found around your house. As you get more experience in gardening, you move to more technologically advanced kits, growth mediums and growing methods. This is however, unless you have the services of a seasoned gardener at your aid.

When choosing the type of plant to grow, if you are aiming at growing different plants in the same room, go for plants that have the same lighting, water, humidity and temperature requirements. This will make your work a little bit easier. Your choice of plant should also be based on the size of space you have indoors. Some plants may require too much space while others may grow too long. For example, you cannot plant trees that grow too long indoors.

Your plant's container needs to have holes at the bottom for drainage purposes. This prevents water logging which is bad for plants. Water logging prevents the plant roots from breathing; water fills up all the space in the soil displacing all the air. Roots will not have air to breathe and may die. It is also advisable, if possible to water plants from the bottom by placing the container in water. Reason for this is that some soil becomes too compact with time to the extent that the water cannot reach the roots. If the plant is too heavy, it will take time and patience. Put a little water at a time and allow it to sip through the soil then add more.

Advancement in agriculture has facilitated the production of nature friendly herbicides, pesticides and fungicides. These products not only kill pests and disease but also benefit the plants in terms of nutrients. These products will ensure your plants are healthy without harming the environment around. In order to prevent transmitting diseases and pests, you should wash off any container before reusing it. Some growth mediums such as hydroton can be reused. In this case, use substances that kill pathogens on the growth medium before reusing.

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Knitting for Beginners (with pictures)

Master the Art of Knitting in 1 Day with Knitting Instructions.
BONUS Chapter with Knitting Techniques included!
Learn How to Knit fast step by step



Kim Ferris

KNITTING FOR BEGINNERS

MASTER THE ART OF KNITTING IN 1 DAY WITH KNITTING INSTRUCTIONS. BONUS CHAPTER WITH KNITTING PATTERNS INCLUDED! LEARN HOW TO KNIT FAST WITH STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS.

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CHAPTER 1 -KNITTING TOOLS

When you are a new knitter, you do not need too many tools to begin with. But if you are working on a project, you will need a few more items. So what are these items?

A tapestry needle

The simplest tool in any knitter's kit, a tapestry needle is a large sewing needle, with an eye big enough to accommodate bulky yarn. You'll use the needle to weave in the tails of yarn left after you bind off your project.

Stitch markers

These small rings slip on your needles to mark particular points in your pattern. Some markers can be clipped directly onto a stitch if you need to mark a spot on the project itself to come back to later in the pattern.

Stitch holders

A stitch holder is like a large safety pin. When a pattern calls for you to set some stitches aside to come back to later, you will slip those stitches onto a holder.

Row counters

Many patterns require you to keep track of how many rows you have knit. Some counters slip onto your needle and have a number dial you change after each row. Some have a simple button you click. Also, yes, there are advanced mobile phone applications for that

Measuring tape

A great deal of patterns, require various inches, instead of various rows. An adaptable measuring tape will be fundamental, particularly when making sets of things, similar to gloves or sleeves. You would prefer not to guess whether your sleeves are the same length.

Needle caps

You use this when you are taking a knitting break. Needle cap can be placed on the end of your needles to ensure no stitches slip off while your project is in your knitting bag or purse. You can also use it to turn a double-point needle into a straight needle.

Point Protectors

Point protectors are little rubber caps which come in a variety of styles and sizes. The standard point protectors are like the ones on the right of the picture but they also come in many styles. I couldn't resist the cute little sock ones. Simply put them on the ends of your knitting needles when you are done knitting and your stitches will not slip off the needles. This is a handy knitting accessory to have.

Cable needles

These cute little needles are used for knitting cables and they come either straight or curved. I like the curved ones best because the stitches are less likely to slip off.

Types of knitting needles

Knitting needles share the same name as needles that are sharp, even though they should not be sharp at all. Needles come in many different styles and lengths and can be made out of metal, plastic, casein, bamboo and wood or more glamorous materials such as ebony, rosewood, birch and walnut. Each is some distinction on the pointed stick concept. The needle you use depends on your project and personal preference, so experiment with a few different types until you find the one that suits your knitting style.

Listed below are the three types of needles. Some projects require using more than one.

The classic straight pair

Double point needles (sold in sets of 4 or 5)

Circular needles

Straight needles are used for most of your rectangular projects, like scarves and washcloths.

Circular needles are two needle heads connected to a cord. They are necessary for larger projects, like blankets. They are also used for projects that are worked in the round, like hats or the body of a seamless sweater. These needles differ by needle size and by cord length, from 9 inches to 60 inches. If you are a frequent knitter, you might want to invest in a circular needle kit, which offers greater flexibility instead of buying a needle for each project, a kit allows you to modify the cord length and the needle size. Plus, if your project calls for changing needle size partway through, all you have to do is squeeze your stitches onto the cord and switch out the needle heads.

Double-point needles are used for smaller projects joined in the round, like mittens or the crown of a hat. Frequently, you will start a project on circular needles, and then switch to double points as you get close to binding off. The good news is that most of these tools are inexpensive and you can keep them for years!

All needles be it straight, circular or double pointed come in a wide range of standardized sizes. They are marked in numeric U.S. sizes (0-50) or millimeters (2.00-25.50) which indicate the diameter of the needle. As a general rule, the lower the number, the thinner the needle. So have fun needle shopping

YARN

Now let us talk about yarn. You can get any yarn of your choice from natural fibers like wool, alpaca, angora, cashmere or cotton, linen, silk and mohair or sleek synthetics that range from cheap acrylic to expensive, shiny rayon novelties and even modern materials like microfiber and paper. Thick, thin, smooth or textured, you will find them in solid colors as well as striped, parti-coloured (lengths of different colors alternated within the same ball) and multicolored patterns. When next you go to the store to get a yarn, take a good look at the multitude of choices available. I bet that you will never have time to try them all because there is just so many to choose from.

Whether spun from wool or paper, traditional or cutting edge, yarns are gathered into basic categories so that you can easily choose which one is right for the project you want to work on. Yarns are organized by weight which is the thickness of the yarn they range from super fine all the way to super bulky. Now that you understand the basics of yarn and needle size, you will still want to know how do they work together. Apart from lace knitting, which is a rare expectation when knitting, thinner yarn goes best with thinner needles. The same law goes with thicker yarn. If you are going to use a thicker yarn, use a thicker needle. Know that each yarn weight has a corresponding range of recommended needle sizes.

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Chapter 2 - PROPER WAY TO HANDLE THE NEEDLES

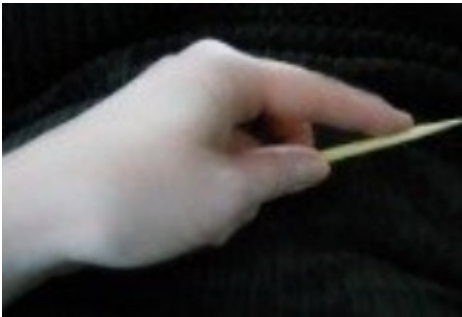
How to hold your needle and yarn totally depend on the individual because there are so many ways to hold your knitting needles and yarn.

As a new knitter, it takes a while to feel comfortable knitting so it is better to wait until you feel much more comfortable with it. You may develop your own way of knitting as you keep learning how to knit and it is okay it happens sometimes.

How to hold your knitting needles

This is a personal preference. Once you start knitting, and you begin to develop a nice knitting rhythm you will discover your own unique way of knitting. Knitting might feel awkward at first but just give it time.

Below, the knitting needle has the hand over it.



While in this other picture, the needle is been held like a pencil



You can use any of these two methods when knitting or use them both or even create your own way of holding your needle. Just do whatever makes you comfortable during knitting.

Also, we have two main knitting methods, which are the English method and the continental method.

The English knitting method: In this method, your right hand will be moving the knitting needle through the stitches on your left hand needle. If you decide to wrap the knitting yarn around your

fingers you will wrap the right hand. English knitters hold and “throw” the yarn with their

right hand.



The Continental knitting method: In this method, your left hand will be moving the knitting needle through the stitches on your right hand needle. And if you decide to wrap the knitting yarn around your fingers you will wrap the left hand. Continental knitters manipulate the yarn with their left hand





Try any of these two methods above and see which one you feel most comfortable with. Remember that you might not get comfortable with them at first so give yourself time to adjust. Learning how hold your needle and yarn takes time to learn so do not worry much if you do not get it at the first try. What makes learning how to hold a yarn and needle confusing is that two people cannot do it the same way. Although the English and continental style have the same end product, most knitters think their way is more superior to others way. If you have been taught how to knit by someone, you have a chance of choosing one way of knitting over the other.

Chapter 3-TIPS ON KNITTING

Learning how to knit can be very overwhelming at first, but these tips will make it much easier

Start with Simple Concepts

If you are a new knitter, start with the basic stuff. Yes you might want to go into the bigger project, but if you do not start with the simple stuff, you will not have much success with the bigger stuff. Also, starting with the basics allows you to work your way up to a high level of proficiency with your new skills.

Follow Instructions Carefully

Reading and understanding a knitting pattern is important to your success, especially when you are just beginning. Read the instructions several times and make a careful note of the recommended yarns. This will help you avoid mistakes and ensure that when you are done working on the item, it is everything you wanted it to be. If you are a much more experienced knitter, you will be able to make yarn substitutions because you will already have a full understanding of how different tensions and drape affect the finished item.

Prepare Yourself Properly

As a knitter, not only should you have all your knitting gears ready; you should also get yourself ready. Make sure your eyes are not dry and tired before knitting. Also make sure that your hands are moisturized and not dry.

Use the Right Yarn

It is crucial to follow the instructions on which type of yarn or colour of yarn to use. Additionally, if you should need extra yarn, you must ensure you buy the same type, tension and dye batch number as you used primarily. If you do not, you may find that the new yarn is a slightly different colour or knitting tension to the rest of the item. So remember to check the yarn tension and colour dye batch number.

Knit the Gauge

Some people see the knitting gauge as a pointless, timewasting extra task. This is very untrue. Knitting patterns do not allow for knitting gauge errors in the finished item, so doing the gauge is vital. The knitting gauge practice run allows you to make mistakes and then adjust, so you can be more accurate when you actually start your project. And you never can tell, the gauge itself may turn out beautifully and be all ready to make into a lovely, useful blanket!

Organise Your Needles

Needle organizing might not be that important to some people but it is best if you keep all your knitting stuff organized that way you know where they all are and you do not have to waste money to get a new knitting kit because you lost something in your previous knitting kit. You can use a B6 zipper pouch to store your needles this allows you to swap needles quickly.

Start big

When getting a needle, get the thickest and longest, about 14 inches needles and also a thick yarn some people prefer to use circular needles more than the straight needles because it puts less strain on their wrists. But it might be a little confusing on knitting with them. However, you may find it confusing to learn how to knit with them. One way to begin knitting is to start with arm knitting because it allows you to see what it is you are trying to do and then you could transfer your arm knitting techniques to your needles.

Invest in a decent book. Get a good book that talks about knitting. Not all books you buy will talk about knitting in detail but make sure you get at least some that will be helpful to you.

YouTube

Watch videos on YouTube about knitting. As we all know seeing something done before our eyes is better than us reading about it because when we see it done, we can follow the step by step procedure on how the other person is doing it. Have you ever tried knitting and reading a book at the same time? It is not easy to do. It is very easy to watch a video and try to mimic it.

Find a friend

You can make a friend in a knitting class. This is a good thing if it happens to you because you two can share your unique knitting ideas together and help one another out. As you know there is a difference between having a real life assistant than letting a video help you. Having someone with you is very helpful and you will learn a lot videos are just for reminders on how to do stuff. Even if you do not have a friend who knows how to knit try and convince one to start I bet they will find it fun.

Keep a list of abbreviations handy

As you know knitting has its own set of abbreviations. So when knitting, keep a copy of them close by in case you want to make a quick reference to it.

CHAPTER 4- KNITTING ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations/Symbols	Meaning
“	inch(es)
()	work instructions between parentheses, in the place directed
[]	work instructions between brackets, as many times as directed
*	repeat instructions following the single asterisk as directed
* *	repeat instructions between asterisks, as directed
alt	alternate
approx.	approximately

beg	begin(ning)
bet	Between
BO	Bind off
CA	Colour A
CB	Colour B
CC	Contrastingcolour
CDD	Centered double decrease
CH	Chain(using crochet hook) start with a slip knot
CM	Centimeter
CN	Cable needle: short needle, used as an aid in the twisting of a cable
CO	Cast on
CONT	Continue
CROSS 2 R	Cross two stitches to the right (to work a cable). Slip 2 stitches p-wise onto a cable needle, let cable needle hang in back of work as you knit the next couple of stitches, then knit stitches

	off to cable needle.
DC	Double crochet
Dec(s)	Decrease
DK	Double knitting weight yarn. Slightly finer than worsted weight
Dpn aka dp	Double pointed needles. A short needle with points at both ends, used in sets of 4 or 5 for knitting in the round
EON	End of needle
EOR	End of row
FC	Front cross (in working cable)
FL	Front loop
Foll	Follow follows following
Grp	Group
Gr	Grams
HK	Hook
In	Inches
Inc	Increase
Incl	Including
K	Knit

k-b	Knit switch in row below. (infrequently used for knit through the back loop)
k-wise	Knit wise. Insert right needle into the stitch as if to knit it
K1 f&b aka kfb	Knit 1 stitch in the front, then in the back. This is also called a bar increase
K2tog	Knit 2 stitches together
LH	Left hand
Lp(s)	Loop(s)
LT	Left twist (where two stitches cross each other, as in the smallest cable stitch possible)
M	Meter
M1	Make 1 this means to increase a stitch. If the method is not specified, use whichever increase you like, for instance M1F
M1A	Make 1 away. An increase
NO	Number
OZ	Ounce
P	Purl

P tbl aka P! tbl, P1b purl	through the back loop
P-B	Purl stitch in the row below. (infrequently used to mean purl stitch in the back loop)
REM	Remaining
REP	Repeat
REV ST	Reverse stockinet/stocking stitch. The “purl” side of plain, stockinetstitch. Purled on RS, knitted on WS
RH	Right hand
RIB	Ribbing: vertical columns of knit and purl stitches, side by side, as in K1, P1 ribbing
RND(s)	Round. In circular knitting, a “row” is called a “round”
RS	Right side, for instance the outside of a sweater. Stated to indicate which side is facing you when carrying out instructions
RT	Right twist (where two stitches cross each other, as in the smallest cable stitch possible)
SC	Single crochet

SK	Skip
SK2P	Slip1, knit 2 tog, pass slipped stitch over (a double decrease)
WYIB	With yarn in back
WYIF	With yarn in front
YB aka YBK	Yarn to the back
YD	Yard
YFON	Yarn forward and over needle. Same as you
YFRN	Yarn forward and round needle. Same as yo
YFWD aka YF	Yarn forward
YO	Yarn over: wrap the yarn around right needle
YO2 aka YO	Yarn over twice
YON	Yarn over needle. Same as yo
YRN	Yarn round needle. Same as yo

MORE TERMS IN KNITTING

As Established

Work pattern or series of steps as previously set - in other words you may see something like 'continue working pattern as established'

As if to knit

Knit wise, begin knitting next stitch like you are going to knit it

At the same time: Working more than one set of instructions at the same time. You may read something like this: 'Continue working pattern at the same time decreasing stitches every third row'

Back of work

The back of work is the side that faces away from you when you are holding the needles.

Block

Blocking is a finishing technique where you lay your finished pieces out flat and dampen or steam them. This helps to form and shape them and also helps define complicated stitch patterns.

Cont. in patt

Continue in pattern - Continue working pattern as previously established. Also meaning keep knitting the way you were originally.

Ending with RS row

Last row to work will be a right side row: An example is Continue working as established ending with a right side (RS) row.

Ending with WS row

Last row to work will be a wrong side row. An example is continuing working as established ending with a wrong side (WS) row.

Every other row

Work instructions on alternate rows for instance you may see this: Continue increasing stitches every other row or continue increasing stitches on every alternate row. So you will increase on one row, work a regular row without increasing and then increase on the next and so on

Frogging

When knitters are frogging their knitting it means that they are displaying or ripping out their work.

Front of work

The side facing you when you hold your needles. It can be the right side or the wrong side of the work.

Gauge

The number of stitches and rows per inch is called knitting gauge.

Join yarn

Adding a new ball of yarn to your knitting or adding a new color known as joining yarn.

Knit wise

As if to knit. Begin knitting the next stitch like you are going to knit it.

K the knits, P the purls: These are the common terms used to describe a pattern of knit and purl stitches. Rather than repeating the pattern over and over you can say to repeat every row knitting the knit stitches and purling the purl stitches.

On alternate row(s)

Work particular instructions every other row

Work even

Continue knitting without making any increases or decreases.

WS

Wrong side - the side that will not show

Bonus Chapter -TECHNIQUES IN KNITTING

Relax

Figuring out how to unwind everything from your shoulders to your arms, and whatever else that may be strained, is the absolute most essential element in expanding your knitting speed. It also makes your sewing a more pleasant affair. For those of you that are tight knitters learn to work on knitting more freely, and you will notice that your knitting pace will expand too.

Decrease your Movements

Some of us make unnecessary movements when knitting and this movements, slow us down and it makes our muscles get tired and over used. Whenever you knit, attempt to watch yourself closely and wipe out any movement that you think may be backing you off. Frequently, when knitting you ought to keep a specific movement, (for case wrapping a yarn around a needle), yet attempt to make the activity of wrapping less overstated.

Change your Posture

A good posture to use while knitting is the same you use at work if you work at your desk. Make sure you are sitting up straight, and your work is resting on your lap. Your arm should be bent at 90degree angle and your feet should be resting on the floor. This will apply less pressure to your joints as you work on your project.

Be Comfortable Feeling Uncomfortable

If you are a new knitter, and you are trying to knit faster, remember that at first you will feel uncomfortable do not try to rush this stage as you may not get the hang of it. Instead embrace it and try to get comfortable with it

Practice

As the saying goes, “practice makes perfect”. So make sure to have a lot of practice with knitting and as time goes on you will see that you will become a faster knitter.

Knit to Fast Music

If you are a music lover like me, you can knit to fast music. You will notice that your knitting speed increases to keep up with the beat to the song.

Keep Your Knitting Moving Forward

Do not be distracted by dropped stitches or anything else when you trying to learn speed knitting. Just keep going because right now your focus on how to knit fast so even if you do not get a row correct do not stop just keep going.

Try to Beat Your Best Time

Record your time when knitting. Like for example, if you are trying speed knitting with a table cloth. Try to record how long it took you and then try it again and try to beat the previous time.

NOTE: The world's fastest knitter, Miriam Tegels, applauds knitting a swatch with US size 8 needles, and some dk weight yarn. Cast on 20 stitches and then knit completely comfortable, only with the tips of your needles, as you try to decrease any overstated movements.

Learn to cable without a needle

This works for smaller cables, but is less successful on cables that are 4 over 4 and larger. If you have any trouble with too-tight tension, this will not be successful. Slip your right needle into the stitches that need to change position from the back or front, whichever way the pattern dictates. Slip the first stitches destined to be a cable off the needle, and carefully transfer the uncable stitches from the right needle onto the left needle. Carefully slip the left needle back into the remaining stitches of the cable. Now you can knit it is pretty easy, and saves time.

Use slippery needles

A metal needle is highly recommended when knitting because the yarn moves across the needle as you work. If you are going to use cables, make sure to get one that has a smooth joint between the cable and the needle. You will see a great difference. Also, nickel can also be used.

Limit distractions

As you, you cannot give good work on something when you are distracted, same thing goes with knitting. Keep your eyes focused on what you are working on at all times and avoid being in situations that may provide distractions.

Commit to a schedule

Commit to a certain number of rows per knitting session. It is enough to keep you moving along when your project or schedule is throwing up roadblocks. If you usually manage 6 rows at a sitting, commit to 7. If you pass 7 and want to keep going, you'll still own yourself 7 more rows at your next sitting.

Swatch

Swatches are like a scrap paper for knitting. You can learn a new skill on a simple narrow swatch. This way you do not waste time ripping back rows of your projects because you do not like the way your design is going. You can swatch it once or twice until you like it and then work it into your project.

Use stitch markers

Any of these uses will speed up your process: Mark the edges of a design element so you do not have to count. Place a stitch marker at the beginning of rounds. For wider projects, place a stitch maker every 10 stitches.

Read through the entire pattern first

The farther into the pattern you are when you get stuck, the less likely you are to finish your project. If a pattern does not seem right as you work, try to figure it out, swatch if you need to before you get farther down into the pattern.

Take good care of your hands

Taking care of your hands is another important thing to remember when knitting. Dry hands, hang nails, cuticles and rough nails can be awkward and they can slow you down. Also they can cause the yarn to snag. Wash and moisturize your hands at bedtime with a deep moisturizer every day. Do not moisture right before you knit because the moisturizer will transfer to the yarn and dirt will cling to the yarn more easily. File your nails regularly, and when doing house chores, wear a rubber gloves also do some finger and wrist stretch several times in a day to maintain flexibility and good blood flow. Your skin and hand will be more supple and do a good job while knitting.

KNITTING PATTERNS

Casting On

This is the first knitting project that you will learn as a new knitter. It is a bit tricky to explain casting on.

Form a slipknot on your needle, to do this, hold the tail end of the yarn in your left palm with your thumb and then wrap the yarn from the ball of yarn twice around your left forefinger and left middle finger. Then pull the yarn strand attached to the ball up through the loop between your two wrapped fingers to form a new loop.

Slide the right-hand needle into the loop on the left-hand needle, from front to back. The next step is to take the yarn attached to the ball and loop it over the point of the right-hand needle, going counter-clockwise. Make sure you do not loop the yarn over both needles or pull too tightly on your stitches. You want your loops to be tight enough to stay on the needle without sagging, but you do not want to pull it too tight, or knitting will be really hard.

Now slide the right-hand needle back out from behind the left-hand needle, while keeping the loop you just made on the right-hand needle and the slip knot on the left-hand needle.

Slowly slide the right-hand needle down so the loop gets close to the tip of the needle, but does not slide off. The right-hand needle will be coming out from behind the left-hand needle at the same time.

When the right-hand needle just comes out from behind the left-hand needle, give the right needle a little push with your left index finger to push the needle in front of the left needle.

Now slide the loop that's on the right-hand needle onto the left-hand needle, above the slip knot loop. You have just cast on your first stitch.

Just keep repeating these steps until you have the right number of stitches on your needle. You are probably going to want about 30 stitches for this project, but you can make the scarf as thin or as thick as you like. Well with all these steps, you have just learnt cast on.

The picture also explain cast on:

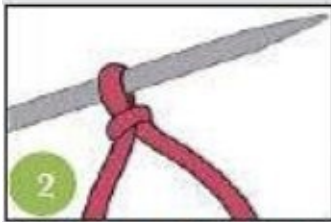
CASTING ON



Make a slip knot: Loop the yarn as shown and slip needle under the lower strand of the loop.



Reach through the loop you just made and pull up a loop of yarn.



Pull the yarn end attached to the ball of yarn to tighten the slip knot leaving the other end approx 4 ins [10 cm] long. Transfer needle to left hand.



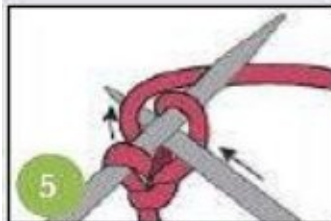
Insert the right-hand needle through slip knot and wind yarn over right-hand needle.



Pull loop through slip knot.



Place new loop on left-hand needle. (You now have 2 stitches (sts) on your left-hand needle).



Insert right-hand needle between last 2 stitches (sts) on left-hand needle and wind yarn over right-hand needle.



Pull loop through. Place this new loop on left-hand needle beside last stitch (st). (You now have 1 more stitch on left-hand needle). Repeat (rep) steps 5 and 6 until required number of stitches (sts) have been cast on left-hand needle.

This picture explains how to knit stitch.

THE KNIT STITCH



Hold the needle with cast on stitches (sts) in your left hand, and the loose yarn attached to the ball at the back of work. Insert right-hand needle from left to right through the front of the first stitch (st) on the left-hand needle.



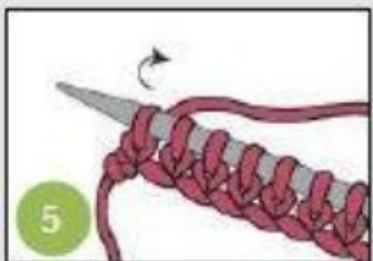
Wind the yarn from left to right over the point of the right-hand needle.



Draw the yarn through this original stitch (st) which forms a new stitch (st) on right-hand needle.



Slip the original stitch (st) off the left-hand needle, keeping the new stitch (st) on the right-hand needle.



To knit a row, repeat steps 1 to 4 until all stitches (sts) have been transferred from left-hand needle to right-hand needle. Turn the work by transferring the needle with stitches (sts) into your left hand to knit the next row.

CONCLUSION

Now that you have read the book I hope you will have one or two things about knitting. With knitting, you can make extra income because you can sell whatever you knit or give it out as a gift to a loved one. Knitting is not a hard thing to do once you have figured it out. Learning the basic of knitting can be rough like casting on, it is easy to learn and understand when you are doing it yourself. Knitting has some concepts that are too difficult to explain and since it is difficult to explain it is more difficult to learn. Anyways, now that you have read this book, I hope that knitting will come easy and understandable to you. Make sure to follow the tips that are mentioned and have fun knitting!

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ORIGAMI

THE ULTIMATE ORIGAMI GUIDE

Master Origami in 2 hours. Learn
Origami with 20 Step by Step Projects
That Inspire You



WITH
IMAGES
INCLUDED

Elithabeth Rays

ORIGAMI

**THE ULTIMATE ORIGAMI CRASH COURSE WITH IMAGES:
MASTER ORIGAMI IN 2 HOURS. LEARN ORIGAMI WITH 20 STEP
BY STEP PROJECTS THAT INSPIRE YOU**

Book Description

Are you interested in learning the elegant and eye-catching Japanese art of Origami but are unsure of where to start? Does the thought of learning on your own seem daunting or overwhelming? Have you attempted to make Origami designs in the past but felt it was too difficult or frustrating? Are you looking to learn something new and unique? Look no further! In this instructional, easy to understand instructional book, you can learn how to master all of the delicate folds and shaping techniques that Origami entails. Complete with pictures, full descriptions and step-by-step explanations, you will find yourself learning fast and forgetting any past frustrations or difficulties. With the help of this book, you too can learn how to make Origami art!

When learning something new, the biggest obstacle (and usually biggest complaint) is that the learning process is frustrating, time consuming, complicated and hard to understand. Origami is no different! While much of Origami requires confusing folds, complex shaping and strange bending of the paper, this book takes away those worries! With the help of this book and it's step-by-step and carefully explained instructions you can learn at your own speed and with the help of concise teaching and pictures.

This book includes:

- Step-by-step instructions with careful explanations and descriptions
- Color pictures
- Basic introduction to fundamental Origami folds
- Tools used in Origami
- 10 very simple, beginner Origami projects to learn the basics
- 5 novice Origami projects to broaden your knowledge
- 5 Origami projects that will add a challenge

-Tips and tricks of Origami

-How to avoid possible frustrations with Origami

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Introduction

Welcome to the wonderful world of Origami! Origami art, originates from the Japanese words “oru,” (“to fold”) and “kami,” (“paper”). It is known for its elegance, precession, beauty and creative designs. Origami is truly a unique and fascinating art.

Many beginner and novice Origami artists, may have tried a hand at it back in elementary school, when your teacher included Origami in their holiday art lessons, or in high school art class. Maybe you have even tried learning it on your own, from online videos or perhaps a community education class. Whatever experience you have had with learning Origami it has left you feeling interested, intrigued and yet, nonetheless dissatisfied with your level of understanding.

To many, however, the idea of this art is quite foreign and often times frustrating. Many find it difficult to follow the precise and confusing folding techniques as well as keep up with instructional videos or teachers. It also seems common for those that are interested in learning Origami to feel like learning to turn a simple piece of paper into a work of art is daunting and overwhelming.

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If you possess these frustrations and concerns but feel drawn and interested in learning Origami, then you have chosen the best learning tool! The world of Origami is now at your fingertips! Although videos and teachers can be difficult and too fast to follow, you can instead take your time and go at your own pace with our clear, to the point descriptions and step-by-step instructions. You may also feel that the folding and shaping of the paper is difficult and hard to duplicate when following a teacher or instructor. Rest assured, with the clear, easy to follow pictures and explanations, you will be able to practice the folding techniques and master the basics. There will be no pressure to keep up with a video or instructor!

This book will take you through not only the basics of Origami, but confront the possible and probable frustrations or difficulties you have experienced in the past. It will also instruct you, step-by-step, with color pictures, how to complete 20 beginner Origami projects! By the time you complete this book, you will have successfully mastered the basics of the art and created 20 Origami art pieces!

Chapter 1 - Learning the Basics

One of the most famous and inspiring stories that stems from Origami art is the story of Sadako Sasaki and her creation of one thousand paper cranes. While gravely ill with leukemia as a result of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, Sadako folded and graciously sculpted nearly one thousand paper Origami cranes. Sadako, hearing of the Japanese folk tale, folded the paper cranes in hopes she would be granted one wish upon their completion.

Although Sadako was Japanese, she too found it difficult and frustrating at first. It wasn't easy to complete the delicate folds and sculpting techniques required by the art of Origami. As time went on, Sadako found it more and more difficult because of her failing health and especially her swelling fingers.

Although your individual reasons for learning and understanding Origami are probably quite different from Sadako's, the basics remain the same. Origami is a unique and beautiful art that draws in people who are looking to be inspired. How amazing is it that with just one simple square of paper we can create beautiful and intricate art? It's quite fascinating! It is also a relief to hear that someone so committed and dedicated to Origami, like Sadako, struggled as she learned the art. Here, it becomes clear that to master Origami, one must first start with the basics while keeping their aspirations in mind.

Origami Tools: What should you use?

Contrary to common belief, there is quite a bit more to Origami than meets the eye. When one thinks of Origami, the first things to come to mind may be Japan, Origami cranes, and simply, folding paper to create a design. Surprisingly, there are many different types of paper and material objects available when creating Origami art. There are many different options. It is not only important to choose what is best for your individual project but also what you prefer.

Overall, it is possible and completely acceptable to use virtually any flat piece of material that easily holds a crease to create Origami. That said, however, “Kami” is the most common type of paper used. It is lighter than copy paper and is the recommended type of paper because it can be used for a wider range of projects and is quite common when looking to buy materials. Kami paper is usually colored or patterned on one side and white on the other. However, this is not true for the entirety of Kami paper. One should choose whatever they deem best for their individual project.

“Washi” paper is another type of paper one might choose to complete a project. This paper is a bit thicker and sturdier since it is made from wood pulp. It will be a bit more on the expensive side but will also be tougher than regular Kami paper. Washi paper is usually used in Japan when creating Origami art.

Although it may sound silly, it is also quite common to use paper money, the American Dollar having the best consistency and weight, to create Origami projects. From paper money, it is easy to create crisp folds as well as having an interesting pattern to go with your design! It is also quite practical since although one may not have Kami or Washi paper on hand, paper money is usually easy to come by and is inexpensive!

There are also several different types of everyday objects you can use to help you create Origami. It wouldn't seem like it, but other than your fingers and a flat, solid surface to fold on, there are many options!

Usually, of course, folds are made with your fingers and although this is a completely acceptable way to work on Origami projects, you can also turn to the help of a bone folder. This could be used if one wanted to create an emphasis on very, very crisp folds.



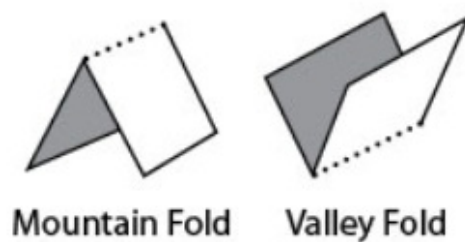
Furthermore, a few more optional tools are possibly be a paper clip when you are struggling to hold down or confine specific pieces of the paper. This can also come in handy when practicing different folding techniques. You can use a paper clip to hold one part of the paper down or away from where you are currently working, to make more space for your practice.

Lastly, when working with small or tiny folds that may feel cumbersome with your fingers, you could use a tweezers. With a tweezers, you can grab the paper more easily as well as make the tiny folds easily while still using precision.

**Tip: You may also find ruler, or hairspray useful. A ruler can be used to make more exact folds, or sketching in lines. Hairspray may be useful to keep the paper rigid so the form and folds hold better.*

Basic Folds: Understanding the Fundamentals

When first beginning Origami, the overall art itself may seem overwhelming and impossible, as a whole, to master. Many people look at an Origami paper crane, frog or rose and see it as one complex, confusing piece of paper. However, if we began to change that mindset a bit and look at it instead as a slow, step-by-step process, broken down into a series of folds and creases, it becomes much easier to comprehend. It is important and vital to begin here, with the basics.

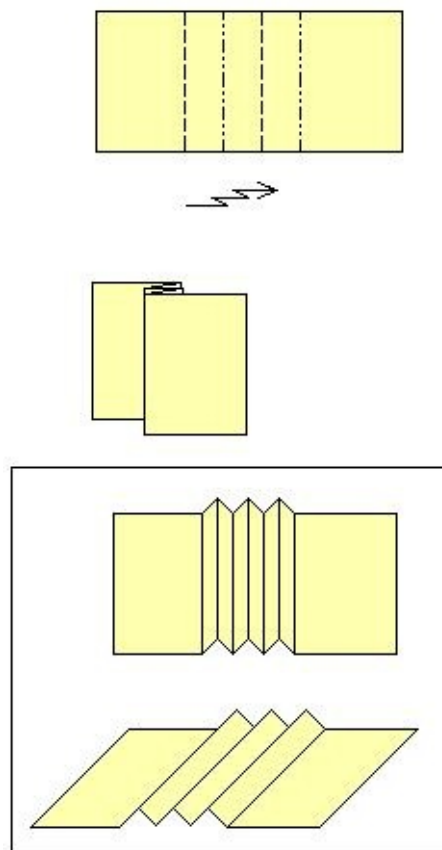


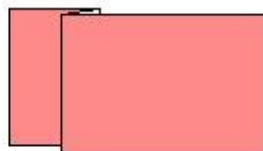
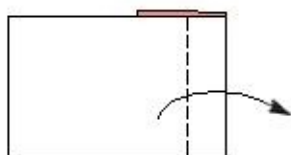
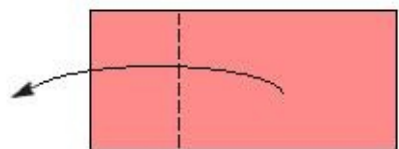
The first important fold to note is the “Valley Fold,” or “Mountain Fold.” This fold is quite simple to understand and complete. With your square Origami paper, simply imagine your square in two or three equal sections. Imagine two or three, individual lines, running vertically from top to bottom and dividing the paper equally into smaller squares. The only difference between the two folds is that “Mountain Fold” refers to folding the Origami paper in a downward motion, like you would to create a table tent. The “Valley Fold” refers to the process of folding that paper in a backward motion, or opposite of a table tent.

**Tip: To make it easier to comprehend, instead of imagining the lines to make the fold, you can instead sketch them onto the paper, lightly, with a pencil. This way, it will be easier to practice more crisper, cleaner folds.*

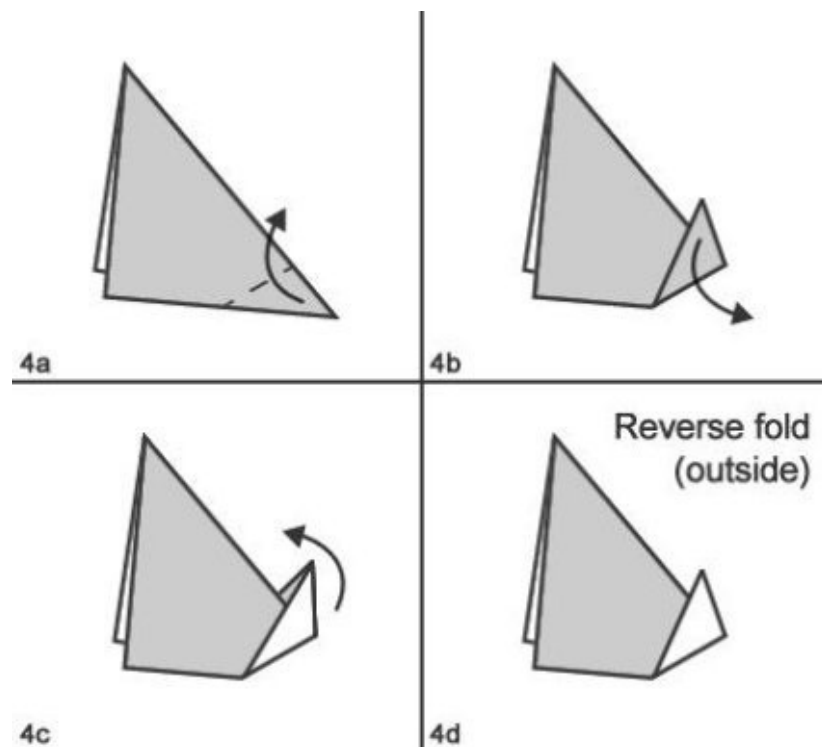
Our second basic fold in our fundamental understanding is the “Pleat Fold.” When attempting to make this fold, imagine, again, at least two lines (for beginning pieces, two will be most common). These two lines are located in the center of the paper, and instead of dividing the paper into equal sections, it instead, creates one small section with two large sections on the outside.

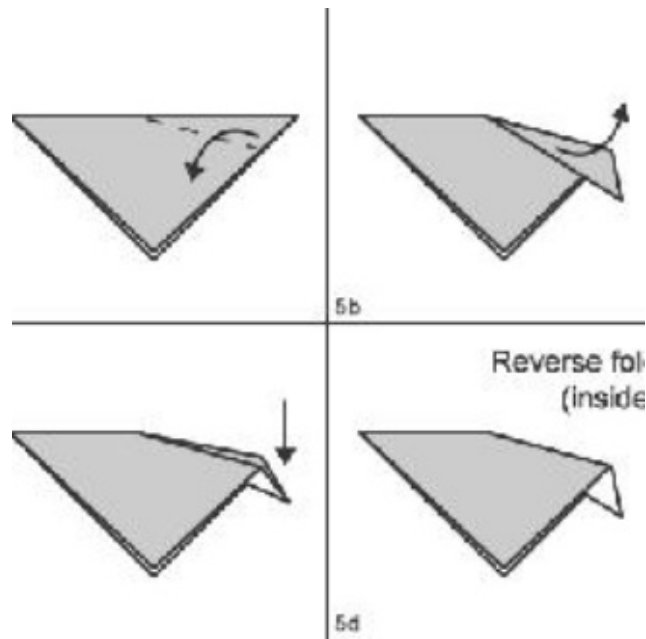
**Tip: To more easily understand this fold, think of it like an accordion.*



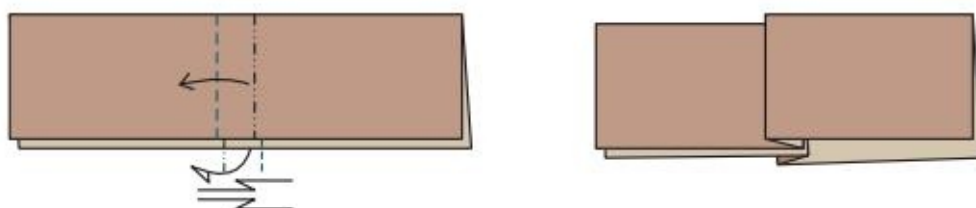
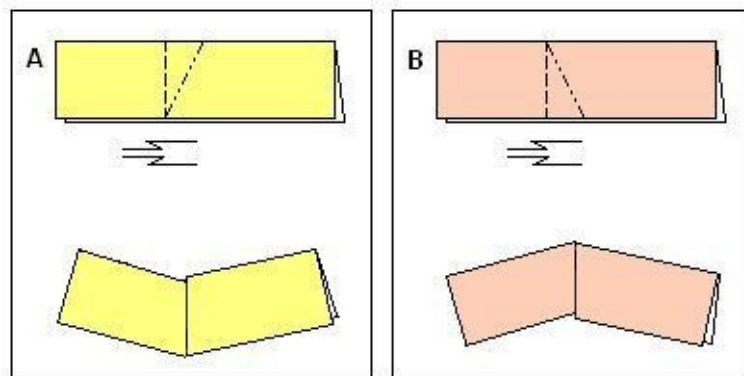


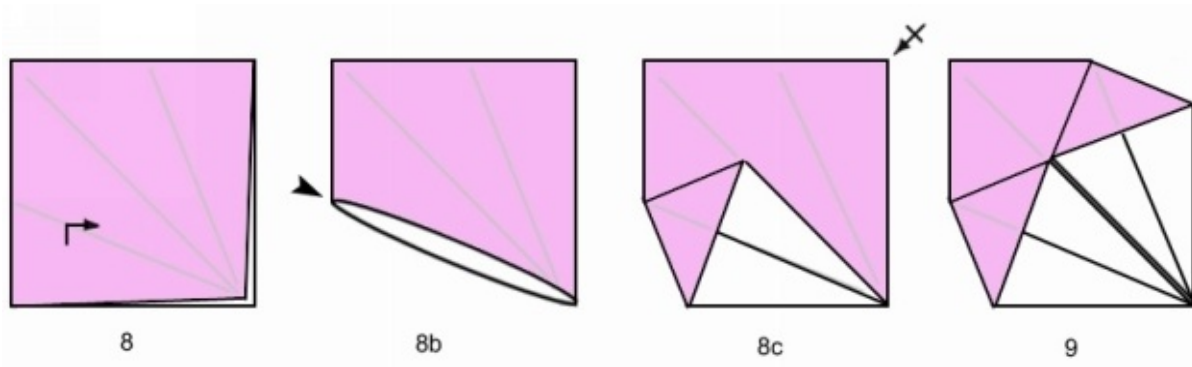
Third, these folds will be vital when creating animal Origami, especially the crane and frog. With the “Outside Reverse Fold,” and the “Inside Reverse fold,” you want to begin with your paper folded into a triangular shape that has created a flap. The fold can be made in three steps. First, fold the flap of paper to one side. Second, unfold the pervious fold. This creates a crease in the paper. Then, press the tip of the triangle downward. You will see, as you do this that a gap is created and you want to fold the paper down into this gap, thus creating a shape that looks like the head of an animal. The only difference between the two is that when creating the “Outside Reverse Fold,” the last step will be the opposite. To create this fold, in the last step, instead of pressing the paper down and in, you should to press it out. When completed, the lighter side of the Origami paper should be showing. In this instance, this fold is a bit more complicated and difficult than past folds. It will be significantly easier to complete this fold if lightly dotted lines are added to the paper before making the fold. This gives extra guidance and creates crisper, cleaner folds.





The forth fundamental fold is the “Crimp Fold,” and, at the beginner level will only entail thinking of two lines. To make the fold, there are three to four mains steps. If you so choose, lightly sketch two consecutive lines onto your flat piece of Origami paper. Both should be vertical line and divide the piece of paper unequally. Then, fold your paper, onto the first line. Lastly, immediately continue to push the most recent fold back and fold again, on the second line, thus creating a “crimp” in the paper. This fold can be done at an angle or as a straight fold, depending on what the specific design calls for.

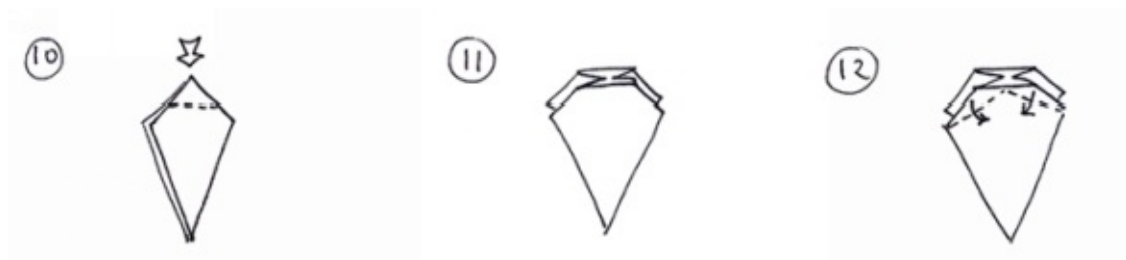




Our fifth important fold is dubbed a “Sink Fold.” You will be making this fold when you have your Origami paper in a diamond or triangle shape. First, push down on the tip of the diamond or triangle to “sink” it. Continue to push the paper down until it is submerged in between the rest of the paper, thus creating layers. Then, press the corners this creates inward and crease the paper.



Finally, we have the sixth and last basic Origami fold, the “Squash Fold.” To complete this fold, lay your paper flat and begin by grabbing the corner of the part of the paper you want to “squash.” Then, open the paper wide enough until the corners began to concave. Lastly, squash it! You will know you are opening the paper wide enough when you begin to see the upper or lower part of the paper fall into a triangle or square shape. When you see this, it’s time to press down and make a fold!



You have now successfully completed and learned about the basic folds of Origami! It is highly recommended to try all of the folds multiple times. This will increase the muscle memory required to make clean, crisp, correct folds. As they say, “practice makes perfect!” It is also in your best interest, if you are finding some of the folds difficult or complex, to sketch, soft pencil lines where you want and should be making the fold. This will help with guidance and precession. Congratulations on creating and comprehending the basics!

Chapter 2

Getting Started: 10 Basic Origami Projects

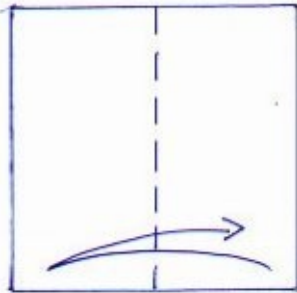
Congratulations! You have learned the basic fundamentals of Origami and you are now prepared to try your hand at basic Origami projects! If at any time, you feel the need to stop, go back and re-read or practice the basic folds more, take your time to do so! Origami cannot be mastered without comprehending and mastering the basics first. Let's get started!

Origami Project #1: A House

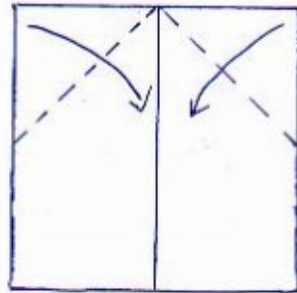
In our very first project we are going to start as basic as possible! To begin, let's place our basic, square piece of Kami paper face down on any flat, solid surface of your choice.

Now, fold your square perfectly in half and once you make a clean crease, unfold it so it is once again a square. Next, fold the top corners of the square to meet in the middle crease you just made. Choose one of these corners and fold one of them up for the third step. Finally, fold both of the sides inward to make two small vertical rectangles. Once this fold is complete, flip over your paper. You have completed an Origami house as well as your first Origami project! Congratulations!

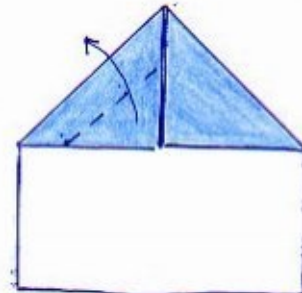
House
Shed
9/00



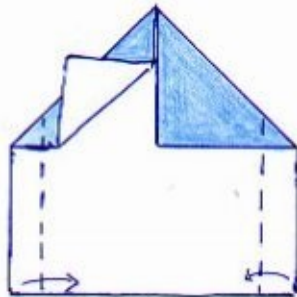
1. Fold + unfold



2. Fold corners
to center



3. Fold corner out



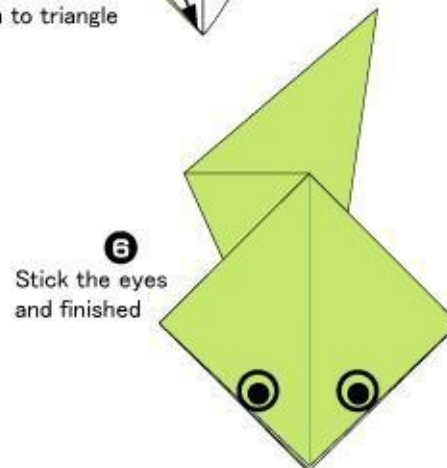
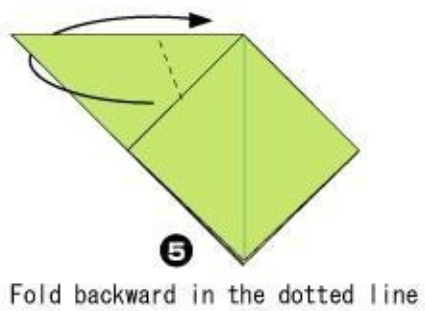
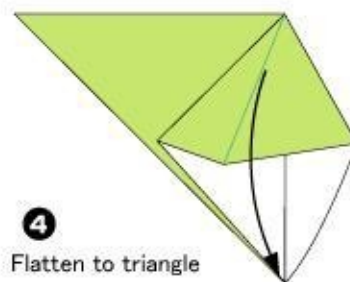
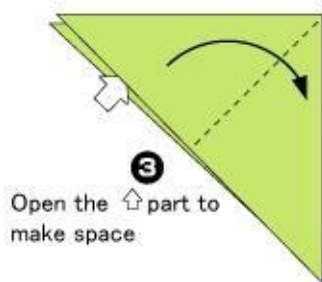
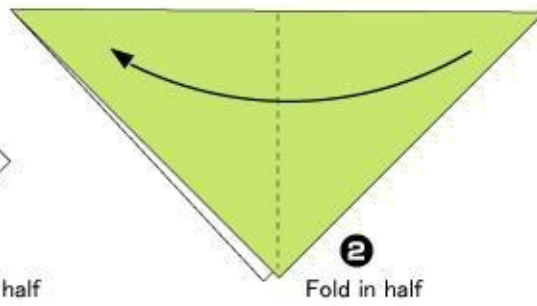
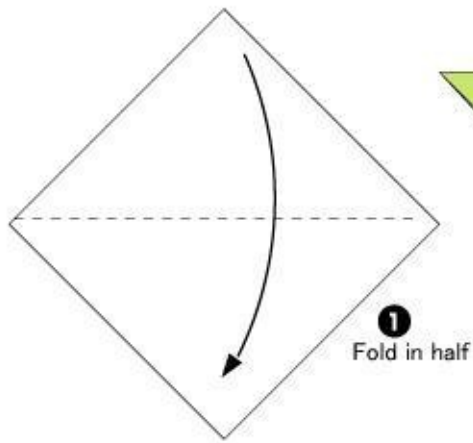
4. Fold sides in



Origami Project #2: A Tadpole

For our second project, you will again need a regular, square-shaped piece of Kami paper, placed face down on whatever surface you have chosen. Make sure you place your paper in the shape of a diamond before beginning.

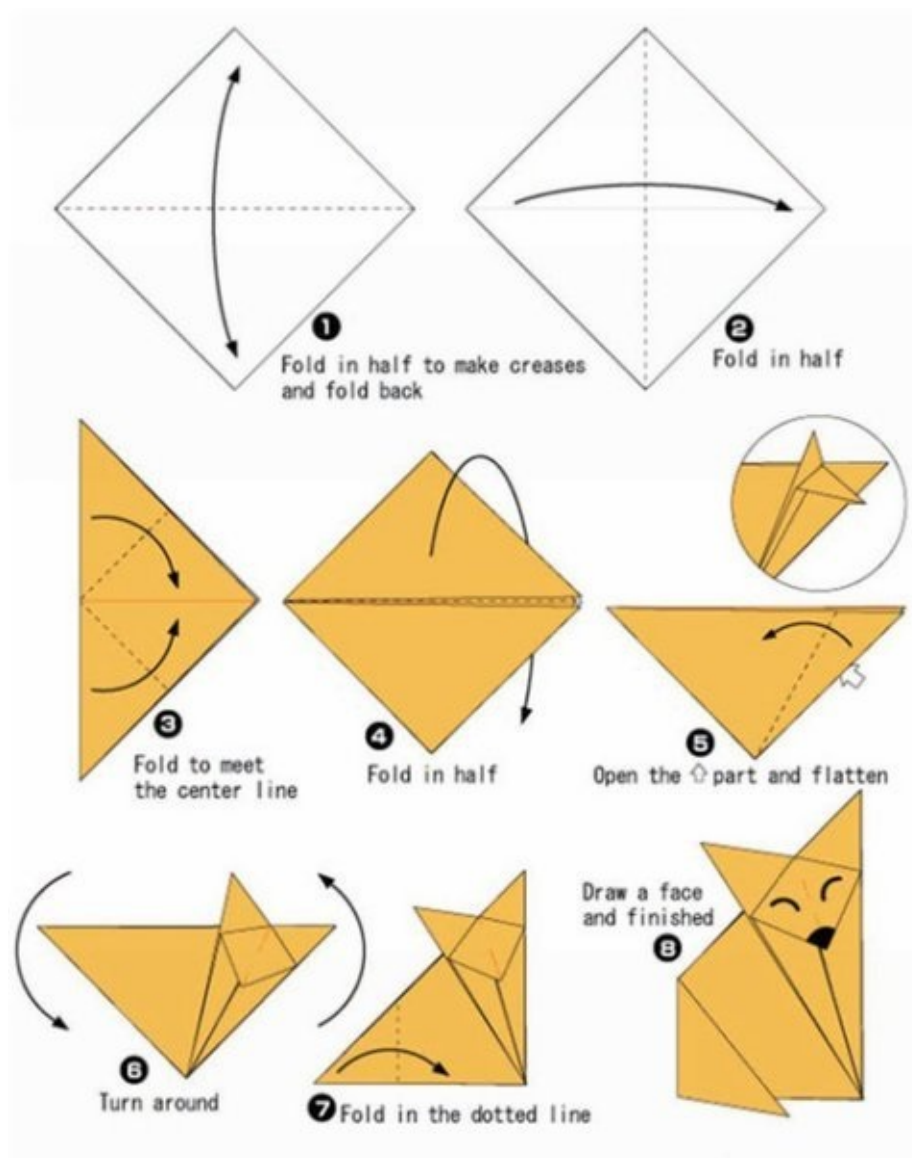
First, start by folding your paper in half by taking the top point of your paper and folding in downward to match the bottom corner. Now, fold the paper in half once more by taking the right corner and matching it with the left corner. Your paper should now be a triangle. On the left side, there should be two layers. Take the top layer, pull up and out to open it. As you open it, you will notice it will take the shape of a triangle. As you push it down to fold, it will fold in the shape of a square. Your Origami piece should now be the shape of a square with a triangle sticking out from it. Take the corner of the triangle and fold it backward. This will make the tadpole's tale! There you have it, project number two, a tadpole!



A Tadpole

Origami Project #3: A Fox

For our third Origami project, we will be creating a fox! Before starting, you will need a piece of regular, square Kami paper, laying face down in a diamond shape.



For the first step, fold the paper in half to make a center crease. This crease should run from the left side of the paper to the right side, (or in a horizontal line). Make sure this fold is nice and crisp and then unfold it once more. Now, make another center crease, in the opposite direction.

You should now have made a horizontal and vertical center crease in your paper. After making the vertical fold, leave your paper folded. Now, for the third step, take the top corner and fold it into the center. Do the same with the bottom corner. You should now have a smaller diamond shaped piece of paper. On the right side of the paper, at the

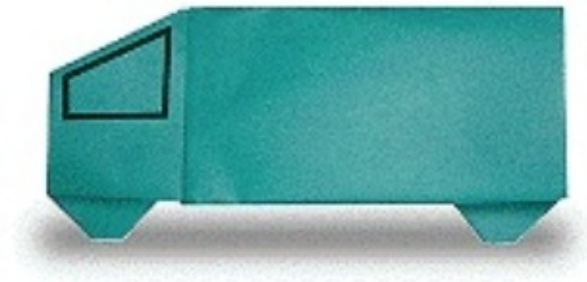
corner, you should have two flaps, or layers, of paper. Take the top layer, open it, flatten it and fold it.

You have now created the fox's head! To finish your fox piece, turn your paper around and fold the left back corner in. This creates the fox's tail. Your third Origami project is finished!

Origami Project #4: A Truck

For this project, begin with a piece of Kami paper laying face-down in the shape of a square.

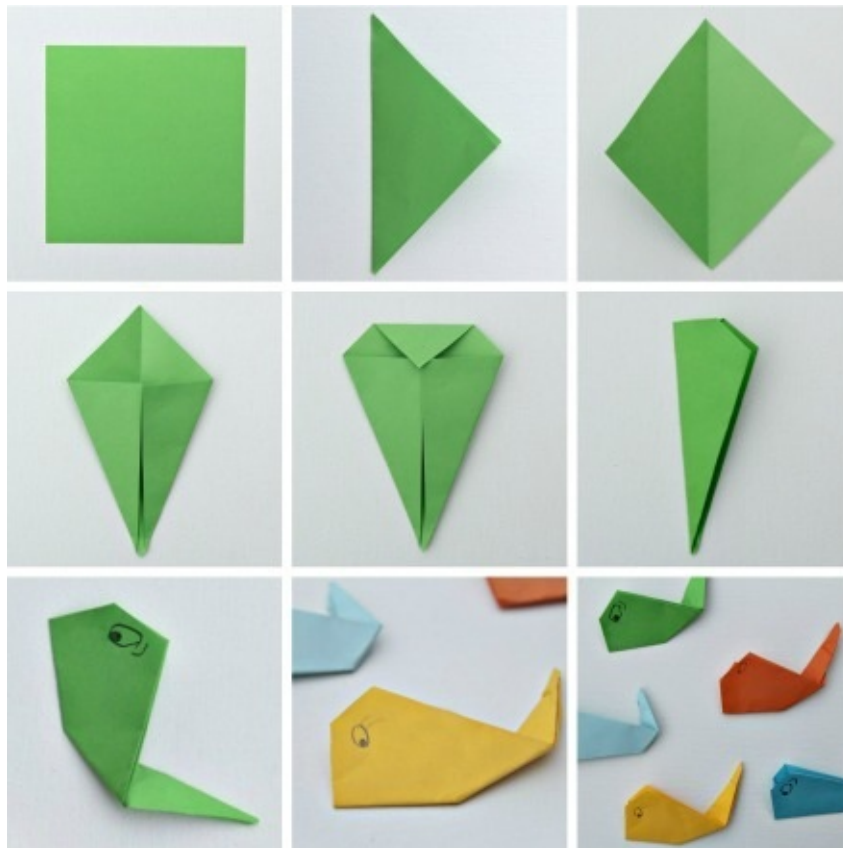
To begin, fold your paper in half vertically and horizontally. Once you have creased these folds nicely, unfold the paper. Now, take the very bottom 1/3 of the paper and fold it upward. Leave this folded. Then, fold down the two outside corners of this flap that you have just folded. Next, turn your piece over to the other side and fold the top 1/3 of the paper down. You should now have a piece of paper with a rectangle at the top, where the top 2/3 of the paper is white and the bottom 1/3 of the paper is colored with two small triangles at the bottom. Finally, fold the bottom right corner of the flap you just created upward to create the window of the truck. You are now finished!



Origami Project #5: A Whale

For this project, you will need to place a simple piece of Kami paper laying on a flat surface, face-down in a diamond shape. In just seven simple steps we are going to create an Origami whale! First, take your paper and fold it in half to create a center crease and then unfold it so it is back in a diamond shape. Now, fold the left hand corner into the center crease you made previously. Do that same with the right hand corner.

Your paper now looks like an ice cream cone. Now, fold the very top point of the paper down and then fold the right side of the paper into the center fold. Your paper is now a strange looking triangle. Turn your paper so the long, flat side of your paper is toward your body. Now, fold the very end point up, thus, making the whale's tale. You have now finished another project!



Origami project #6: Origami Boat

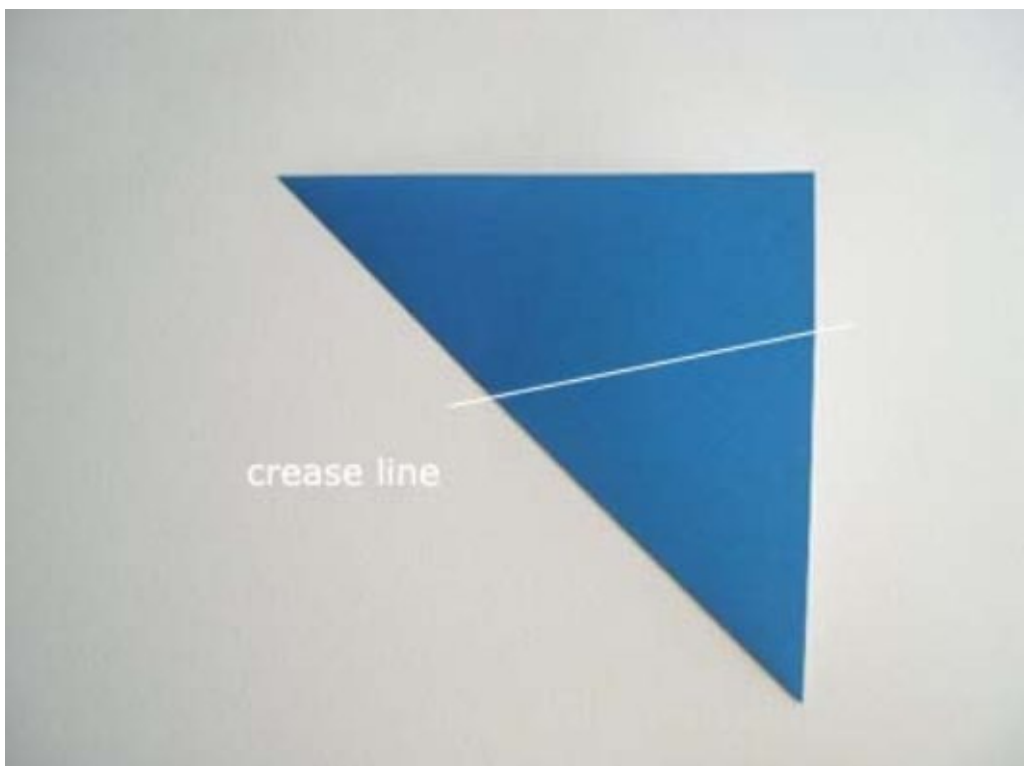
For this project, you want to use a basic piece of Kami paper and begin by turning the white side of the paper up on whatever solid, flat surface you are using. Then, fold the paper in half but matching two corners of the paper together on opposite sides of the square.





Then, you want to grab the bottom corner of the paper and move it toward the top of the paper, to make an off kilter fold.

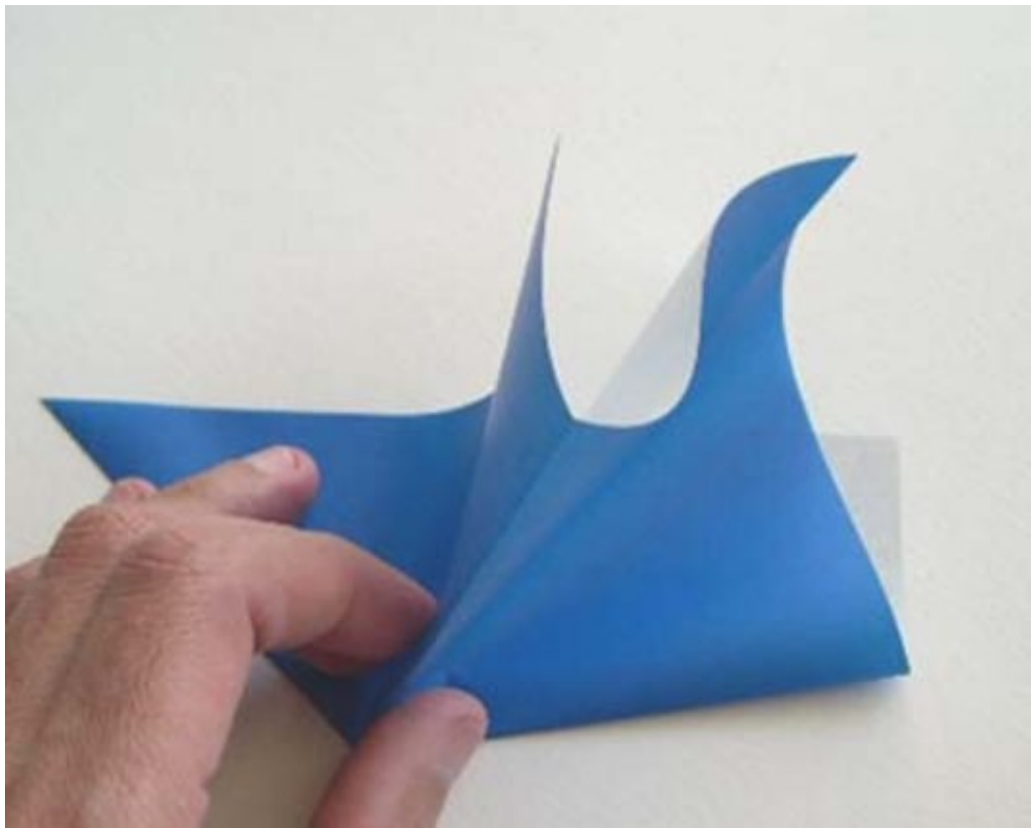
**Tip: this is an instance where sketching a light pencil line to guide the fold will come in handy.*

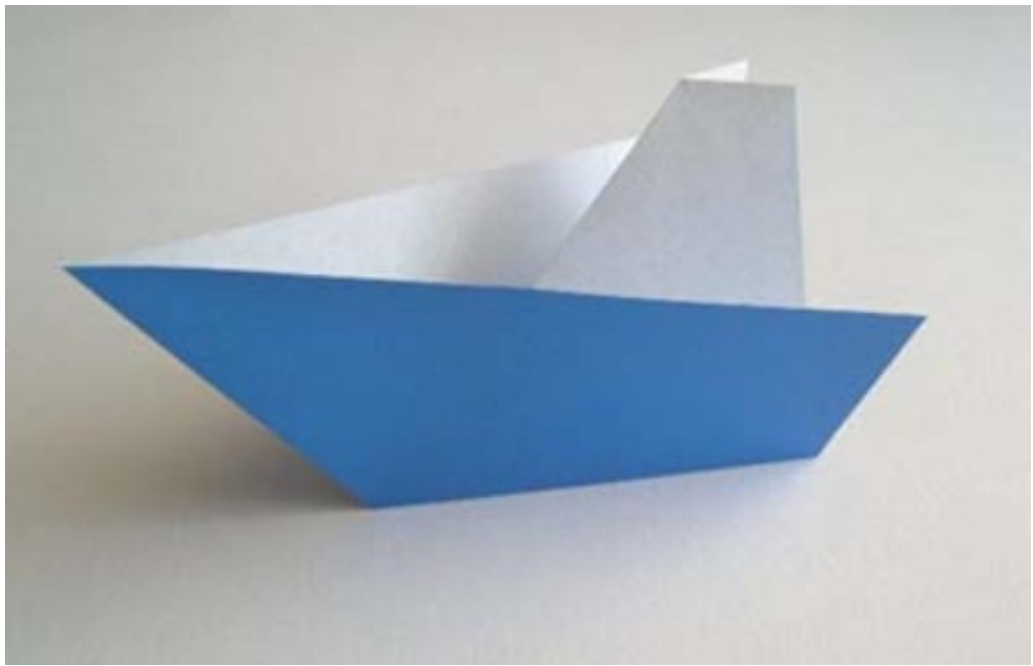


You now want to do a reverse fold to create the hull of the boat. To do this, grab the bottom corner of the paper and pull it up and towards the top.



Finally, you will see that the top of your boat is pointed into a triangle shape. You can do two things here: one being cutting off the top of the triangle to make it flat or, in traditional Origami fashion, do one final reverse fold. To complete the latter, push down on the tip of the triangle point and push the paper down and inwards. This will create a flat top and a layer of paper. You now successfully created your second Origami project!





Origami Project #7: Origami Fan

For this project, you will want to use a patterned piece of Kami paper.

First, lay your piece of paper, white side-up on a solid, flat surface. Now, you want to make a valley fold. To complete this fold, grab the bottom on the paper, and fold the paper directly upwards in a small rectangular shape.





Now, you want to make a mountain fold, meaning making a fold in the opposite direction. You can do this by grabbing the paper, flipping it over, grabbing it again where you made the last fold and pressing up and in. This fold should make a “table tent” shape. To complete the fan, you want to continue these two steps continually until you have used all the paper available. Then, to create a handle for your fan, slightly unfold your fan to view the face of the fan.





Now, fold down a portion of your fan about two inches from the bottom! Great job! You are finished!



Origami Project #8: A Windmill

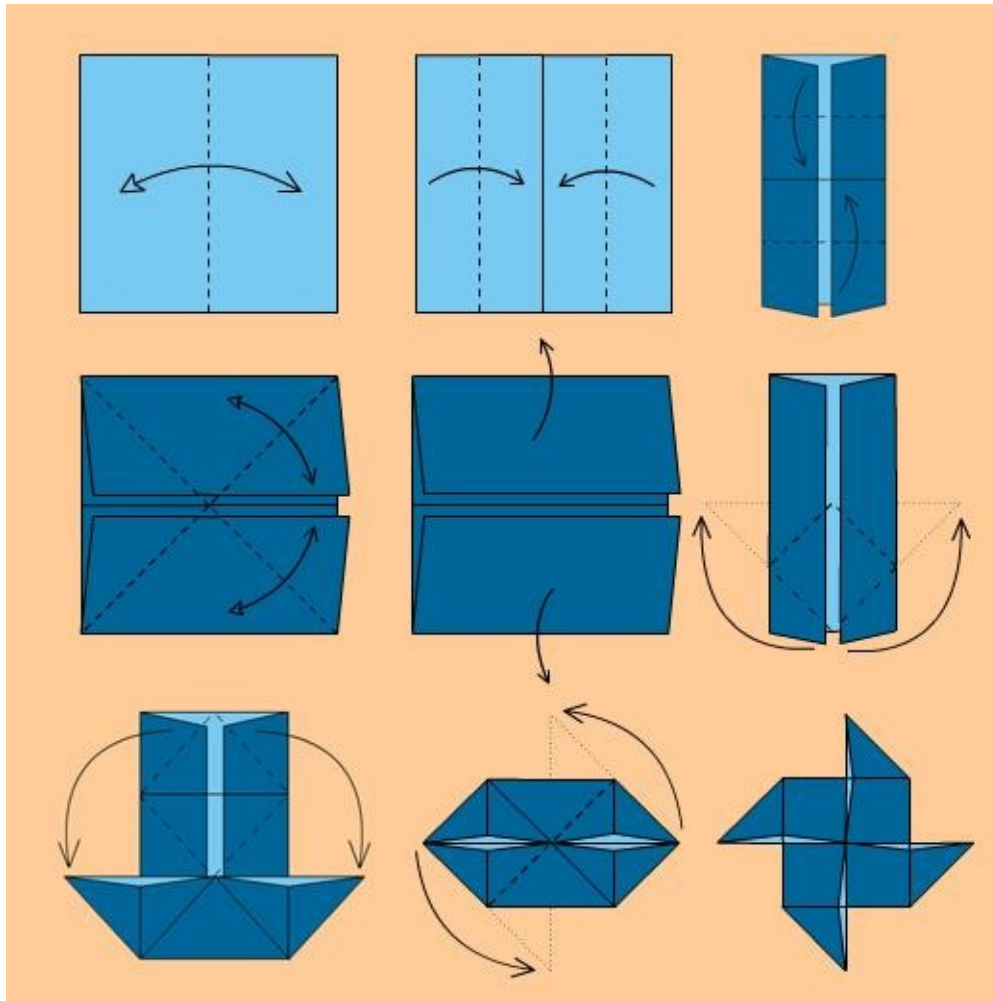
In our eighth project we will be making a windmill! You will need a regular, square piece of Kami paper and if you so choose, a plastic straw and pin.



**Tip: For a super fun, interesting pattern and maybe a bit of a challenge, you could use money or a Dum-Dum Sucker wrapper in place of Kami paper!*

For step one, make sure your paper is laid, face-down on the solid, flat surface of your choice. Then, fold your paper in half vertically. Make a nice, clean crease and then unfold it. There should now be a crease running down the middle of the paper, thus dividing the square into two rectangles. Now, take the outsides of the paper and fold them inward to meet in the middle. Again, make sure you adequately crease the paper and then unfold it once more. You should now have three creases in your paper that divide it into four long rectangles. Leave these folds folded and do not open them like in the last step. Your paper should be one long rectangle. Next, fold the top half downward to meet in the very center while also taking the bottom half and folding it upward to meet in the middle as well. This should turn your paper into a smaller square. Now, unfold these so your paper is back in a long rectangle shape. You should see two horizontal creases in the paper that you just made. Next, at the bottom of your paper, you will see two corners resting in the center. Take these two corners and pull them up and out. You will see that as you pull up and out, this will create an upside-down trapezoid shape. Make a crease here. Do this same exact step on top. Now, imagine a line running from the bottom left

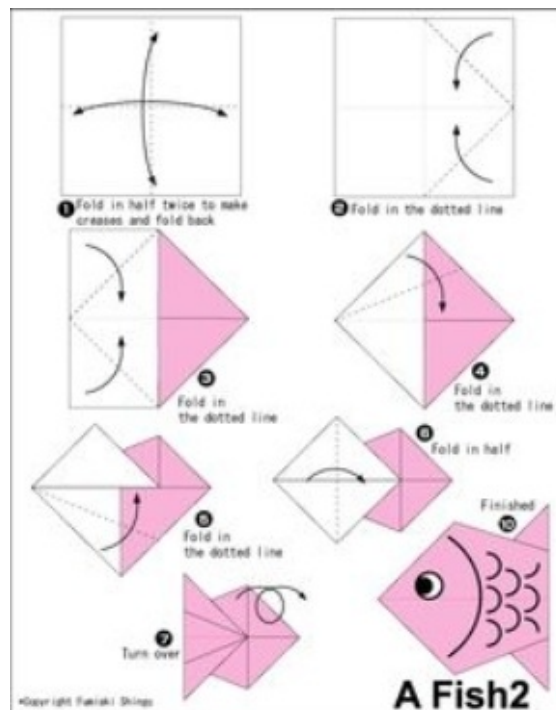
corner of your paper, diagonally, to the top right corner. Make a crease along this imaginary line. You now have an Origami windmill! If you so choose, you can now attach the plastic straw and pin to your Origami piece.



**Tip: It may be quite helpful to sketch in many of these lines rather than just imagine it. Don't be afraid to sketch in the lines so it can make it easier for you to learn!*

Origami Project #9: A Fish

For project number nine, you will need a basic piece of Kami paper placed face-down. For the first step, simply fold the paper in half horizontally and vertically. Once these creases are made, unfold your paper. Now, take the right bottom corner and fold it up and in to meet at the center crease. Do the same for the top right corner. Now do the same to the bottom left and top left corners. This will turn your paper into a smaller square. Next, take the top left corner and fold it diagonally downward. Do the same for the bottom left corner. Now, flip over your paper and you have an Origami fish! Nice work!



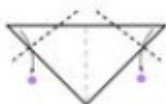
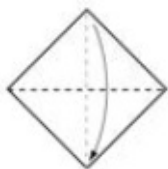
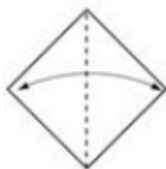
**Tip: If you so choose, you can add eyes and scales to the fish to make it more realistic!*

Origami Project #10: A Talking Dog



Our tenth origami project for this chapter will require a regular piece of Kami paper, a marker (to draw on the eyes and nose once the dog is finished) and a flat, sturdy surface to do your folding.

To begin, start with your Kami paper facing down on the surface in the shape of a diamond. Then, fold the left corner of the diamond to match up with the right corner. You have just folded your paper perfectly in half and created a center crease. Once you have completed this fold, open the paper again to then turn it clockwise. The crease you just created should be running horizontally. Now, fold your paper in half once again and keep it folded. Then, fold the two corners diagonally downward. This will create the dog's ears! Now, at the bottom corner, take the top layer of the corner and fold it upward into a small triangle. This creates the dog's nose! The folding is now finished and you can draw on the dog's eyes, and mouth!



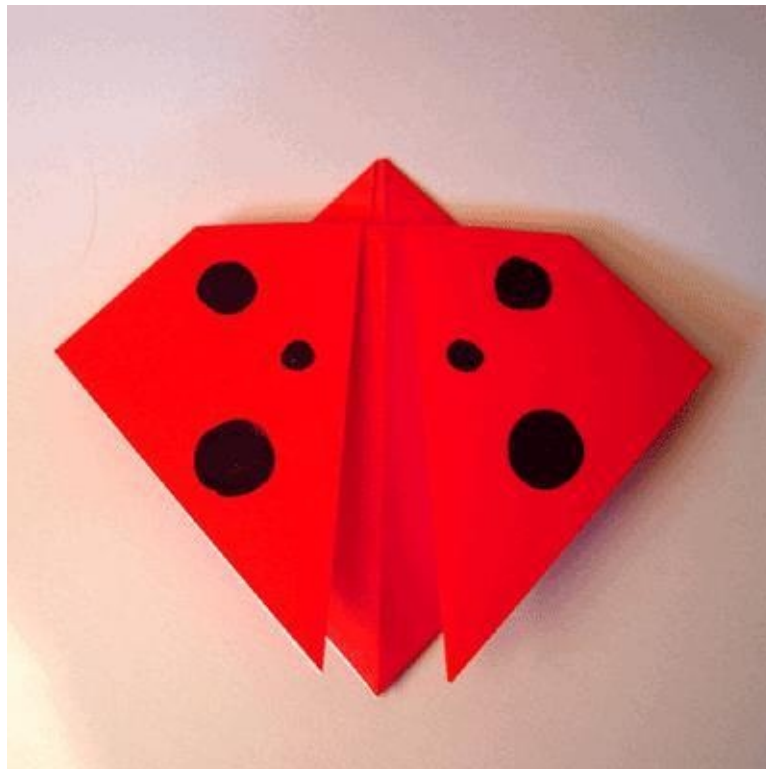
Chapter Three

Stepping up: 5 more Origami Projects

In our third chapter, we will still be explaining how to make simple, yet interesting Origami art. However, we will be showcasing projects that consist of more complex folding techniques and a few more steps than in the previous projects. Nonetheless, they will still be easy to comprehend and follow! Let's get started!

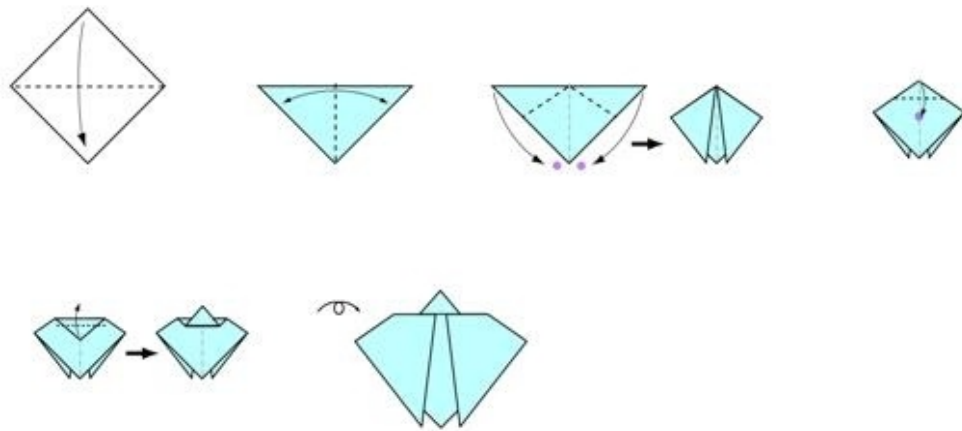
Origami Project 11: Ladybug

In the first project of this chapter, we will be making a Ladybug! There are a few more steps to this project than in the previous ones, but you shouldn't find any of the folds too challenging.



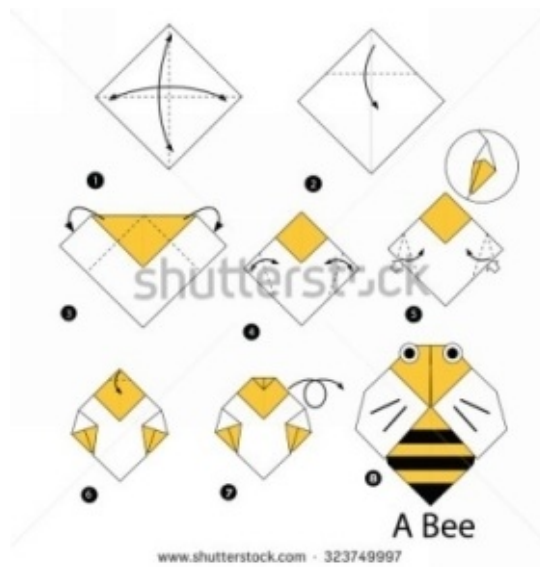
In step number one, begin with your piece of Kami paper pattern-side down on a

flat, solid surface. Place the paper in a diamond shape rather than in a square shape. Then, fold the top corner down to meet the bottom corner, thus folding your paper into two equal parts. Next, fold your paper in half again, by taking the two outside corners and matching them together. Crease this fold well and then unfold it. You should then see a crease mark down the middle of the paper. Now, fold the two outside corners down, but not along the center line we have been following in prior steps. Instead, leave a gap in the center of the two folded corners. For the forth step, flip your paper over and you will see a corner at the top. Take this corner and fold it down to the very center of the paper. Once you are finished with that fold, simply take the bottom of the corner you just folded down and fold it upwards. Finally, flip over the paper and you're finished! You just made an Origami ladybug in six easy steps!



Origami Project #12: A Bee

Place your square piece of Kami paper in a diamond shape, face-down on the flat surface of your choosing. To begin, fold the paper in half two times, once horizontally and once vertically. Once you have made these creases, unfold the paper. Now, take the top point of the paper and fold it down into the center point of the paper. Next, take the outside left and right corners and fold them both in diagonally. Once this crease is made, unfold the paper once again. Now, take the same corners and fold them in half the amount you did in the last step and to follow, fold along the same crease you did in the previous step. You should now have slanted shapes on each side of your paper. Next, take the opening on the small flap (made by the crease you just completed) and open it up. If you open it wide enough, it will begin to form a small triangle shape. Fold along this line. There should now be two kite-shaped triangles on each side of your Origami piece. Lastly, flip the paper over and you're finished!



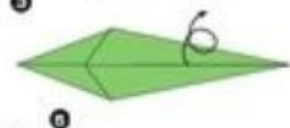
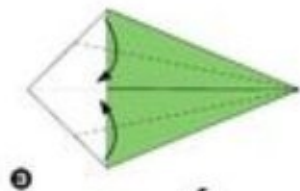
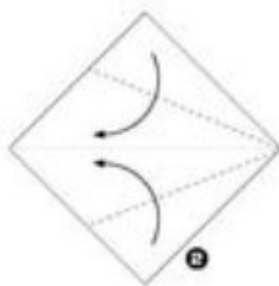
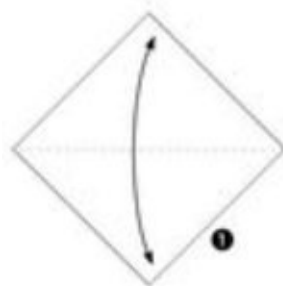
Origami Project #13: A Snake

In this project, we will especially focus on the Valley and Mountain Folds. Although we have done them a bit in prior projects, we haven't focused on them specifically since the introduction, so this will be good practice!

For this piece, you will want to use a regular, square piece of Kami paper. Before starting the steps, place this paper pattern-side down on a flat surface like a table or countertop. Place the paper in a diamond shape.

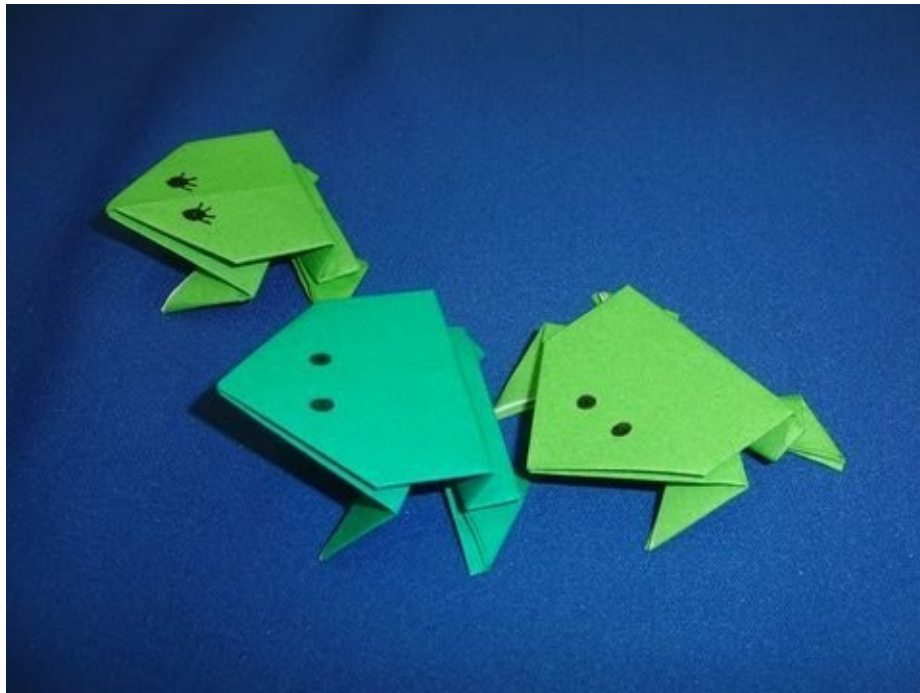
**Tip: If you so choose, it could be fun to use plastic a plastic “googlie” eye or a black marker to make the snake’s eye once the folding is finished.*

To begin, take the top corner of the diamond and fold it down to match the bottom one. This will mean you are folding you paper perfectly in half. Make this crease nice and crisp and then unfold it. Now, take the same top and bottom corners and fold them into the center crease that you just made. Your paper should now look like a sideways kite or ice-cream cone. For the third step, take the two corners on the bottom and top and fold them into the center once again. This will make your sideways kite (or ice-cream cone) into a skinner version. Now take the two new top and bottom corners and fold them into the center line. Now your paper should be completely one color. Now, starting towards the right end of your paper, begin folding your paper into a Valley Fold. Immediately following this fold, make a Mountain Fold. Continue in this pattern until you have used 3/4 of your piece of paper up. It should now remind you of an accordion. Now take the tip of the part of the paper you didn't fold and fold it down, to make the snakes head. Finally, fold the very tip of the head of the snake backward and you are finished!

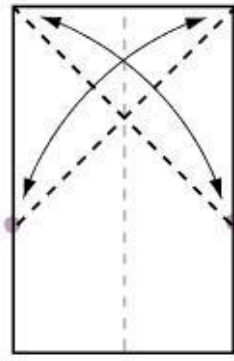


Origami Project #14: A Jumping Frog

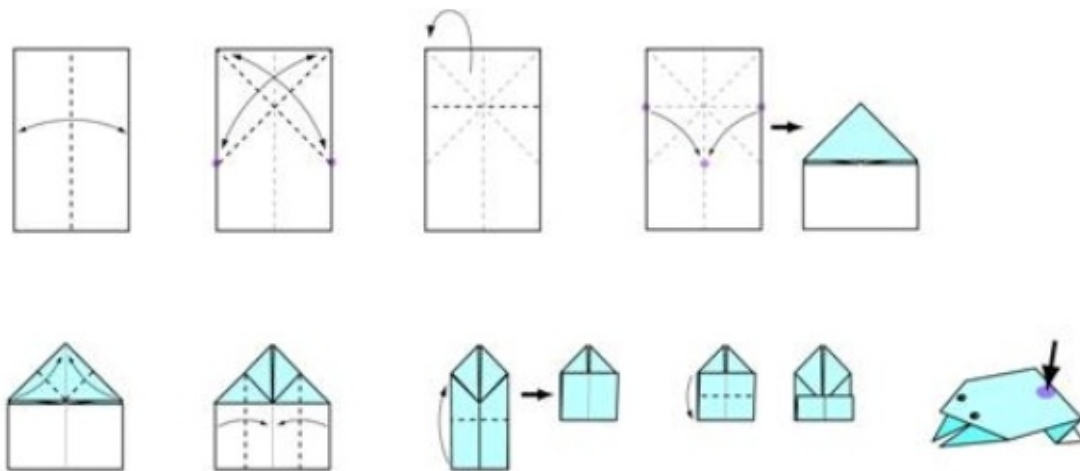
Our fourteenth project will seem quite similar to the last few in the first chapter, with folds that are quite comparable to the those we just completed. There will be a few more steps but nonetheless, the folds and steps will be at the beginner level. This project is especially fun if you are doing Origami with children!



First, for this project, you will need a rectangular shape of Kami paper. Lay it, pattern-side down on a solid, flat surface with the rectangular shape placed the long way. Then, fold the paper perfectly in half the long way. Make sure this fold is crisp and then unfold it so the paper is open with a crease running down the middle. Now, near the top of the rectangle, take the two sides of the paper and fold them directly into the center line where you made a crease earlier. Then, immediately following, take the top two corners and fold them across the paper diagonally. Both corners should be folded to the opposite sides of the paper. Make clean folds and then once again, unfold them.



Now, you will have two layers of triangle shapes at the top of the paper. Take the top layer and fold them upward to meet the top corner of the paper. For step six, fold the outsides of the paper inward, to meet the center line you created in step one. Then, fold the bottom half of your paper up, so the very top half of the two triangles are visible. Finally, fold half of the same part of the paper (that you just folded up) down, thus making a crimp fold. Now, flip your model over and you have a jumping frog!



**Tip: To make the frog jump, press on the crease at the bottom of the square that makes the frog's body.*

Origami Project #15: A Necktie

In this project, begin with a regular piece of Kami paper laying face down on a flat surface of your choosing. Lay the Kami paper in the shape of a diamond.

First, fold your paper in half, vertically by taking the left corner of the paper and matching it to the right corner. Once you have made a nice crease, unfold the paper. Now, fold the two corners on the left and right, into the center crease you make in step one. Your paper should now look like an upside-down kite or ice-cream cone. Flip your paper over, so you are looking at the colored side. Now, fold the top point downward, into the center of your piece. Then, fold what used to be the very top point that you just folded downward, up, to form a small triangle. Now, fold this small triangle upward, to create a square shape at the top of your paper. For the last series of folds, turn your paper over and fold in the sides to meet in the middle. Flip your paper over once more and you are finished! You now have an Origami necktie!



Chapter Four

Adding a challenge: the Last 5 Projects

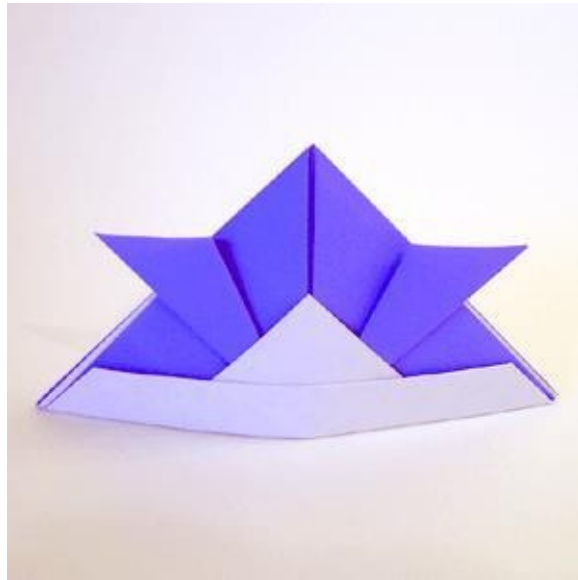
If you are beginning this chapter it means you have completed 15 Origami projects! Way to go! Think back to the beginning when you were brand new to Origami! You have come so far and learned so much! Congratulations!

In the last five projects, we are still focusing on a beginner's level of Origami, however, these projects will add one or two more steps and a bit more of a challenge. Rest assured, the folds and techniques will still be easy to follow and will be based on exactly what we have been doing in the prior projects. Here we go!

Origami Project 16: Samurai Helmet

For project number sixteen, we move into slightly more challenging folds and more complex steps. Here, you will get a lot of practice with the basic folds and fundamentals that we covered in Chapter One.

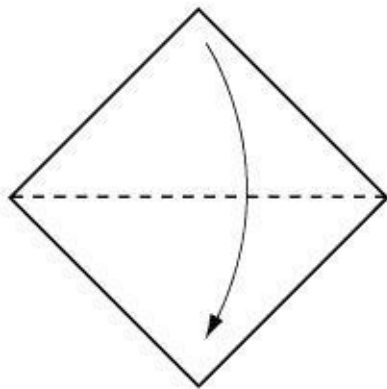
**Tip: It will help immensely to take advantage of sketching in lines where you want your folds to be. This will make it much easier to break down each and every step as well as make cleaner folds.*



To begin, you will need a basic piece of Kami paper. Keep in mind, there are several folds in this project that will significantly decrease the size of your paper.

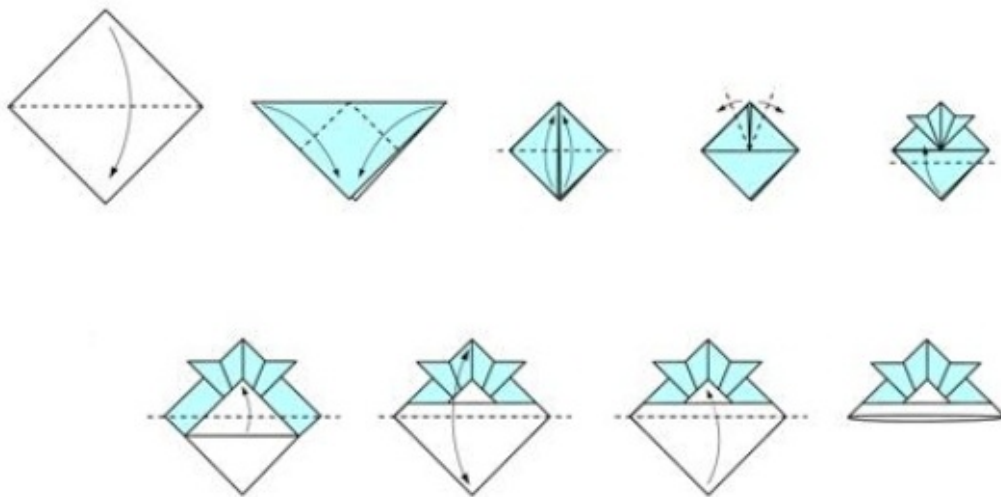
**Tip: If you are still working on perfecting your folds or if folding still seems cumbersome, try using a larger piece of paper so there is more paper and room to work with.*

Lay your piece of paper with the pattern-side facing downward. Lay it down in the shape of a diamond, instead of a square. Then, fold the top corner down to line up with the bottom corner. This fold will essentially crease your paper into two equal parts.



Now, take the outside corners of the paper, one on each side and fold them down to meet the bottom corner. Once this is complete, you will have a top layer and a bottom layer of triangles. Take only the top layer of triangles and fold them up to meet to top point of the paper. This should mean folding them along the middle crease you made in step one. Next, take the very top tips of the triangles you just folded and fold the tops outward. Now, take the next layer available and fold it three-fourths of the way up towards the triangles. Finally, in steps six and seven, take the bottom layer and fold it up towards the top of the triangles, then unfold it and tuck it backwards, to create an opening

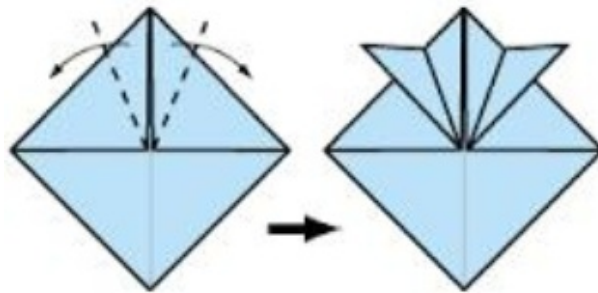
at the bottom. Great work! You just finished another project!



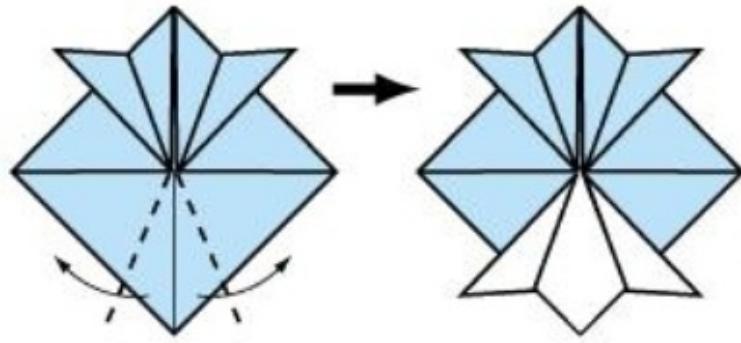
Origami Project #17: A Tortoise

You will find this project quite similar to the Samurai Helmet. Many of the folds are the same and although you may notice we are building up to more complex project each time, we are still focusing on beginner folds and Origami techniques.

To begin making your Origami tortoise, you will need a regular, square shaped piece of Kami paper and a pair of scissors. Place the piece of paper face down on the solid, flat surface of your choice. Step one is to divide your piece of paper in half by folding the left corner to match up with the right corner. Once you crease this well, open the paper again. Now, turn it clockwise one time, so that you have a different corner at the top. Now, fold your paper in half again, this time, folding the top corner down to meet the bottom corner. Then, take the two outside corners and fold them down to the very middle. Follow the crease you made in step one. Now, when looking down at your paper, you should see that you have taken your large square of paper and made it into a smaller square, with two triangles on top. Next, take the outsides of the triangles and fold them upward. This should make the two triangle shapes poke out from the outline of the paper.



Now, you will need your scissors! Careful to only cut the top layer of the paper, cut from the bottom point up to the center of the paper, along the middle crease you made in step one.



Now, take the flaps you just created and fold them out to make a triangle on each side. These triangles should create perfect symmetry with the top half of your Origami piece. Next, fold the outside points inward to meet in the middle. Finally, fold the top point down and then up again, using a crimp fold, to create the tortoise's head. Flip your paper over and you have created an Origami tortoise!

Origami Project #18: A Sitting Dog

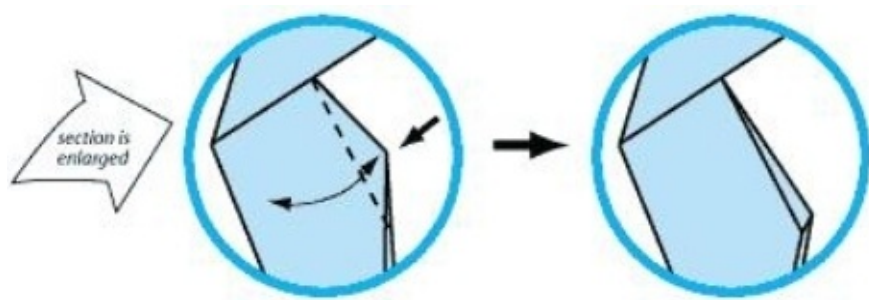
Here in project eighteen, we are changing things up to try some new folds and techniques! Although still beginner and easy to follow, many of these folds will be new and different than in our past projects. You will see that many could and will be used in your future of Origami to make animals such as butterflies and cranes.



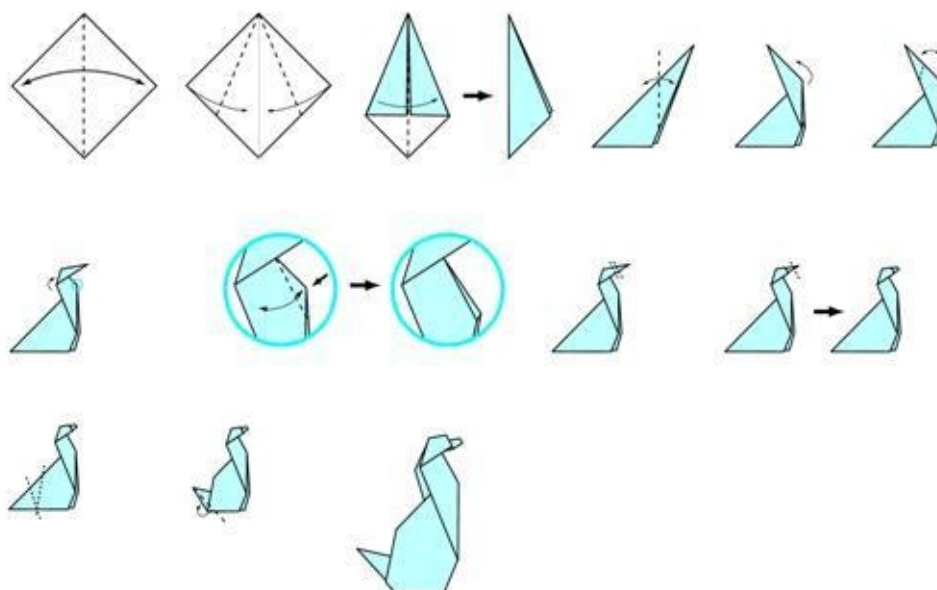
To begin, you will want to place your square piece of Kami paper, pattern-side down on a flat surface and put it in the shape of a diamond. First, fold the left corner to the right corner, thus creating a center crease line and folding your paper perfectly in half. Once you have made the center crease line, unfold the paper. Now, take the two original corners on the right and left side of the paper and fold them inward to meet in the very center, where you just created a crease. Then, fold your paper in half. For the fourth step, choose a place about half way down your paper (that is now in the shape of an obtuse triangle) and fold it backward. This fold will create the dog's neck.



Next, in the top half of your paper, or the part that is shaped like a triangle, choose a spot half way down and make a fold frontward. This will create the dog's head. Now, you will see the dog's "neck." At this exact spot, make a sink fold by pressing in on the point and folding.



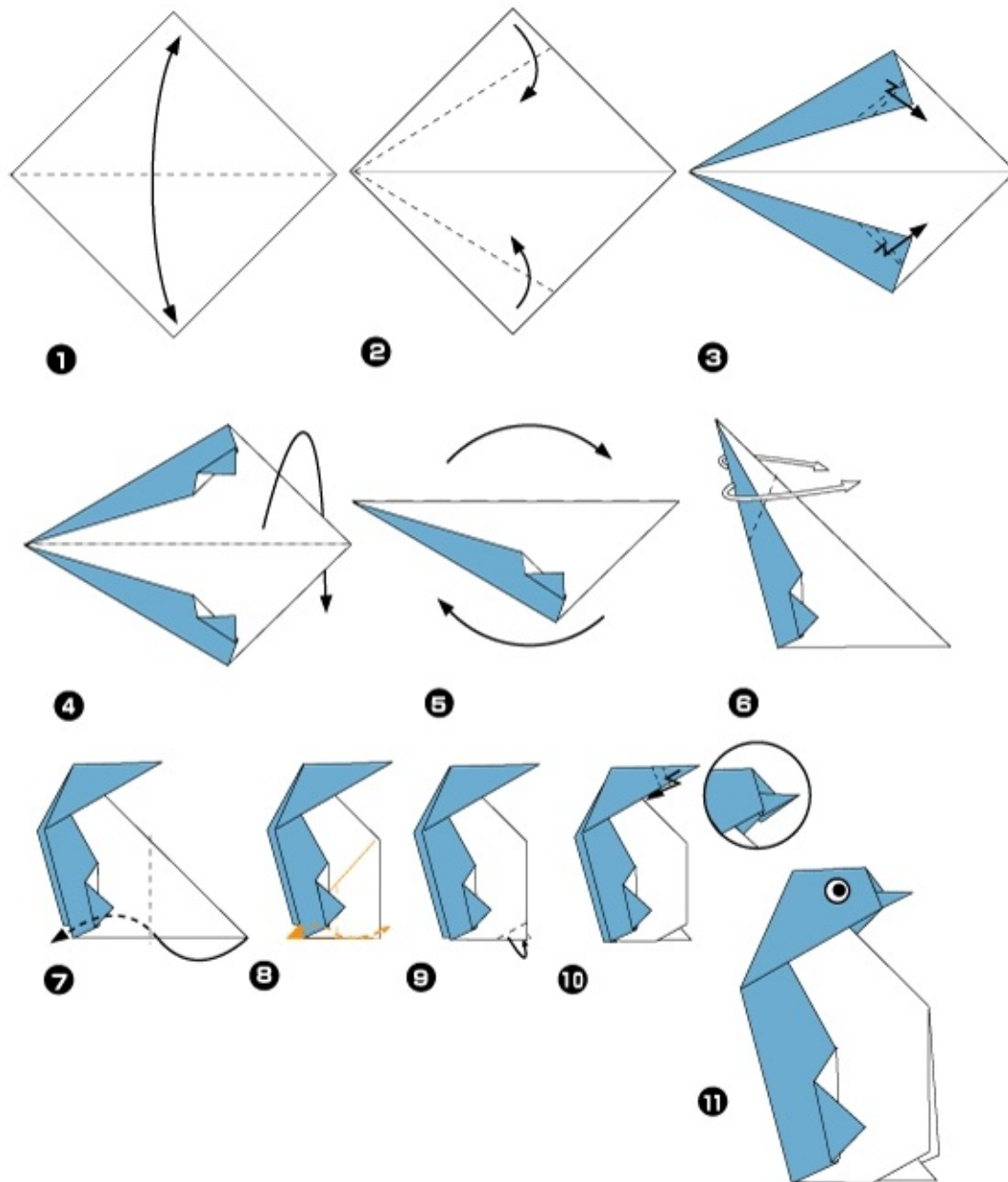
Then, take the very top corner on the dog's face and fold it in, to create the dog's nose. Finally, take the bottom part of the paper, where the dog's back might be and fold it in and upward, to create the dog's tail. You are now completed with your 18th Origami project!



Origami Project #19: A Penguin



To begin our next project of this chapter, use a regular piece of Kami paper and set it on a flat, solid surface. Place it face down in a diamond shape. For the first step, fold your paper in half by taking the top corner and lining it up with the bottom corner. Make sure you've made a strong crease and then unfold. Now, imagine a line running from the left hand corner up to the top corner.



**Tip: It may make it easier, if you sketch in the line rather than imagining it.*

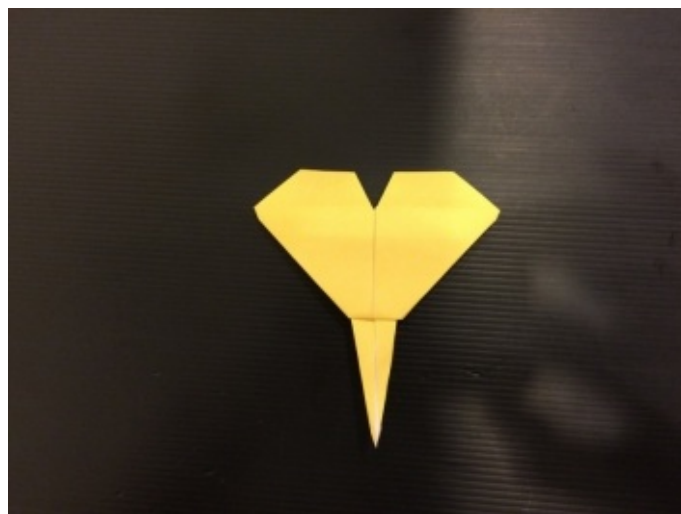
Next, take the two points of the pieces you just folded in and make a Crimp Fold by taking the points and folding them back and then forward again. Now fold your entire piece in half by folding it backward along the center fold you created in the first step. You should now be able to place your piece right-side up, so it is standing up. Next, on the outside of your piece, choose a place 1/3 of the way down from the top and make an Outside Reverse Fold by pushing inward until the paper caves. This step will create the penguin's head. The next step will create the penguin's stomach. To do this, make another Outside Reverse Fold by pressing on the very bottom corner of your piece until the paper caves inward and you create almost a pocket that will form the penguin's belly. In the second-to-last step, take the point at the end of the penguin's head and press it inward and fold to make the beak of the penguin. Finally, fold in the new bottom corner. This will create the

penguin's foot. Your penguin is now complete!

*Tip: If you would like to get more creative and add more to your piece, you can use a plastic "googlie" eye or a marker to make an eye for the penguin.

Origami Project #20: A Ginkgo Leaf

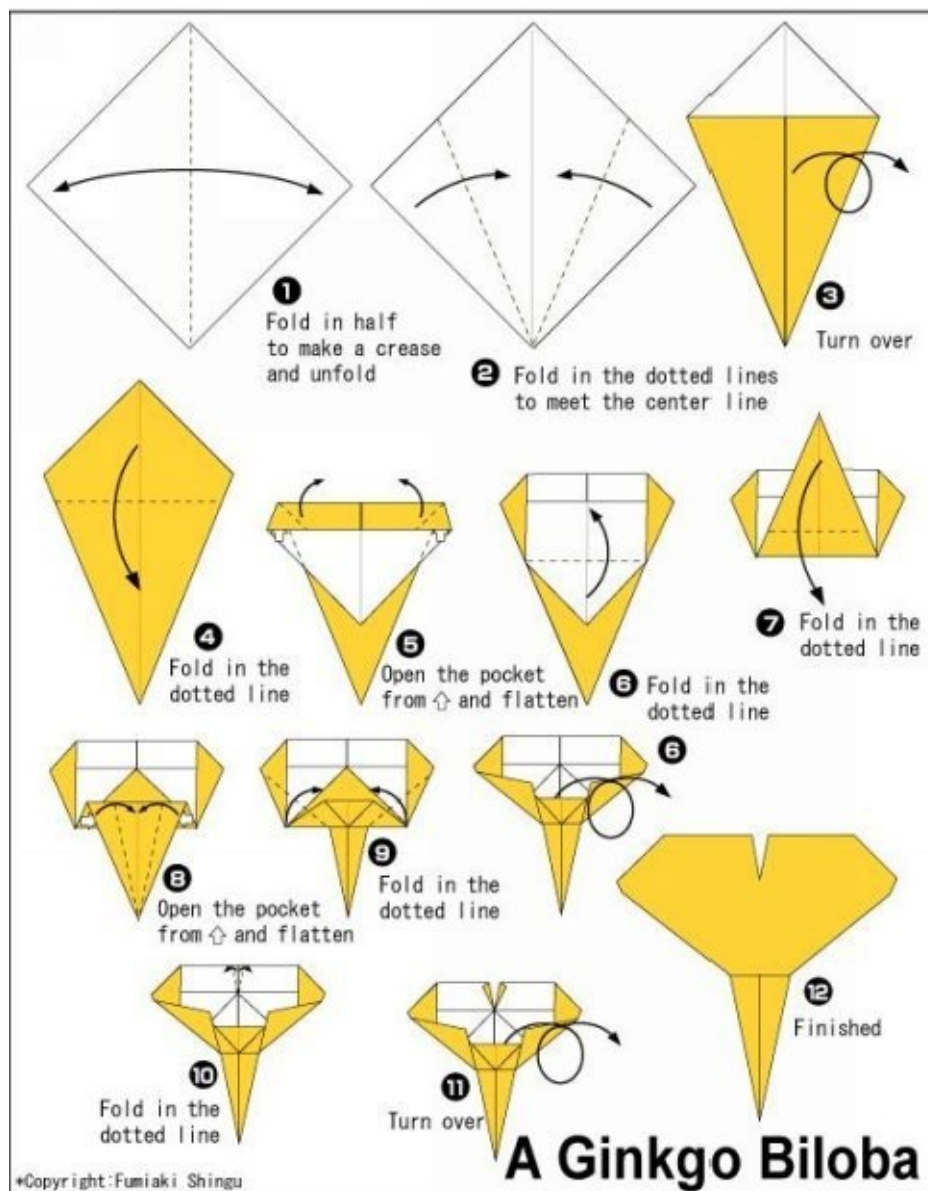
Can you believe it? We are already to our last project! we are going to follow many of the folds and techniques we have been working on throughout all of our different projects. In this particular project, there will just be more of them.



**Tip: Since there are more steps in this project, it will help greatly if you focus on making the best creases and folds possible.*

Before beginning, make sure you have chosen a flat surface and placed your square piece of Kami paper, face-down in a diamond shape. First, fold your paper perfectly in half, make a crease and then unfold it. Next, take the two outer corners and fold them into meet the center fold you just made in step one. This should make your paper look like an ice cream cone or an elongated kite. Now, flip your paper over and pick the spot just under where there are two points in your paper (one on the left side and one on the right side). Now, fold this piece in a backward motion, towards your body. Now, you should see, after folding it backward, that there is a white triangle. Above this white triangle, there are two small flaps. Take these two flaps and pull them up and outward. You will see, the more you pull, that it forms a square with a triangle at the bottom. Fold here. Now, you will need to do a Crimp Fold. To do this, grab the bottom point of your paper and fold it up. You will have just folded a triangle on top of the rest of the paper. Now, choose a place near the bottom of this triangle and make a fold downward. You have now completed the crimp fold! Next, at the very top of your piece, you will see two flaps along the center crease you made in step one. Take these two flaps and fold them both out to make two

tiny triangles. Finally, flip over your paper and you're finished!



Conclusion

Congratulations! You have now learned about many of the basic folds and techniques of Origami, tools you can use to help with your Origami skills, tips and tricks to make your Origami experience easier. You have also successfully completed twenty, full Origami projects on your own! Great work! Since page one you have come so far! You can now go forward with this valuable knowledge and build on your Origami art skills! Good luck and don't forget to keep those folds crisp!

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QUILTING FOR BEGINNERS

THE ULTIMATE QUILTING CRASH COURSE:
Learn Basic Quilting Techniques Master The Art
Of Quilting And Start Creating Amazing
Designs! 10 Modern Quilt Patterns And Ideas



Roberta Mayas

QUILTING FOR BEGINNERS

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**LEARN BASIC QUILTING TECHNIQUES MASTER THE ART OF
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10 MODERN QUILT PATTERNS AND IDEAS

Book Description

Are you ever jealous of those beautiful quilts your aunt or grandmother used to make? Were you ever interested in making your own but were unsure of how to begin? Are you looking to start a new, interesting hobby? If the answer to any of these questions is “yes,” then this is the book for you! This book will assist in teaching, educating and helping you learn not only the basics of quilting but also how to put together and complete your very own quilting projects! In the past, you may have found quilting old fashioned, difficult to learn and classes hard to follow. Rest assured, with this book there are step-by-step instructions, pictures and full explanations to help you easily follow and understand quilting. There is no complicated video to follow and no teacher to keep up with. You can work at your own pace, practice as many times as you want and learn to quilt step-by-step. This book includes:

- An introduction to quilting

- Quilting jargon and terms

- An overview and information on the tools you will need to begin quilting

- Step-by-step instructions

- Full, in depth explanations

- Color pictures

- 10 quilting patterns and ideas

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Introduction

Welcome to the wonderful world of quilting! To many, quilting may seem like an obscure, outdated and difficult hobby. For the majority of people, it is something we have seen our aunts or grandmothers do in their spare time and something we have maybe envied from afar, yet never taken the time to pick up ourselves. Quilting also seems to be quite a foreign concept and most cannot even fathom how to begin, let alone how to learn the unique hobby.

However, with this book, you can rest easy! This book will provide you with the very basics of quilting. Starting with the tools and any equipment you will need. It will then explain the basics of the hobby as well as how to practice and master the fundamentals. From there, it will showcase ten different quilting projects with step-by-step instructions and explanations. These examples and ideas will be easy to follow, especially with the color pictures! In the past, you may have attempted to learn by following videos or taking a class. This requires you to keep up with your teacher or a video. With this book, there will be no one to keep up with! You can go at your own speed, practice as many times as you need, go back to review and take your own time to learn how to quilt. There is no stress involved! Let's get started!

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Chapter 1 -Quilting Basics

When you think of quilting, you may think of your grandmother, your aunt or someone in your family, sitting around the house on holidays and weekends practicing their hobby at a leisurely pace. Chances are, you were quite taken by the colorful, intricate patterns and interesting designs your family member could make. Maybe you even received one of these color creations as a Christmas or birthday gift a time or two! However, you always wondered just how they did it and how they made it look so easy.

One story of quilting most aren't familiar with however is how they were used on the Underground Railroad in pre and post civil war era. The quilts are rumoured to have been left out to send secret coded messages to those using the Underground Railroad to escape to freedom. For example, some say pictures on quilts represented specific messages the quilter would be trying to send to those navigating through the Underground Railroad system. Some quilts could tell runaway slaves if a specific house was safe or if they should continue to move on and use caution.

Whether you are familiar with both of these, one or none, it is clear quilting has a fascinating history and has always been a unique and interesting hobby to learn. As with learning any new hobby or trade, there are struggles. Your grandmother or aunt probably found their first patterns difficult and confusing. The quilters on the Underground Railroad probably found their task daunting not only because they had to sew specific, difficult patterns but because they also had to get it perfectly right. In the beginning, it is clear, we all struggle.

With this book, however, you are sure to have a more relaxed, stress-free experience because of the step-by-step process and careful explanations. If you have always dreamt of creating beautiful quilting patterns, just like your family members before you, or maybe like those brave seamstresses along the Underground Railroad, then let's begin!

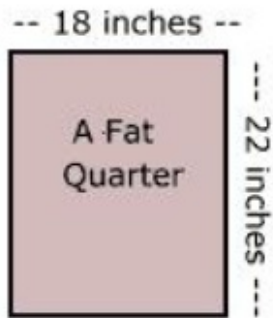
Quilting Fundamentals: Quilting Jargon

When first learning something new or beginning a new hobby, it is essential to learn the very basics. In this instance, it is important to learn the jargon or “language” that will be thrown around when explaining how to quilt. Understanding these terms will make your level of understanding so much higher as well as make your quilting experience much more enjoyable.

First, is **backing**. This refers to the material that will make up the back of the quilt, or the side without a specific pattern.

Second, we have **batting**. This means the material you put in between the front and the **backing** of the quilt to make the quilt have more substance or if you are looking to use your quilt to actually keep warm. In Lehman’s terms, it is whatever material you have chosen to put in the middle of your quilt. For this material, you can choose cotton, silk or polyester.

Third, we have ***Fat-Quarter***. This term refers to a piece of fabric that is made when you cut a yard of fabric in half and then cut in half again, but this time, vertically. This piece of fabric will be 18” by 22”.



Next, there is ***seam allowance***. This means the 1/4” of fabric to the right of a seam. In quilting, it usually measures at 1/4” although, there are times where it could be different. All quilts in your upcoming projects will use this seam allowance

Finally, we have ***templates***. This will be an important term and one that will come up a few times in your future projects. A template is a shape cut from plastic, cardboard, paper or sometimes even fabric. A template is used as an outline to make other, multiple, identical shapes exactly like it. You can also use a template to trace the shape onto fabric, paper or any other type of material. You will find templates highly useful when quilting.

Quilting Tools: What do you need?

First and foremost, it is important to choose the correct fabric. As this material is the entire basis for what you will be making, it is an important aspect. When choosing fabric, 100% cotton is highly recommended. This is because it holds up well throughout any wear and tear after the quilt is finished as well as handling any moisture well. It creases much more easily and is found to be much more durable compared to blends. In the future, as your skills improve, you may find that you want to use an assortment of different fabrics. Many experienced quilters do this. However, as previously stated, this will come with time and more experience.



Another thing to consider when selecting and purchasing fabric is to mull over the pattern you're thinking of purchasing. If you choose a large, complex piece of fabric and then choose a pattern where the fabric needs to be cut into small pieces, you will lose the original pattern you initially liked so much. Be careful with the scale of the fabric you are choosing.

Your second important tool when quilting is thread. This is obviously vital for many reasons. This is the material that is going to hold your quilt together as well as determine how easy it will be to sew your quilt together. You want to choose the best possible thread to have the best quilting experience as well as to make the very best quilt you possibly can. When choosing fabric, it is highly recommended to purchase cotton covered-polyester thread. Cheap polyester threads should be avoided because these can actually cut through the fibers of your fabric rather than holding them together.

Another thing to consider is the color of thread you are going to use while quilting. If you're making a brightly colored quilt, white or off-white thread colors would probably be best. If you're making a darker colored quilt, then a gray thread is strongly suggested.

Next, it is important to think about what is referred to as "batting." Batting is essentially what material will go inside your quilt. It is first important to think about who will be using this quilt. If the quilt is for children, you will want the material inside to be sturdy and durable. If the quilt is just a decoration, you could use a thinner batting such as silk. On the other hand, if you are making the quilt for the purpose of, for example, to stay warm during the winter, then cotton batting would be a good idea since it is so warm.

Now, after discussing the materials you may need for quilting, let's move to tools you may want to choose. The first and probably most obvious is the needle. All needles are numbered 1-12. For quilting, numbers 7-12 are recommended. If you are using a sewing machine, look to the manual for suggestions.

Then, you will want to consider shears and scissors. Shears are better for cutting longer, bigger pieces of fabric and are also much sharper. Scissors can be used for cutting or trimming smaller pieces of material. You may find you want both, but regardless, make sure when purchasing these items ensure whatever type you buy are quite sharp and of good quality. You don't want to ruin fabric or even your quilt with cheap, dull cutting tools.

Lastly, other tools you may want to consider are thimbles, rulers, templates, safety pins and pins. If you are planning to hand-sew your quilts, a thimble may be a good idea, especially if you are also new to sewing. When considering the latter two, always make sure they are not too wide to avoid making big holes in your fabric.

Chapter 2 -The Fundamentals of Quilting

Five basic quilting projects to get you started

You are now ready to begin your very first quilting project! In this chapter, we will cover five basic quilting projects that have simple and easy steps.

Quilting Project #1:Classes T-shirt Quilt

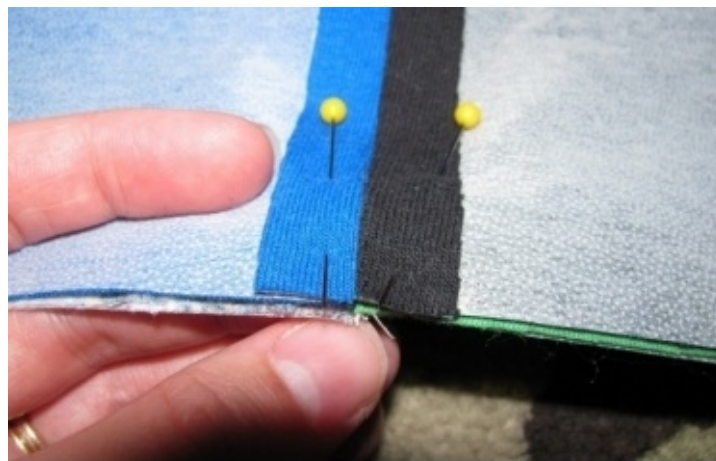
Our very first quilting project may be one you have seen before or are familiar with! The T-shirt quilt is quite popular and also a good project to being with. To prepare for this project, you will want to set aside maybe a weekend or a full day to put together and complete your quilt. You will first want to choose which t-shirts you want to use for your quilt. Make sure you choose t-shirts that offer enough fabric to make the design look consistent. When choosing t-shirts, you also need to take into consideration how large you want your quilt to be. For example, if you have 9 t-shirts, you will want to pattern your t-shirts in a 3x3 fashion. A good place to start may be 9-15 t-shirts. Anything more than this will create more work and it may be more than you bargained for. You now want to cut your t-shirts down so they can fit into the pattern. A good size to cut them into is 15"x15". You will also want to prepare the fabric you desire for the back of the quilt, your batting, the needle and the thread of your choice and finally, interfacing material to put on the back of each t-shirt.

Once your t-shirts are all cut out, you now want to cut the interfacing material down to perfectly match to the size of each individual square of t-shirt. Ensure each piece of interfacing material as well as each square of t-shirt is cut to match exactly.

Now, put each of your t-shirts into a pattern by laying them out just as you want them in the quilt. Now, you can begin to sew each t-shirt together. Make sure you are sewing the t-shirts in one row together but not sewing all of the different rows together yet.



Next, once all of your t-shirts are sewn together, into neat rows, you can begin to sew the rows together. To make this process easier and to ensure the neatness of your quilt's pattern, you can pin the rows together.



Now, once your t-shirts are all sewn together, you are nearly finished! You now want to put in any batting that you so choose and sew on the other side of the quilt. To do this, measure out the fabric for the other side. You can do this by laying the material under your finished t-shirts and cutting the latter material two inches larger than your t-shirt side of the quilt. Once this is finished, you can cut the material down to fit perfectly and then pin the two sides together to ensure even sewing.



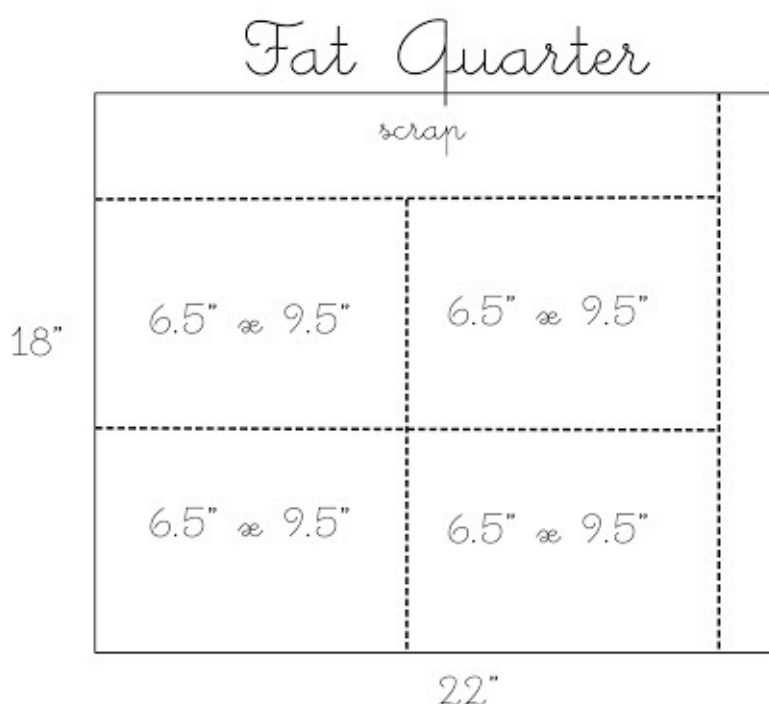
Finally, sew the two sides together and you're finished! Congratulations! You have just finished your first quilting project!



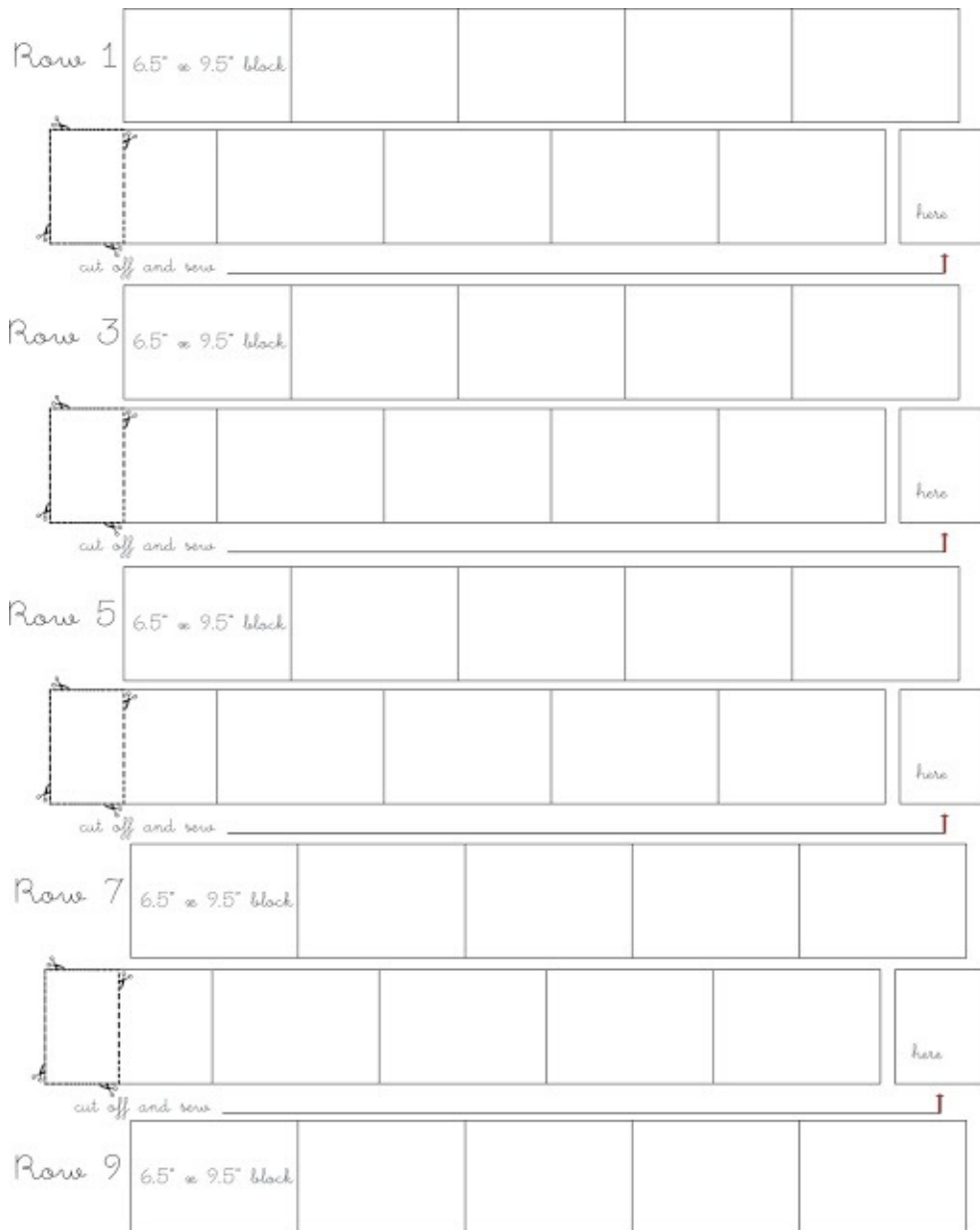
Quilting Project #2

Our second project is a Basic Brick Fat Quarter Quilt. Basically, you will be taking different colored and patterned squares or fabric and sewing them together to make a colorful, warm quilt! For this quilting project, you will need 12 quarters (to be explained in the near future), 100% cotton for the batting and the scissors, shears, needle and thread of your choice! To give you a general sense, you will need about 4-5 hours to complete this quilting project.

To start, cut your fabric into the 12 quarters. Your quarters should be 18" by 22", with four 6.5" by 9.5" squares. This, in the end, will give you 48 squares. Although you will only need 45 squares for the quilt overall, you can use the three other squares for something else in the future.



Once you have your squares cut, you will want to begin sewing them together. You want to envision sewing them together as if you are sewing together a brick wall. Every odd row will be 5 blocks sewn together where as the even rows will have four blocks sewn together, with the fifth block cut in half and sewn to each end.



After sewing all of your squares together in brick formation, you then want to add the batting and sew the completed side of the quilt to the other half. Usually, you would make the other side one solid color. You have now finished your second project!

Great job!

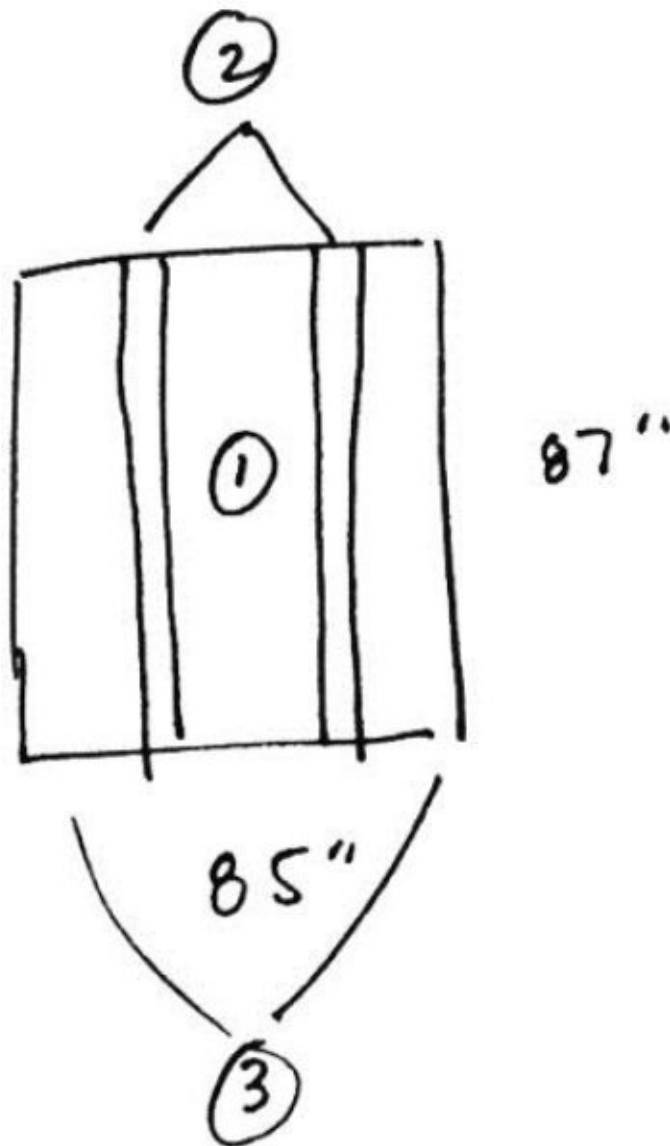
Quilting Project #3: Queen Size Panel Quilt



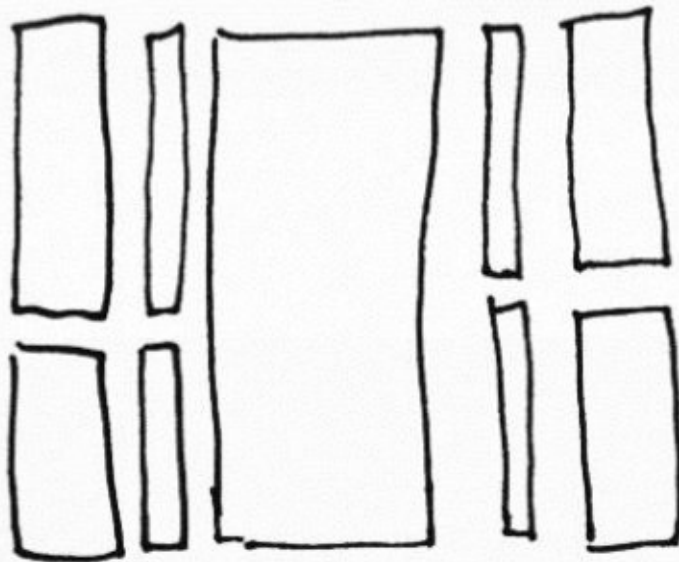
Onto your third quilting project! In this project, you will need about a weekend's worth of time. This is because, if you make the quilt based on the instructions (recommended) then your quilt will be nearly the standard size of a Queen size bed. For your fabric, you will need three different colors or patterns (see left picture). Your center piece should measure out at 2.5 yards.

For the two, long rectangular side pieces of fabric, they should measure half a yard. Finally, for the outside fabric, you want it to measure 2 yards. You will also need whatever type of batting you'd like as well as scissors, shears, a needle and thread. Since this project is larger, you may prefer to use a sewing machine. This will cut down the time spent on the project since it is quite large. Or, you can choose to make the quilt itself smaller! Use your own best discretion.

Now, you want to cut the fabric down a bit to make it easier to work with. Leave the center piece as is. Cut the two long, skinny pieces into four separate rectangles. Each square should measure about 4.5 by 44". Finally, cut the outside rectangle into smaller pieces measuring 18".



Sew these pieces together, add whatever batting you'd like and sew on the other side of the quilt. Since the completed side of the quilt is so colorful and busy, you may want to choose a solid color but this decision is completely your own!



Quilting Project #4: Lasagna Quilt

This quilting project is a fun one! Although there may be food in the name, don't worry, it won't actually resemble lasagna! For this project, select what looks like a "jelly roll" of fabric. This fabric should come in a roll and should come with at least 42 strips of fabric that measure 2.5 inches across. You will want another .5 yard of fabric for binding (or putting together the two sides of the quilt), so you can either purchase another .5 yards of fabric or set aside a minimum of 5 of your "jelly roll" strips. Finally, you will need 5 yards of fabric for the back of your quilt. This quilt can be finished in about 4 hours so set aside an evening or afternoon to complete it!



To begin, lay out all of your strips of fabric as you want them to look on your finished quilt.





Next, you want to take the right triangle side of one strip and sew it to the next right triangle side of the strip. Make sure to put two different colors or patterns together so that the selection and overall design of the quilt look random (unless, of course, you want the same colors together). Now, when all of your strips are sewn together, iron the flappy corners down. Your strips should now measure 1600". Take 18" off one end of each strip that you have just sewn. This will help offset any sloppy seams as you sew. Now, you're ready to sew! Sew your strips together until it measures 44"x65". Finally, add whatever batting you have chosen and sew on the back of the quilt. You have now finished your third quilting project! Way to go!

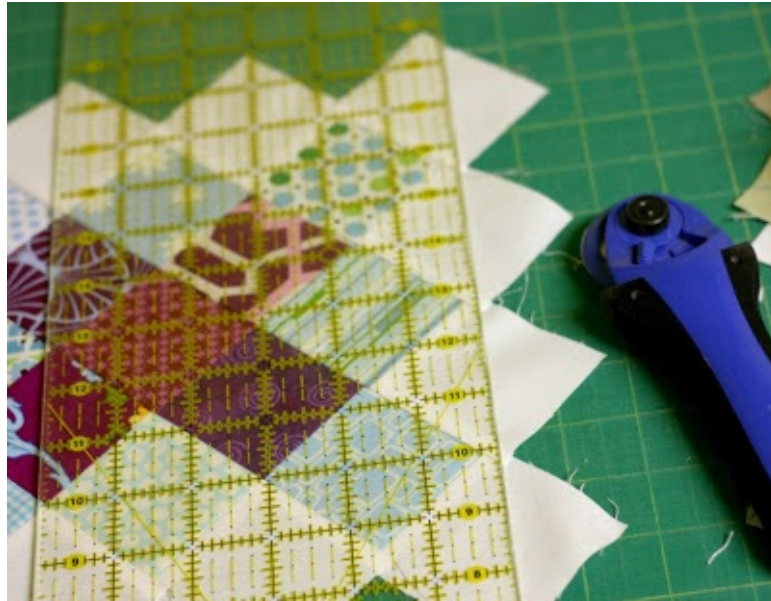
Quilting Project #5: Block Quilt

This is the fifth and final quilting project of this chapter! In this project, you will want to use all the scrap material you have laying around. After completing the last four projects, you should have plenty! If you choose to follow this tutorial exactly, your quilt will measure 50"x60" after completion. You will need to choose what fabric you will want for the back of the quilt as well as a needle, thread and whatever batting you'd prefer.



You will be making several different “blocks” to make up the overall quilt. For one single “block” you will want 12 2.5” squares of fabric for whatever background color you choose. White, grey or a solid, neutral color is suggested. You will then need 8 2.5” squares of fabric for the outer ring of the “block.” These should be patterned or all the same color. Lastly, you will need 5 2.5” squares of fabric for the inner core of your “block.” These squares should also be patterned. For this quilt, you will want enough fabric squares for 20 “blocks.”

To begin making your quilt, you want to lay out your squares in the block pattern and sew them together.



Next, after your squares are sewn together into a block formation, you need to trim the outside edges. So, at this point, the outside edges are pointed. You want to cut the outside corners off so the entire block makes a perfect square.

Cut along the straight edge

You now want to continue by sewing all the “blocks” together. When you are finished with this, carefully cut down the fabric you’re going to use for the back side, pin the two sides together and then sew the two sides together. Don’t forget to put in the batting right before you’re finished sewing the two sides together! You have now completed five quilting projects as well as this chapter! Way to go!

Chapter 3: Five more Quilting Projects

Five quilting project that will add a bit of a challenge

This chapter offers five more quilting projects at, of course, the beginner level. At this point, you have already learned the basics of quilting as well as created five projects all on your own! Great work! Continue reading to learn even more and create even more fun quilts!

Quilting Project #6: Color Patchwork Quilt

Welcome to the second half of your quilting projects! For this project, you will need to choose four different colors for your quilt pattern. These colors should technically all be the same but they should be four different variations. For example, navy blue, sky blue, indigo and baby blue. You will want to rank these color variations into your main color, second color, third color and fourth color. You will want 83 squares of your main color, 40 squares of your second color and 21 squares each of your third and fourth colors. Each square should be exactly 6". You will also want to select the batting, needle, thread and fabric for the backing of your quilt.



Now, to get started, lay all of your squares out as you want them in your finished quilt. It is suggested to do a layout of 15 rows by 11 columns and this will take 165 squares total. When you have all the squares laid out like you want them in the completed quilt, stack them up by row in order from left to right. This should give you 15 stacks of squares containing 11 squares each. You can now begin sewing your squares together!



After all of your squares are sewn together, you now want to work on the batting and backing of the quilt. To make the back, cut whatever fabric you have chosen about 5" wider than the finished side. Lay the two sides out together. You can now cut down the back to match with the front perfectly. Once both are cut to match, pin them together and sew! If you choose to add batting, put it inside right before sewing up the last bit of the two sides of fabric. You are now finished!

Quilting Project #7:Pinwheel Quilt

For our seventh project, we will be making a pinwheel quilt, so you will need to choose two different colors of fabric. You will also want to select the needle, thread, batting and backing of your choice.



Make Four Half Square Triangle Units



Arrange Units As
Shown Above and
Sew Into Two Rows



Sew the Rows
Together to Finish
The Pinwheel Block

To begin, we will be making ten 6" block pinwheel designs. To do this, you will need to cut out 3" half square triangles from each of your fabric colors. You will need to cut out 40 half square triangles for each fabric color, so 80 triangles in all. Start by taking two triangles of the opposite color and first pinning them together. You will want to pin together two triangles of the opposite color that will then make a square. You need four squares to make one of your ten blocks. When you have all of your smaller squares sown together, put them together in groups of four to make the blocks. Then pin these together and sew them! After sewing, you will have ten blocks!



Now, you want to sew together all of your blocks into one mass, thus completing the front part of your quilt. Finally, to finish, you want to sew on the backing and also put in whatever batting you have chosen.

Quilting Project #8: Triangle Quilt



Welcome to your 8th quilting project! You will need three different fabric colors or patterns. If you would like to use patterns, it is suggested that you use two different patterns and a solid color fabric. You will also need to select the needle, batting and backing of your choice.

Let's begin! First, you will need to cut your fabrics into acute triangles of all the same, identical size. You will want to cut these triangles with a 2" base. You will need at least 120 of these triangles and you should have 60 triangles of your main (or solid) color fabric and 30 triangles each of your other patterned or colored fabric. In the end, the quilt will be 6x20.

Once you have all of your triangles cut out, you will want to lay them out in groups of three (see right). Make sure, as you are laying out your triangles into the pattern that you are spacing the colors apart correctly. You don't want two triangles of the same color touching, this will ruin the pattern of your quilt. Now, you will want to overlap them slightly, pin and sew them together. Then, once all of your triangles are sewn into groups of three, being sewing two groups of three together to make groups of six.



Finally, once you have completed this task, the front of your quilt is finished! You can now add the batting and backing. Project eight is now complete!

Quilting Project #9: Polka Dot Quilt



Here in the 9th project, we will be getting a little bit more challenging while still sticking to the promised beginner level. This project also differs from the others in that you will now need to create and use two simple templates to complete this quilt. The first being a quarter circle shape and the second being the paper material around the quarter circle template. You will make these two templates out of one piece of paper.



You could also make these templates out of some type of sturdier material if you so choose. For example, you could use cardboard or plastic. This quilt will be made from twenty different blocks. That means, you will want 80 of the shapes shown to the left. Each block will look like the picture to the right. Once you have these shapes cut out, you will want

to conjoin the odd shape to the quarter circle shape. To do this, You need to pin the two together and then sew. This can be done by taking the point of the odd shape and pinning it to the center of the quarter circle. Now, you will want to round the edges of the odd shapes to form around the other shape. As you do this, make sure you are pinning it down to avoid any sloppiness of confusion. After pinning, you can then sew!



Your shaped should not be four different squares. These four smaller squares will make up one of twenty blocks. Next, you will need to sew these squares together to make the block. Now, you can continue to make the other nineteen squares. When the 19 squares are finished, you can sew them together and then the front of your quilt is finished! Simply add the batting and the backing and your 9th quilt project is finished!



Quilting Project #10: Zig-Zag Quilt

Welcome to your very last quilting project! Way to go! You have come so far, learned so many things and created so many unique quilts since you first started! For your last project, we will be making a colorful zig-zag quilt! For this project, you will need a bit longer as it is more time consuming but probably no more than a weekend. Although this quilt will be at the same beginner level as the rest, you may find this one to be more difficult, or the most difficult. That's okay! This last project is meant to be a bit more challenging but not *too* challenging. You should still have no problem with it and as with all the other projects, this one will be explained step-by-step and with the help of pictures. Here we go!



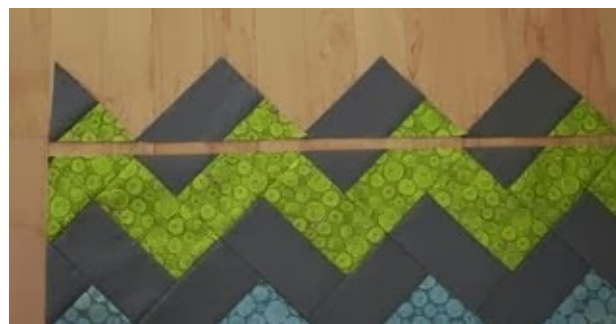
Before you start sewing, you will want to select ten different colors or patterns of fabric. One of these, however, should be a solid color. You will also want to choose a needle, thread, batting and backing for your quilt.



Now, you can begin! First, cut two 3" strips from 9 of the fabrics you have chosen. Next, cut 18 3" strips from the solid color of fabric that you have selected (see right). Now, sew your strips by twos. For example, take one patterned strip and sew it to the solid color strip. Use a 1/4" seam here. Once you have sown your strips together into couples, cut them into 5.5" rectangles. Each strip should give you seven rectangles. Now, lay out your two strips into a zig-zag pattern. Make sure you are only using one patterned fabric and the solid fabric at this point. Keep laying out this pattern with all of your different fabrics until you have used them all! Now, you can begin to sew it all together! Begin sewing at the top right corner of your laid-out pattern.



When you have sown your entire pattern together, use a rotary cutter to make a clean edge on the top and bottom of the front of your quilt. Your quilt should measure 46"x61" when it is completed! Now, all you have to do is lay out, cut out and sew on the backing. Don't forget to put in any batting if you so choose before you finish sewing together the two sides.

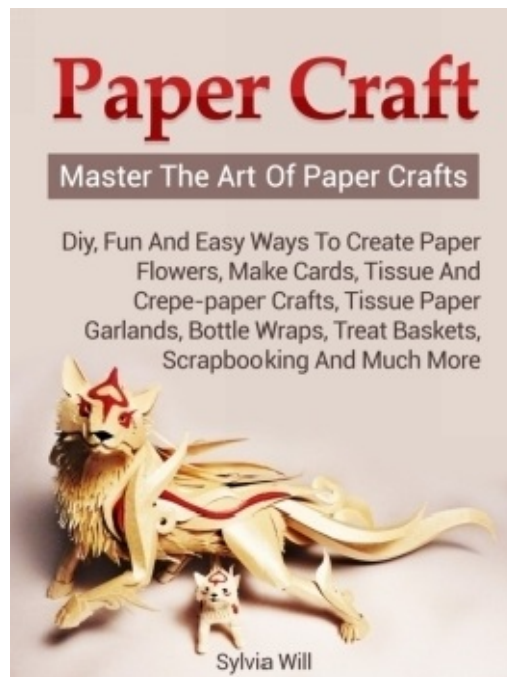


Congratulations! You have now successfully completed ten quilting projects! Way to go!

Conclusion

Great Job! Although quilting seemed like a near impossible and daunting hobby at the very beginning of this book, you have now learned so much and completed ten of your very own projects! You have come so far! In the beginning, you were worried about how to even begin. You were worried about how you could possibly learn a hobby that seemed so complex and “old-fashioned.” However, look where you are now! You have learned, with the guidance of this book, what tools you need for quilting, the basis of quilting and how to put together and complete ten different projects! You should feel extremely proud! You can now go forth, using the information you have learned to continue quilting and making projects of your own! Good luck and happy quilting!

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Introduction

There's inspiration all around us. With popular websites such as Pinterest and a wide range of DIY blogs, the ideas are endless. Learning to sew is often thought of as a thing of the past. But I can assure you that sewing is far from a lost art. In fact, learning to sew has many benefits for you and your wallet. Sewing can be a therapeutic hobby that you can do alone or with friends. Sewing can be a cost effective way to replicate things you have seen in your favorite stores but could not bring yourself to paying the price for it. Sewing can also salvage some of your favorite pieces by patching holes or repurposing old things into new conversation pieces. Who would not want something that is one of a kind? Imagine if everything you always dreamed of was right there in your closet! Learning to sew opens the door to this exciting possibility. By now, I am sure you would like to know how to get started and this book is the concise guide to sewing for beginners that will give you all of the insight you need to do just that. Sewing is simple once you learn the basics. This book will provide you with a basic supply list, outline step-by-step instructions and supply you with great tips for all your future sewing needs.

This book will walk you through a variety of topics that will keep you organized and in control of our project from start to finish. You will learn how to build your initial sewing toolkit. What supplies do you need in the very beginning to complete your first project? This book answers this question with a short list of supplies that will be sure to meet all of your first time sewing needs. The list includes suggestions for additional supplies you might like to have handy and gives a brief overview of what each tool will do to help you complete your project so you can feel confident you will only be spending money as needed until you decide that sewing is an art you will enjoy over again. This guide will provide you with suggested resources to finding a project you would like to start with. Sometimes figuring out where to start is the hard part and for some people ambition can bite us off more than we can chew. This guide will help you to make informed decisions for where to start your skills at and will open your eyes to the fact that possibilities are endless.

You will briefly learn about fabrics and how to choose during this exciting time. Knowledge of fabric is important when choosing what to work with and this guide keeps things simple and raises awareness on how to choose the best fabric for your first and future projects by posing simple but relevant questions to keep you focused on your project needs. Anything you invest your money in you want to ensure it lasts, right? This guide will give you tips on taking care of your new fabric and walk you through preparing your fabric to cut and move onto actually sewing. Making best use of the fabric you have purchased is essential and this guide should help you avoid errors during this crucial time of beginning to sew.

And what is sewing without a needle and thread? This guide not only walks you through purchasing the right needle and thread for the job at hand but it also gives you step-by-step instructions for threading your needle with great tips that every beginning sewist needs. Finally, this guide ends by giving you very detailed but brief step-by-step instructions to begin sewing whether you have decided to test the waters with hand sewing or dive right in with machine sewing. This guide provides recourses for both techniques and will guide you to the very end. Sewing is easy once you learn the basics and this book is full of great insight and useful tips from start to finish to help you successfully complete your first sewing project stress and worry free. Reading this guide is the next step in your sewing journey. Enjoy!

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Chapter 1 - Gather your Toolkit

Every job requires some type of tools or supplies. Without them, how could we get the job done? Experienced sewists will tell you your supplies are an investment and quality matters. Spending more money now will put more money in your pockets later. But do not fear, to begin your sewing journey, the supplies you will need will cost you less than \$100 dollars (and if you are a bargain shopper, less than \$50—not including your sewing machine if you chose to begin your sewing journey, might I add).

There is a long laundry list of things you can buy to enhance your sewing experience, but the list you will find in this chapter highlights exactly what you will need when starting off—the bare minimum to help you survive your trial and error stage. Any great sewing guide will tell you, you must have something to help you measure, mark, cut and press your fabric when you sew.

Precise measurements are essential to making the best use of your time and your fabric. Marking your fabric gives you exact points for precise cuts and leaves less room for error if your fabric shifts while you work. Pressing assists with folds, pleats and draping and perfects your final presentation. You don't walk into a clothing store to wrinkled garments on hangers for a reason. And last but certainly not least, sewing wouldn't be sewing without a needle and thread. So let's begin:

Tape measure

Tape measure allows you to measure three-dimensional objects and take longer measurements.



Yard Stick

A measuring tool that will give you a straight edge for accurate marking and cutting. A ruler is also acceptable.



*A seam gauge is not a necessity and is a commonly overlooked supply but is worth mentioning because it can save you loads of time and work when marking hems and seam allowances on clothing—its sliding piece works better than a ruler for some people.

Marking tool

This can be in the form of a pen, pencil, or chalk. Fabric chalk is great because it brushes right off the fabric. Water soluble pens and fabric pencils are also okay because they will easily wipe or wash out of most fabrics.



Seam ripper



Seam ripper: Makes most sewing mistakes disappear. The sharper the seam ripper the better to remove any unwanted seams from your fabric.

Shears

Shears: You should aim for clean, precise cuts and while a pair of safety scissors may work for your thin cotton blends, investing in a pair of shears is a must for anyone serious about the art of sewing. For cutting fabric, the longer the blades, the faster the job and the cleaner the cut. For cutting threads or getting into the small nooks and crannies of your fabric, a smaller pair of shears is ideal.



*Some people like to keep a rotary cutter around (not to be mistaken for a pizza cutter). It's not a necessity but it is great for cutting curves quickly and precisely—and don't forget, the sharper the blade.... Note that this tool also requires a cutting mat.

Iron and ironing board

Some sewists chose irons, others like steamers. Starting off, I suggest the iron. You don't need anything too fancy, just something with heat and steam control. If you chose the iron, find a board that fits best in your work space. They sell small boards that work just as great as your traditional ironing board. Some people will suggest a pressing cloth to protect your fabric but if you know the heat limits of your fabrics you should be okay. Delicate fabrics are where a steamer may come in handy.



Needles

For those who are starting out with a sewing machine, your machine should come with a set of needles but understand there are different needles for different weights of fabric. Your sewing machine manual should come with all of this information, should you need replacement needles. Hand sewing needles are best purchased in a variety pack so you have the right size needle for any job.



Needle threader

The more experience you have threading needles, the less you'll find this supply necessary, but for beginners the needle threader is perfect for quickly getting your thread through the eye of your needle.



Thread

Just starting off, all-purpose thread will work well for most sewing projects. Find a color that matches or compliments your fabric and build your thread collection up with each project.



Pins and pincushion

Straight pins come in different varieties. Steel pins are your best. Some come with a flat head and others with small balls at the top. They all serve the same function. Pincushions can be anything from your grandmothers' traditional mini fabric pouf to the more modern magnetic trays that will keep pins secure when not in use.



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If you are planning to wear your creation it is time **get your measurements**. Use your tape measure to **measure your bust, hips and waist** to help you choose the right sized pattern for the job. These are the three basic measurements you needed when choosing a pattern. Having someone else take your measurements will provide you with a more accurate number.

Note that your clothing size in a store may not reflect the same size for the pattern you choose. This could be flattering or downright disheartening but understand that some patterns just run a bit big or a tad small. Do not make assumptions; read the measurement requirements to be sure you are purchasing a pattern that will fit you and to ensure you are cutting out the right size from your pattern pieces.

For those who are holding off on using a pattern but would like to make something simple to practice, you can do quite a few things. Many stores offer small fabric squares of precut fabric that you buy in the small squares. Fold or cut your fabric to practice your sewing with these. For more ambitious beginners that are not ready to experiment with pattern but have something at home they would not mind trying to replicate, you can lay a simple garment you already own onto the fabric you have purchased and simply trace around it to create your pattern.

Be sure the garment you are using to trace fits you and be careful when tracing or cutting around it as not to ruin it. Also, trace about an inch out around the item you are tracing. We will get more into the reason why in coming chapters so just hold tight.

As mentioned in the introduction, the internet is a wealth of resources. Simple patterns are available for you to download and print yourself from your computer. Figure out what you want to make and it is almost guaranteed that someone else is trying to do the same thing themselves and has figured out a simple way to assemble it with minimal fabric, sewing skills and supplies.

Have you decided what you would like to make yet?

Chapter 3 - Choosing your Fabric

Choosing your fabric might just be the most fun part of sewing. Know that there are many types of fabrics and not everything works for every purpose. Knowing and understanding what fabrics work best for the project you are working on will help you to narrow down your choices when choosing the fabric you want. If you are anything like I was in the beginning, “if it’s pretty I’m getting it”, without any concern for if it will work for the project. Please don’t make the same mistakes I did by buying fabrics without making informed decisions about my fabric choices. We will get more into how you can find the right fabric in this chapter.

There are four types of fibers: natural, synthetic, man-made, and blends. Natural fibers come from natural sources such as wool, silk and cotton. Synthetic fibers are chemically produced such as nylon, spandex, and polyester. Man-made fibers use natural materials like acrylic and rayon to produce. And blends come from multiple sources. Fabrics you will more than likely choose from as you learn to sew are cotton, rayon, knits, wool, silk, denim, satin, flannel, nylon, polyester, spandex and linen. And there are many different variations. When starting a project with a pattern, the designer has already suggested fabrics that will work best. Trust that the designer has figured out already through trial and error or basic sewing knowledge, what fabrics will work best. Blogs and other internet sources often suggest appropriate fabrics as well. In the beginning stages of your sewing, cotton will be your best friend. It is easy to work with and leaves more room for errors than other fabrics would. The added bonus is that cotton is generally less expensive.

When fabric shopping, generally fabrics are separated throughout the store by fiber type. If something catches your eye, you can figure out what it is made of by reading the top of the bolt. There it will tell you everything you need to know about this fabric from its fiber content, how to care for it, to its width (which is important when using a pattern—this determines how much fabric you need to buy to lay your pattern pieces out as shown in the pattern instructions).

As mentioned above, how do you know what fabrics to choose when it has not been suggested for you? Think about how the fabric feels and ask yourself, would I wear this? Would this be good in this weather, can this hold up for what I need it to do, will this drape or droop? Will it withstand a few washes and still look the same? How will I need to care for this? Gentle cycle or dry clean only? I know—so many questions that need answers. Finding the right fabric is like finding the right shoes—is it appropriate of the occasion, comfortable, durable? The best way to answer a lot of these questions is to look at the tags on the inside of some of your favorite garments and goods in your home that are made of fabric. This will help guide you when you are on the hunt for your next piece of fabric.

Understand that fabrics like silk require more skill and precision when sewing, not to mention are expensive and as a beginner shouldn’t be your first choice of fabric to experiment with. Starting off with a light or medium-weight cotton or cotton blend is your best starting point because it is less expensive, easy to work with, and as an added bonus, generally has more options for prints and colors. Know that print matters for certain things. Certain patterns make assembling projects more difficult because you have to match the lines and shapes in the patterns to what you are sewing. As beginners we probably are not there yet. Keep it simple and also think of the big picture.

Now that you know what questions to ask yourself while out on your next fabric shopping trip, keep these themes in mind as you find something that will work for your first sewing project. Your craft store employees can also suggest good fabrics for you. Tell them what you are looking to make and show them the fabric choices you have picked out. Finding fabric should be painless and fun. Just make informed decisions and as a beginner, keep your expenses to a minimum. You can even practice on old pieces of fabric you have around the house like old clothing that is falling apart, you don’t wear, or haven’t gotten around to donating yet.

Chapter 4 - Prepping your Fabric

Now that you know what you are making and you have purchased your fabric, it is time to get started preparing your fabric to sew. In the toolkit chapter, we discussed why certain tools are needed. Well, let us begin to put that knowledge into action. Some sewists like to prep their fabric by washing it, especially if you are using fabrics that can potentially shrink. If you do not plan on wearing your creation or care if the fabric shrinks, washing your fabric may not be a top priority for you, but it is highly suggested.

Care for your new fabric the way you would anything you already own of that similar fabric. After washing and drying it, it is best to break out your iron so you can get a crisp fold and lay to before you begin cutting. Care for the fabric when ironing it the same way you would things you already own. Once your fabric is completely ironed (or steamed) lay it out on your work space.



For patterns, pay special attention to the direction the fabric is folded in. Your pattern instructions will tell you exactly what to do. Cut out the pattern pieces that are called for (also indicated on the instruction paper). Some people will choose to keep the original pattern intact in case they plan to use the pattern for someone else or in the case of garments or the user foresees drastic weight loss or gain in their future. In terms of garments, for the purpose of this book and as beginners, let's keep it simply—we have chosen a pattern that fits who we are right now.

Once your pattern pieces are laid out on your fabric, it is time to pin and mark your fabric. Use your straight pins to secure the pattern pieces to your fabric. Use as many or as little pins as you need to keep the pattern pieces from shifting as you lift the fabric to cut or move it. Certain fabrics need more pinning than others but this part is essential to getting your pieces the correct size. Some people choose to mark and pin their fabric extensively to ensure accuracy. It is best to place your pins horizontally. When sewing, it makes it easier to remove the pins as you go along.

If you are not using a pattern, you can trace what you are trying to duplicate or freehand draw it. Mark your fabric using one of the marking tools listed in the toolkit chapter. Remember that if you are not using a pattern to trace about an inch out from the item you are trying to replicate. You have to allow room for seams, which we will talk more about in coming chapters. If you cut the fabric to scale with the item you are trying to sew, understand that it will be smaller once you have completed your project because you generally have to turn things inside out so the raw edges do not show.

Now it is time to cut. Depending on what you are making, you can choose to use your shears or if you purchased it for your convenience, your rotary wheel, you can use that too. Don't forget your shears need to be sharpened and clean and

if using the rotary wheel to have to place your mat underneath your fabric. Keep your lines as clean as possible and take your time while cutting. Cutting out our fabric determines a lot for the look of your finished product. A messy cutting job can mean a messy and uneven finished product. Take your time and be patient during this process. It will all be worth it in the end. Now that you understand how to prepare your fabric for cutting, get straight to it. After you have cut out your pieces, whether you are using a store bought pattern, a printable and downloadable pattern, or just cutting fabric squares of your own, you are now one step closer to completing your project. Now it is time to choose your needle and thread.

Chapter 5 - Choosing your needle and thread

Sewing can be done by hand or with a machine. Hopefully by now you have decided which method works best you and for completing your project. Some projects require both hand and machine to complete. Some people suggest learning to hand sew before you learn to machine sew, but it is up to you. Both methods have their pros and cons for new users but if you are willing to be patient and learn, than starting off on a sewing machine should not be an issue.

This guide will not lead you to buying your first sewing machine. “Bad” sewing machines so to speak do not really exist if you are buying new. Purchasing a warrantee is suggested as you would for any major appliance that you are looking to last you some time. My first sewing machine was from a garage sale and just needed to be cleaned up. The price of refurbishing broken or old sewing machines might be as much as simply buying a brand new machine but figure out what is right for you.

If you intend to grow with your machine, it is okay to buy a more expensive machine with many functions and capabilities. In the beginning you will not need to use these functions but they will come in handy the more that you sew. A simple sewing machine will work just fine and do not cost a lot depending on where you purchase it.

There are guides out that will help you to choose a machine that is right for you. For the purpose of this guide, we will assume that you have already chosen your sewing machine if you so choose to take that route as a beginner sewist. The newer the machine, the more capabilities it probably has. Please note that all machines are different but the instructions in this book provide you with general step-by-step instructions to get you started. Please use the instruction manual that comes with your sewing machine for assistance and take care with handling.

Finding the right thread and needle for your project is easy. Choosing the right thread is dependent on the project at hand. As mentioned before, all-purpose thread is generally okay for most projects. If you are using a pattern, read the back of the envelope to find out what type of thread you will need. For DIY projects, see what the suggested thread choice is.

Choose a color that compliments the fabric you are working with. Some people try to find the closest match to the primary color of their fabric. Some people chose a color they like from the fabric they have purchased to create an eye-catching contrast. Be aware that if your chose this route, your stitches (which we’ll get more into during later chapters) need to be clean, even and precise to achieve an intentional look. Once you have chosen your thread, it is time to find the perfect needle.

Choosing the right needle depends on the weight of your fabric. For the purpose of this book we will pretend the fabric you have chosen is medium weight cotton as we suggested earlier, because as beginners this is the best fabric to start with. Please be advised that the wrong needle size on a sewing machine can cause your needle to break, get stuck in your fabric, or create noticeable holes in the fabric. The wrong needle choice when hand sewing can make the sewing process very difficult by having to push harder on the needle to get it through or it might create noticeable holes in the fabric if the needle is too big.



You can test your needle by pushing it through a corner of the fabric before you thread it. If it glides right through the fabric smoothly and no holes are left behind, than you are good to go. When hand sewing, some beginner sewists choose to use thimbles, others find that they get in the way.

The purpose of a thimble is to protect your fingers when pushing your needle through your fabric. But having the right sized needle for your project can eliminate the need for this. As long as you are paying attention, being careful, and taking your time, a thimble is not a necessary starter kit tool but can certainly be helpful to prevent you from pricking yourself with the needle.

Chapter 6 - Threading your Needle

We're almost there! It is time to thread your needle. For hand sewing, you will need your thread, a needle, sheers and your needle threader. Needle threaders make this process fast, painless and simple. Without this tool, threading your needles in the beginning of your sewing journey will take some time—for some a lot of time and frustration. But in order to thread your needle, first you need to cut your thread. Grab your spool and let's begin measuring.

1. Measure the length of one side of the fabric you're trying to sew. This can be done with your thread or with your measuring tool. The less thread that you have to work with, the less chance you have of your thread getting knotted up and you having to cut it and start all over.
2. Triple the length of the thread and cut the end from the spool. Having sharp sheers will help make the threading process easier.
3. Hold your needle in one hand and slip the wire end of your needle threader through the eye of your needle. The wire part of the needle threader should separate enough to slip your thread through.
4. Pull the metal tab of your needle threader out in the direction it came from and your thread should slip right through the eye of the needle along with your thread.
5. Pull the thread through halfway and tie both ends together in a knot. Do this over again until the knot is thick enough not to slip through your fabric. Leave about half an inch of untied thread on the end. You can clip this later.

If you are using a sewing machine, getting your machine ready will become second nature with practice. It requires more steps than threading a needle but the actual threading of the needle is exactly the same. For this you will need to secure your needle into the machine.

- 1) All machines are different but typically it is as simple as loosening the screw above the pressure foot, slipping your needle in (the flat side of the needle facing the back of the machine) and securing the screw back into place.
- 2) You must wind your bobbin. Open the small door on the front of your sewing machine to reveal the bobbin case. It is a small metal piece. Remove the bobbin case from the machine and lift the lever. A plastic or metal bobbin should be inside. It should be free of thread before winding.
- 3) At the top of your machine should be a spool pin that resembles an antenna. Place your spool of thread on top of the pin. When you pull the thread from the spool, it should rotate counter clockwise.
- 4) At the top of the machine on the opposite side of the spool pin will be what is called the winding tension disk. Almost all machines have diagrams printed right on the top to machine guide you. Wind the end of the thread around your bobbin that you pulled from the bobbin case.
- 5) In front of the spool pin is what is called a bobbin pin. Place your bobbin on top of the bobbin pin and slide the bobbin pin to the right to lock it into place. You should hear it click.
- 6) Hold your thread lightly and begin to wind your bobbin by lightly pressing on your foot on the floor pedal. It should begin to wind the bobbin for you. When the bobbin is full the machine generally will stop itself.
- 7) Slide the bobbin pin back to the left and remove your bobbin. Snip the thread that should still be attached to the spool and place the bobbin back in the bobbin case. Allow some of the thread to peek out of the bobbin case before placing the bobbin case back in its chamber. You will have to lift the lever on the bobbin case to slip it back into place. When you let go of the lever, the bobbin case should be secure and you are now ready to close the door.
- 8) From the spool that is still attached to the spool pin, pull your thread in the direction the diagram at the top of the machine guides you to. The arrows should guide you around the tension disk again and for to make a U-shape around the take up lever to thread your needle. If it feels like the thread is being pulled too tight as you are trying to get the thread to reach the eye of the needle, it probably is not threaded correctly.
- 9) You can use the needle threader to thread your machine needle in the same way you would with a hand sewing needle. Once the thread is through the eye of the needle, still hold on to it lightly, then turn the wheel on the side of your sewing machine to lower your needle and raise it back up. This process will catch the thread from the bobbin chamber.
- 10) You should now see two threads, one coming up from the bottom of the machine through the pressure plate and the other thread is coming through the eye of the needle. Now your machine is threaded and ready for you to sew.

Chapter 7 - Beginning to Sew

Your fabric is prepped, marked and cut. You have the correct size needle and it is threaded and ready to go. Great! Now you finally get to assemble your project. This part takes practice and may not come out perfect the first time but just remember that at this end of this chapter you will have sewn for the first time! This is an exciting moment!

If you are hand sewing, this guide will start with you first. Take your fabric in hand and your threaded needle and decide which edge you would like to start sewing at first.

1) It is advised to start about an inch out from the seam of the fabric. The seam is the raw edge. You can mark this to use as a guide. This will allow you to follow and maintain a straight line. Use your measuring tool and marking tool of choice to create your lines on your fabric. As beginners this will show you exactly where you need to go and will make for a more even, polished finished product.

2) Stick your needle through the fabric and pull it through completely until the knot you created at the end of your thread touches the backside of the fabric. Tug gently to ensure the knot does not break through the fabric. If it does, that is okay, just tie the knot a few more times. Watch your fingers as you push the needle through. If the needle is the right size, there should not be too much pressure to push the needle through.

3) Depending on how big you want the stitch to be, bring the needle back down into the fabric and pull it all the way through again. However wide you make the stitch, be sure to stay consistent throughout. A standard stitch is about half an inch wide. You do not need to measure your stitches out, just use your best judgment.

If you are a perfectionist, you can use your marking tool to mark the stitch lengths instead of marking one straight line on your fabric before you begin. When you bring the needle all the way through, do not pull too tight. Keep the fabric flat and ensure the thread is not bunching up or knotted. Remove pins as you go. Some beginning sewists also use their pins to show the distance between stitches.

4) When you get to the end of your line, go over the stitch a few times in the same area to secure the stitch.

5) Cut the remaining threads with your shears and tie a knot to reinforce it if you would like.

6) Repeat the process until your project is complete.

When using a sewing machine, sewing a straight line is very simple. Remember that practice makes perfect and taking your time is essential. Try testing a small square of fabric first to test the stitch length and to ensure that your machine is threaded correctly and will not jam. Again, every sewing machine is different, so get to know your machine by reading the manual that comes with it and being patient as you begin to learn all of the basic features.

Understand the smaller the number of your stitch length (which can be found on the machine and stitch lengths can be changed), the closer together the stitches will be. It is good to test your sample fabric to see if the stitch will be too far apart (which can lead to holes down the road with use of your project) or too close together (which can lead to the fabric buckling, your thread jamming, and makes it harder to remove the seams if you make a mistake.)

For beginners, all you really need to know is listed in the instructions below. Almost all sewing machines have what is called a seam guide, which is essentially a measuring tool that is attached to the machine located directly beneath the pressure foot. To sew a straight line:

- 1) Place your fabric under the pressure foot. Leave about an inch between where the needle will fall and the seam of the fabric.
- 2) Align your seam with the seam guide and ensure your straight pins can easily be removed as you begin sewing (placed horizontally). If your sewing needle strikes a straight pin, it could cause your needle to break. Pay close attention to what you are doing.
- 3) Lower the pressure foot. On most machines, this is done by a small lever located on the side or the back machine.
- 4) Use the wheel to lower the needles into the fabric.
- 5) Gently put pressure onto the floor pedal and you will see your needle begin to move up and down and through the fabric. It is good practice to reverse stitch after your first few stitches. On most machines, this is done by pressing a button that will back over the stitches you have just done in order to secure them from unraveling. Read your machine's instruction manual to see if it has a reverse stitching feature.
- 6) Continue pressing the floor pedal at a slow and steady pace to allow your fabric to move forward again. There is no need to rush this part. Gently guide the fabric. Remember to remove the straight pins as you go and be sure the seam of your fabric continues to follow the seam guide. It is important to watch the seam guide and not your needle. Be sure your fabric stays flat, and the thread is not knotting up on the backside of your fabric. Once you have reached the end of your line, reverse stitch again.
- 7) Raise the pressure foot and remove your fabric. You will note that the threads are still attached. Clip them and prepare to do the same process on all other sides until your project is complete.

Examine for any holes or loose stitches and press again using your iron or steamer. Make any needed final adjustments. Wow, you have just sewn for the first time! Now you are set to show it off your creation!

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have finally completed your first sewing project. Hopefully no one got hurt in the making of this project and you are eager to try again and again until you are a master sewist. Hopefully this guide was helpful in all areas from start to finish. Hopefully this guide made your initial shopping trip stress free and gave you guidance on everything you needed to get started and successfully complete your project.

The hope is that the information listed in this guide helped you to make good decisions based on your skill level to find a pattern or project and gave you the tool for you to feel comfortable and confident as you worked from start to finish.

Hopefully the step-by-step instructions allowed you to successfully complete your first sewing project, leaving no questions unanswered and exceeding your expectations on your finished product. This guide was intended to prepare you for a long journey of success in sewing and this is just the beginning.

Most importantly, the idea was that you had fun! Everything in life becomes easier once someone gets you started. Practice makes perfect. Best of luck on your sewing journey and whatever your heart desires to create. May it be beautiful, functional and drop jaws all over town.

Enjoy your first handmade goodie and hopefully this will not be your last!

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