

How to make recycled paper

You will need:

- Two frames, one of them with a mesh covering. You can either buy a paper making kit from your local craft shop or you can make your own by following the instructions opposite.
- Two baking trays approximately 30cm x 25cm
- Plastic sheets to protect tables
- Shredded or ripped up paper or ripped up egg boxes. A paper shredder will make this easier but it is not essential. Avoid glossy paper.
- Potato masher or liquidiser
- Washing-up bowl or a large, clean cat litter tray
- Jug of water
- Sheets of blotting paper or tea towels
- 2 sponges

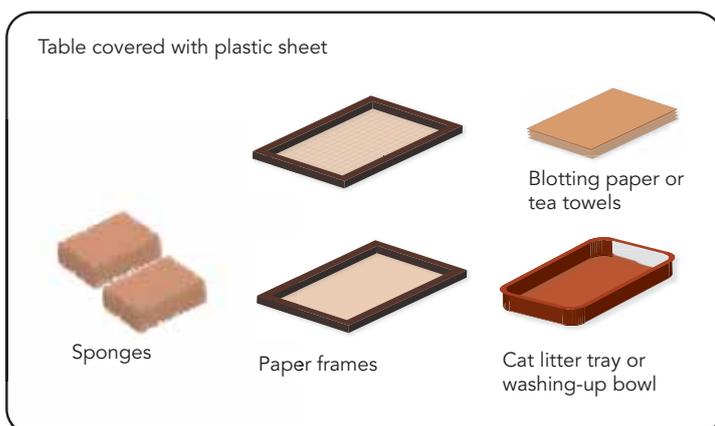
Making the frames

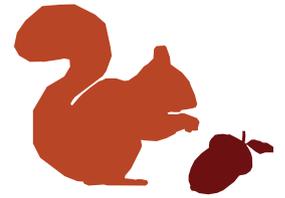
If you decide to do this yourself, you will need:

- 2 inexpensive wooden picture frames
 - A4-sized, nylon, tight weave net curtain, or tights or greenhouse shading mesh (available from garden centres)
1. Cut a piece of net curtain or mesh to fit over one of the picture frames. Staple the net to the frame so that it is stretched tightly.
 2. Protect the place where the net is attached by covering the frame with gaffer/duck tape.

Making the pulp

1. Shred or rip the paper into bits and soak these in warm water for at least a few hours. The longer you can do this for the better so, if possible, leave it to soak overnight.
2. Either half-fill the liquidiser with water, add one or two handfuls of soaked paper and blend for a few minutes, or mash the soaked paper with a potato masher until it looks like thick soup.





Making the paper

1. Set out the equipment as shown in the diagram on page 1.
2. Pour water into the bowl or tray so that it is between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Add 2 or 3 handfuls of the paper pulp. Then, use your hands to swirl the mixture together.
 - If you are going to add seeds to the paper, add them at this stage and swirl the mixture thoroughly.
3. Place a sheet of blotting paper or a tea towel on one of the baking trays.
4. Place the mesh frame on the table with the mesh facing upwards. Put the open frame on top of the mesh and hold the sides of the frames together.
5. Scoop the paper pulp into the frame by holding the frame over the tray with the front tipping downwards and moving it down and forwards into the water. Then hold the frame under the water and move it gently backwards and forwards.
 - If you are going to add a leaf to a sheet of paper, place it in the pulp where the frame is.
6. Lift the frame straight up and out of the water. Count to ten whilst you let the water drain into the tray. If you have added a leaf, do not try to move it as this will create thin and thick spots in the paper.
7. Remove the open frame and turn the mesh frame upside down onto the blotting paper or tea towel. Do not put your fingers on the mesh or you will make a hole in the new paper sheet. Press down on the mesh with a sponge to absorb the excess water. Drain the excess by squeezing the sponge back into the pulp bowl.
8. Lift and remove the frame.
9. Place a piece of blotting paper or a tea towel on top of the recycled paper ready for the next sheet.
10. Repeat steps 4 to 9 until you have a stack of recycled paper interleaved with blotting paper or tea towels.
11. Place the other baking tray on the stack and add some heavy weights, such as large books, on top to squeeze out more of the water. Mop up the water with the sponges and squeeze water back into the pulp bowl.
12. Gently separate the sheets of paper, each still on a sheet of blotting paper or tea towel and hang up to dry.
13. When dry, peel the recycled paper off the blotting paper or tea towel.