

How to Make... Junk Mail Paper



What you will need:

- Some junk mail/ old paper
- A bowl / bucket
- Scissors
- Water
- Potato masher (optional)
- Towel
- 2 x J-cloths (or simialar)
- A cup / pot for pouring
- A rolling pin or similar
- Pegs (optional)

The following tutorial will guide you through the steps to create our own handmade paper by recycling old papers - we used junk mail!

At the end of this tutorial, you will find some ideas of how to utilise your paper and pulp once it is made...



1 - Select your papers. We suggest putting some old junk mail to good use! If you have coloured paper, try separating it into colour types to create papers of different colours.

2 - Remove all staples, plastic and other non-paper items from your junk mail.

3 - Tear your paper into small pieces about 1 inch square or smaller. If you have one, utilise a paper shredder and scissors to make the pieces smaller.





4 - Once your paper is shredded to size, place it into a large bowl or bucket and cover with warm water. Leave the paper to soak for at least 1 hour, the longer the better as this will make the paper softer to mash.



5 - Once soaked, mash the paper into pulp. This can be done by tearing the paper repeatedly by hand or use a potato masher if you have one. Mash your paper pulp until it resembles the texture of porridge.

This step is usually done using a mechanical blender, we suggest not using a blender that will be used for food - but if you have an old blender to use it will speed up the process and save you some effort.

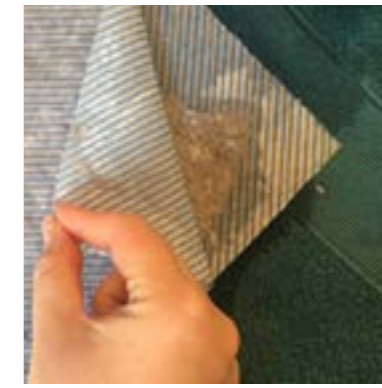


6 - Lay out a large towel onto your table. We suggest folding it over to double its thickness to catch more water. Lay one of the J-cloths (or similar sheet or fabric) on top of the towel.

The next step traditionally done uses a papermaking deckle and frame - if you enjoy this tutorial you may want to consider purchasing one - they are available online and in some craft shops. (see image above)

7 - Pour 1-2 cups of pulp across the top of the J-cloth.

8 - Use your hand to gently even out the pulp into a sheet.



9 - Place the second J-cloth on top of the pulp.

10 - Use the rolling pin (or similar smooth cylindrical object) to roll the length of the jay cloth, flattening the paper pulp and squeezing out some of the water.

11 - Carefully lift off the top J-cloth and check for thin areas and missing patches in the pulp. Take another cup of pulp and use it to fill in any gaps.



12 - Place the J-cloth back on top of the pulp and roll with the rolling pin.

13 - Carefully peel off the top J-cloth to reveal your sheet of handmade paper.



14 - Dry your paper but either laying it on a flat surface or hanging it up. We put ours by the radiator to speed up the drying. If you make many sheets, you can stack them on top of each other so long as you place a J-cloth in between each sheet.

15 - You will see the colour of your paper lighten as it dries. Wait until your paper is completely dry all over before peeling off of the J-cloth. To do this, place the sheet paper side down on the table and carefully peel the J-cloth away for the paper (rather than the other way around) this will make sure the paper does not bend or curl as the jay cloth will be as you peel it away.

Share your makes with us online...

We love to see what you make at home, so once you have completed this tutorial why not share the result on social media and tag us in:

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Ideas for Junk Mail Paper...



If you have a typewriter, your paper will fit in it! You can write a message, story or a poem onto your handmade paper.

Try sewing many sheets of your handmade paper together to create your own books. You can draw, paint or write in them!

When laying out your pulp on your jaycloth, try adding seeds to create growable seed paper to give as a gift.

Try printing onto your handmade paper, it can create some wonderful texture



Other Uses for Your Junk Mail Paper Pulp...

You don't just have to make sheets with your paper pulp...



Try using a turkey baster to trail pulp into shapes. You can write words or draw simple images



Sieve the water from your paper pulp and add seeds. You can then shape small balls of pulp into seed bombs!



Sieve the water from your pulp and add some glue or wall paper paste.

You can then mould your pulp like clay to make 3D objects!

The pots below were made by pressing pulp into old drinks bottles and yoghurt pots...

You can also make pulp from old egg boxes (they come in some great colours!)

The bowl below was made using pulp from a one blue and one yellow egg box.

