

INVASIVE PLANT PAPERMAKING



Image Credit: Make Magazine



Image Credit: Meghan Heeres



Image Credit: Megan Heeres



GATHER MATERIALS



Go outside in your backyard and find invasive species such as garlic mustard (pictured above), tree-of-heaven, Japanese stilt grass, crown vetch, mile-a-minute, barberry, honeysuckle, English ivy, and Bradford pear. When you pick, make sure it is on your own land because permits are required on public lands and through other landowners. Make sure you don't spread seeds by carefully putting it into a zipped bag. Try to gather 1- 2 lbs or a large bag full at least.

These need to dry fully before use.

Once you find all of your outdoor materials, you will need a tub/basin water, paper scraps, spoon, felt/washcloth, sponge, spatula, food processor/blender, window screen (hardware cloth), 2 frames ,duct tape, scissors, staple gun, wire cutters, foam weatherstrip tape





BUILD THE MOULD & DECKLE



Image Credit: Paper Slurry



Image Credit: Paper Slurry

Take 1 of the 2 frames that is the largest or same size(if different sizes, the smaller one should fit easily inside the larger). Place the flattest side of the frame face up Bring out your screening to attach to the frame. The more tightly woven the screen, the smoother the paper. You can multi-layer screening as well. Place the screen on top of the frame and get your wire cutters ready to cut. Cut to slightly bigger than the frame itself. Start stapling the screen to the frame securely. Make sure it is pulled tightly and there are no dips. This is the mould part of the project. Feel free to use an existing window screen if you have an old one around.

Trim off the excess screening past where you stapled. Now, take the duct tape and tape around the edges covering the screening and sharp wires.

Now, take your second frame to make the deckle. Apply foam weatherstrip tape to the flat side of this frame as well. The tape should be adhesive and the fit should be the whole way around with no cracks between the tape. This seal prevents pulp from leaking out of the deckle while your creating sheets of paper. If you choose to make this more waterproof, you can paint it with polyurethane and let dry before use.



Image Credit: Paper Slurry





SET UP YOUR STATION



Image Credit: Instructables



WWW.TINKERLAB.COM

Image
Credit: Tinkerlab

Prepare by setting up before you start papermaking. You can do this over a sink or over a basin. Have a tea towel or felt on a flat surface beside the tub. Set your mould and deckle on top of the sink or basin. Have separate bowls for soaking paper scraps ready as well depending on if you are making different colors or not. Having a dry sponge, spoon, spatula, and a blender plugged in nearby helps too.



Image Credit: DIY Network





MAKE THE PULP



Image Credit: DIY Network



Image Credit: DIY Network

Recycled paper is needed to make the pulp as well as the invasive plants. Using post consumer paper scraps or from paper egg cartons, etc. will work wonderfully. You can use newspaper, construction paper or anything you have in your recycling bin! Once you have at least 5 sheets of paper gathered, start ripping it up into shreds and small pieces. If you have a paper shredder, that works well too. Once the paper is ripped up, place in a bowl of warm water to soak. About 2 handfuls of paper scraps will make one sheet of paper.

The dried invasive plants you have can be cut up into small pieces and included in the pulp when blended. Keep the ratio to 40% or less of plants unless it is mostly fibers. They also can be added in whole form later after the mixture is blended.

After the paper has soaked for an hour or two, it is time to put it in a blender or food processor and blend! Scoop into the blender leaving excess water out. Do this for 30 seconds to a minute and make sure everything is blended together

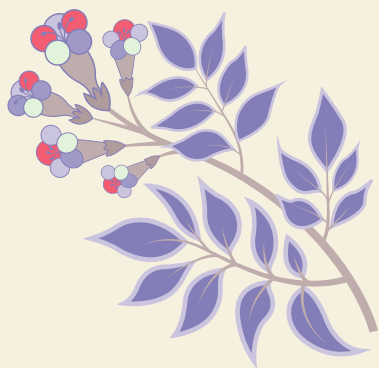
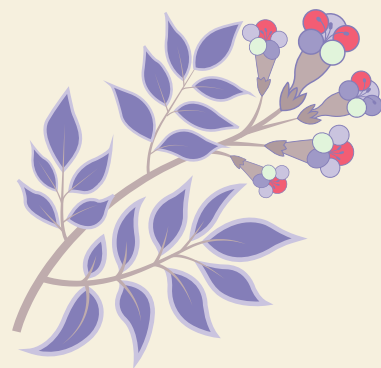


Image Credit: DIY Network





POUR THE PULP



Image Credit: DIY Network



Image Credit: DIY Network

Once you have your blended pulp, it is time to pour it into the mould and deckle. Make sure the frame with the foam is foamside down inside or ontop of frame with the screen. Use the back of a spoon or a spatula to even out the pulp. If you want a square edge, make sure the pulp touches the frame edges on all sides. If you want that weathered natural paper look, put a little less pulp in the mould and spread it out so that it doesn't hit the edge. If you have thin spots fill them in. The thicker you make it the thicker the paper will be but longer to dry. You can add additional plants and leaves at this point if you wish as well. Just make sure some of the pulp past covers it. Even out the surface as much as you can. If you wish for your paper to have fragrance you can add a few drops of essential oils to the mixture.



Image Credit: DIY Network



Image Credit: DIY Network



PRESS AND DRY



Image Credit: DIY Network



Image Credit: Morris Town Green

Move your mould and deckle to your piece of felt or cloth. Make sure there are not any wrinkles. Flip the mold and deckle completely over so that the paper that you just created is going to be face down to the cloth. Lift up the deckle itself and leave the paper and mould on the felt.

Starting in the middle and working your way out to the edges, press your sponge firmly to gather some of the water and to flatten more.

Gently separate the paper as it is face down flat on the felt, then lift the mould. The paper should now be separated from the screening.

Let this paper dry here for about 2 hours. Then you can transfer it to a drying rack for further drying. If it starts to curl, place a book or something flat with weight on top of it and the other paper you made. You can also dry them on a clothes line with clothes pins. This works best for thicker paper, but feel free to experiment.

You can repeat this whole process with many sheets of paper. Have more towels/felt pieces ready for drying initially and many can be dried on top of one another later once they went through the initial drying. Rinse excess pulp on the screen out between uses.



Image Credit: DIY Network



Image Credit: Make Zine



RESOURCES



Image Credit: Megan Heeres



<https://www.diynetwork.com/how-to/make-and-decorate/upcycling/how-to-make-paper>

<https://makezine.com/projects/papermaking-101/>

<https://diygiftworld.com/how-to-make-paper-from-invasive-plants/>

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<https://www.instructables.com/id/Homemade-Paper/>

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