

Plantable seed paper

Here's an eco-gift that keeps on giving — a perfect project for family craft time or a night with the girlfriends. Seed paper is just that — paper embedded with seeds. Use it to make cards, bookmarks, or gift boxes that can be planted, indoors or out, to grow herbs and flowers.

MATERIALS

scrap paper

magazines — not high gloss, pre-soaked non-waxed boxes, old greeting cards, paper grocery bags, flyers, unused paper napkins, phone book pages, envelopes, receipts, etc.

seeds

must be small and flat; native species are best and good choices are poppy, English daisy, evening primrose, foxglove, forget-me-not and hollyhock flowers, or basil, thyme and mint herbs.



STEP 6 Drain pulp with screen



STEP 9 Drop paper onto tea towel

EQUIPMENT

paper scraps

scissors or paper shredder

blender

measuring cup

large container — the sink works, or a plastic tub

old frame (e.g. picture frame) or scrap wood and screws to make your own — measure to fit inside the sink or large container

mesh screen like the kind used for screen doors — ask at your local hardware store; the stiffer the better

tacks or stapler

wax paper the size of your frame

glass jar or rolling pin — helps press water out

old tea towels

cardboard

newspapers

iron

stamps, ribbon, ink, and felts to decorate your gift cards, homemade coupons, etc.

DIRECTIONS

1. Tack or staple the screen tightly across the frame. Tear or shred scrap paper into small pieces (about 1-inch square; the smaller the better.) Soak these in a sink of warm water for about 30 minutes. (Different papers produce different effects so don't be shy about experimenting).
2. Half fill the blender with the paper mixture and water. Blend until smooth.
3. Add blended mixture (pulp) to the large container, about three blender loads.
4. Stir in seeds.
5. Dip the screened frame into the container and move it gently from side to side (horizontally) in the pulp mixture. Try and catch an even layer of pulp onto the screen. (Use your finger as a measuring stick. The thinner the layer the better, because it will dry faster and be easier to cut and craft!)
6. Let the water drain through as you lift the frame. Rest the frame on the side of the container. Place a wax paper sheet on top and roll a glass jar across the paper to squish all the moisture out.
7. Once the dripping has stopped, carefully place the frame — pulp side down — onto a dry tea towel.
8. Carefully lift the screen. (You might need to tap it with your fingers from the opposite side.) The paper should drop out easily onto the cloth.
Note: paper that sticks to the screen probably hasn't been drained well enough.



9. Put a tea towel on top of your seed paper sheet. Now you're ready to put another on top.
10. Once you have a stack of seed paper sheets separated by tea towels, put a piece of cardboard on top of the stack and apply pressure to squeeze out any remaining water.
11. Let the paper dry completely. You may have to leave it overnight, depending on how thick your sheets are. You may also have to swap out wet tea towels for dry ones.
12. Gently pull cloth pieces away. As a finishing step, place paper between dry tea towels and press with a hot iron. This will help make it flat and dry out the final damp spots.

Voila! Sheets of seed paper that can be made into great gifts. (Don't forget to include planting instructions and the type of seeds!)

PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

Plant paper in indoor pots, or cut into strips for a colourful flower or herb border in your garden!