



easy-to-follow paper-making instructions

Paper-making is a gentle craft. The best results come from working slowly and carefully! Good luck and, most of all, have fun!

equipment

Most of the equipment you need to start making paper is in your **Paper Nymph** Kit. There are, however, some household items you will need:

- 10 litre plastic bucket
- Felt or cotton material cut to size of foam
- Blender
- Large tub or sink
- Clean water
- Scrap paper
- Wooden press (or 2 flat boards)

step-by-step method

Making paper involves four main steps:

- 1 Making a pulp mix
- 2 Preparing a couching bed
- 3 Forming a paper sheet
- 4 Rolling and pressing

step 1 making a pulp mix

- ▶ Soak several handfuls of shredded or torn up pieces of scrap paper in a bucket of clean water overnight to soften the paper fibres.
- ▶ Place a small handful of the resulting pulp into a blender and then fill it 3/4 full with clean water. Blend on high speed for about 20-30 seconds. (If you hear the motor straining, there is too much pulp in the blender. Remove some, then add more water and continue blending until finely pulped.) To get started you will need 3/4 bucket pulp to 2 buckets of water. Pour this mixture into your tub or sink. Your *slurry* is now ready for use.

handy hint
USE VERY HOT WATER TO SPEED UP THIS PROCESS

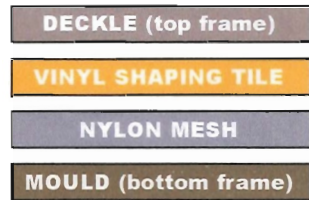
step 2 preparing a couching bed

The *couching bed* is where you place your sheets of paper in order to remove excess moisture.

- ▶ Place the foam block down on a smooth, flat surface near your tub or sink. Lay the chamois down on top of the foam block and smooth it flat, then place a felt on top of the chamois and smooth flat also.

step 3 forming a paper sheet

- ▶ Place the nylon mesh on top of the bottom frame (*mould*), then put a vinyl shaping tile on top of the mesh. Put on the top frame (*deckle*) and ensure a snug fit.

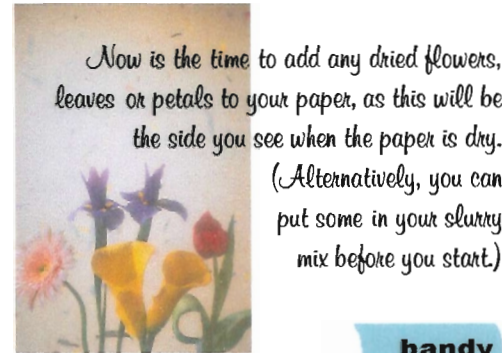


The mould and deckle sandwich is now ready to use.

- ▶ Gently agitate the slurry, using a swirling motion. While it is still moving, hold the mould and deckle sandwich firmly at the sides and dip it into the tub, edge first, until submerged, then slowly lift it up and out of the tub, keeping it flat and level (horizontal). Use a scooping motion in a continuous movement - do not stop half way or the mesh will rise.
- ▶ Shake it gently from side to side, to help the paper fibres interlock and settle.

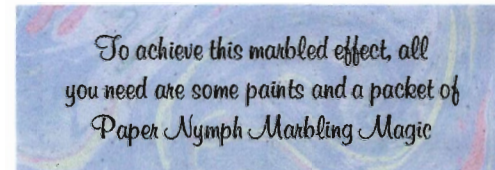


- ▶ Hold the frames above the water for a few seconds to let the water drain off, then gently tilt, lifting the deckle slightly to release any excess water. Leave to drain.
- ▶ Make sure the couching bed is prepared.
- ▶ Lift and remove the deckle and place aside.



handy hint
DON'T LIKE THE LOOK OF THAT SHEET? DUNK THE MESH BACK INTO THE SLURRY TUB AND START AGAIN!

- ▶ Lift and remove the vinyl shaping tile and place it aside. What you now have left is the sheet of paper, laying on top of the mesh sitting in the mould.
- ▶ Carefully lift the mesh by two end corners and lay it paper-side down on top of the felt on your couching bed. (Don't panic - the paper won't fall off the mesh!)



step 4 rolling and pressing

Now you can start rolling the excess water out of your sheet of paper (as well as helping to remove any air bubbles).

- ▶ Taking the roller, gently roll over the mesh from the centre out. Do this 2-3 times, pressing a little more firmly each time. Roll past the sheet edge.
- ▶ When rolled, carefully peel and lift the mesh away from the sheet of paper, which will stay attached to the felt.
- ▶ Lift the felt and paper up off the couching bed and lay flat.



You can now reassemble the mould and deckle sandwich (as per step 3), ready to make another sheet of paper. Make sure you prepare the couching bed as well, squeezing out the chamois and putting down another felt (as per step 2). Sometimes the foam block will also need a squeeze out.

handy hint
TO USE TWO PIECES OF MESH AT THE SAME TIME, LEAVE THE ONE WITH THE NEWLY FORMED PAPER TO DRAIN OVER THE TUB WHILST ROLLING THE OTHER ONE ON THE COUCHING BED.

As you finish rolling each sheet on the couching bed, lift off the felt and paper and add it to your pile (about 8-10 sheets). This is called a *post* of handmade paper. Keep the post nice and neat and remember to leave one felt aside to place on top.



Note: When the pulp gets too thin and you can see through the mesh, let the slurry settle for a few minutes then scoop some of the water off the top and add some more pulp.