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Creative Leisure: The Basics

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Would you like to send a birth announcement, a birthday card, or send off a Happy New Year's card? No more mundane store-bought greeting cards? let your creativity speak!

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1. Combining materials

It's an extremely popular art in English-speaking countries: cardmaking is the art of creating your own greeting cards. Thanks to the wide variety of available papers, you can experiment with colors and textures. What's most important? Follow your inspiration, and don't hesitate to shake up traditions!

Materials you can use : layer velum paper over metallic paper (quite chic for a wedding announcement), unique textures such as cork, gauze, corrugated cardboard (fun for a birth announcement or a birthday card)?

Special hint : always set aside materials that you find at home day to day: wrapping paper, brown kraft paper or corrugated cardboard, colorful pocket folders that your children do not use anymore in school? on the big day, no need to shop for supplies, you will already have a lot to choose from!

2. Card decorating

To design card, take your inspiration from scrapbooking techniques:

- paper-folding: create designs by overlapping and folding paper.
- Iris folding: cut out wide strips of colored paper. The results should resemble a camera shutter.
- 3D cutting.

- Pergamano: create lace shapes made of parchment paper.

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Special hints: paper punches, decorative edge scissors, beads, jewels, charms, wax seals, ribbons, colored raffia?

3. Making a good impression

Rubberstamping, the art of printing images using a rubber stamp) is a must do. It's simple: all you have to do is ink the image by pressing it on an ink pad, then pressing the stamp firmly onto paper.

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Practical Advice: Illumination

Like in medieval times, you can use the technique of illumination on your stationery:

- Copy a design using tracing paper.
- Apply yellow gouache paint on the sections you wish to turn gold, then allow to dry 15 min.
- Deposit the gold leaf (dampen it beforehand), remove the excess with a fine paintbrush and polish with a cotton cloth.
- Use gouache to paint the other areas of the design which will not be gold.

Outline the borders using a drawing pen and India ink.

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4. Refine your writing skills

It's time to practice your handwriting! In order to practice writing different style alphabets, you may use calligraphy guide sheets to help you learn: Very useful, they guide you step by step in drawing each letter. They show:

- the height of the letter: the width of the nib (or beak) used to determine the height of the letter. Ex : the height of the letter "A" is equal to three nibs.
- the ductus: are many small arrows that show the direction in which the letter should be drawn.
- Pen angle: according to the different styles, the angle of the pen relative to the paper will vary.

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Even simpler, try doodling (or scribbling): this technique used in scrapbooking involves drawing arabesques using various tools: markers, ball-point pen, reed pen, feather pen, paint, pencil, embroidery thread ... It's a snap !

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Practical Advice: The wrapping counts too!



Bring your envelopes to life:

- use transparent papers
- make cutouts
- insert flaps that hide then reveal images, photos, words...

Make your own postage stamp:

- cut out a lacy frame
- stamp an image onto the background, emboss it, then color it with chalk, ink or paint.
- imitate the cancellation mark using a stencil and a gel pen

Suggested products

Canson® Coloured Tracing Paper

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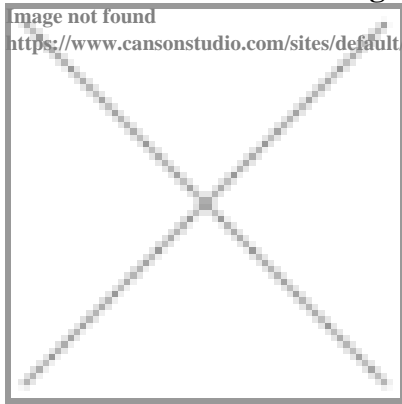


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Paper and something to write with: this is of course the basic equipment needed to start out in creative correspondence. Beyond these two indispensable items, the rest is up to you!

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