

Class #4: Paper Piecing

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PAPER PIECING DEFINED

Paper piecing is a scrapbook technique that uses patterns to make a pieced design. The pieces of the pattern are cut out of different papers to make the pieced item more realistic and unique. Fitting the pieces together is much like putting together a little puzzle.



FINDING PATTERNS

Paper piecing patterns can be bought or made. You can make your own by using pictures from coloring books, clipart, drawing books and the like. I also find inspiration from kids clothing and dingbat fonts. There are wonderful patterns online at www.dafont.com. It's a website that offers FREE fonts for download. You can find patterns for owls, robots, popular cartoon characters, such as Hello Kitty and Mickey Mouse. You want to look at their "Dingbats" Menu Option at the top of their homepage.

For this particular monkey, I found my inspiration/pattern on a shirt that was purchased for my daughter.

Inspiration abounds around every corner! I'd bet even now the wheels are turning and you've thought of a few different things you could grab right now for inspiration to make a beautifully handmade paper pieced embellishment. Am I right?



CHOOSING SUPPLIES

We'll once again be using basic scrapbooking supplies. In the tutorial I'll show you ways that you can make the same pattern look different by slightly altering your supplies.



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For this particular monkey, I used a product available exclusively at Scrapsupply called Handmade Paper. It is a thick version of mulberry paper and has a wonderful heavy texture to it. You can also do a few things to the paper itself to make it fuzzy like a stuffed animal, which I will show you. But, you can certainly complete this project with basic cardstock and patterned paper, which I will demonstrate in the tutorial as well.



TUTORIAL: PAPER PIECED MONKEY

supplies

- scissors
- pattern (templates provided)
- cardstock
- patterned paper
- specialty paper (i.e. handmade or mulberry paper)
- adhesive
- buttons
- brads
- silk and/or paper flowers
- floss
- needle
- tweezers or fine-tipped scissors
- small spray bottle with water
- pen or pencil



tutorial

1. Print the template pieces (provided) and cut them out. If you think you'll make them more than once, I recommend transferring them to chipboard so they will hold up over time.
2. Lay your pattern piece, facedown, on the wrong side of your paper. This allows you to cut out without worrying about leaving stray pencil/pen marks behind.
3. Place your pattern into a sandwich or snack size baggie and label the bag. Don't risk losing pieces of your pattern by not bagging it immediately when done tracing. This is especially important when doing an advanced pattern that may have lots of small pattern pieces. I also find it helpful to snap a picture of the project when I am finished and include a printout of it in the bag for future reference.

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4. Next, cut out your pieces.

5. Start adding character. Here are a few ways to add texture to your handmade paper or cardstock.

- Put the paper through a paper crimper.



- Crumple your paper. Spritz lightly with water first to make the paper more pliable and avoid tearing.
- Make handmade or mulberry paper fuzzy by spritzing with water and then using tweezers or a fine-tipped pair of scissors to "fluff" up the fibers. Here is a side-by-side example of untouched vs. fluffed handmade paper.



And here is a detail shot of the fuzzy monkey made using the handmade paper. See why I love this stuff? It gives a wonderful texture to your projects.



6. Adhere your pieces together, being careful to avoid getting adhesive where it will show. I find that a wet adhesive works best with the handmade paper and paper to which you've added texture. Then, add buttons for eyes and brads for the nose to embellish your piece. A few variations are shown.



7. Add further details to personalize your piece, including flowers, ribbon bows, hand stitching, etc. Before hand stitching, I prefer to poke my holes using my needle or a paper piercing tool making it easier (and quicker) to add stitching. You can make your monkey a male by simply leaving off the flowers and adding insets to the ears in the same color or pattern you used for the face.



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8. You can add further character to your cardstock pieces by distressing them using the open blade of your scissors and scraping it along the edges to rough them up.



9. Adhere to project.

additional TIPS for success

- *Remember that piecing patterns can be enlarged or reduced on a copier.* Consider making the same pieced pattern in different sizes to embellish related pages.
- *Almost any pattern can be reversed.* If you don't want the duck facing left, reverse the pattern and make him face to the right.
- *Move body parts.* When piecing animals and people, feel free to move their arms and legs. Cut off an arm and re-attach it at a different angle. Do the same with a leg. Such changes will allow your pieced designs to adapt dynamically to the design on your layout/card.
- *Go super-sized!* Paper piecing makes a lovely canvas or framed art piece for your living space when you enlarge the design.
- *Try different adhesives.* Mini glue dots are a GREAT adhesive for small pieces or ribbon embellishments.

Happy crafting!
Tania

