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Recycling paper

Did you know that every year families in the UK throw away 6.3 million tonnes of paper? In this exercise you will learn how to make recycled paper which you can use for notebooks or for making gifts. There are lots of fun things you can make out of recycled paper – read on to find out more.

What you will need

Old newspapers, a bucket, water, a wooden spoon with a long handle, a square tray or pan, thin mesh or netting, a flat piece wood or a large book.



What to do

1. Tear up 2 or 3 single sheets of newspaper and put them in a bucket with about 5 cups of water and leave to soak overnight.
2. When the paper is soft, use a wooden spoon (or your hands) to mush it into a pulp.
3. Pour about 2cm depth of water into the square pan and lay the mesh in the pan.
4. Take about a cupful of mushy paper from the bucket and pour it over the mesh. Spread the pulp evenly over the mesh using your fingers.
5. Carefully lift out the mesh and place on some spare newspaper to drain.
6. Place another section of newspaper on top of the pulp, and carefully turn the whole thing over so that the mesh is now on top of the pulp. Leave both sections of newspaper in place.
7. Place your wood or book onto the newspaper and push it down to squeeze out the water.
8. Remove the top piece of newspaper and the mesh. Then leave the pulp to dry for at least 24 hours.

Other suggestions

- Add petals or leaves to the pulp
- Add ink to the pulp to make coloured paper
- Make paper mache by mixing old newspaper with glue paste instead of water. You can make all sorts of exciting models – try pasting paper layers onto a balloon to make a paper mache head.





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Discussion

- Did you know that most newspapers are printed on recycled paper? What else can be made out of recycled paper? Why is it important to recycle paper?
- People have been making paper for hundreds of years – the Egyptians were the first known users, and paper has been found in Egyptian tombs from 3500 BC! Look at the history of paper. Why is it important? – Think about what paper is used for and what we have learnt from paper.

