

## ArtHouse Activity: How to Make Papel Picado

### You will need:

1. A supply of tissue paper, pre-cut to letter size (i.e. 8 1/2" by 11")
2. Scissors
3. Small hobby knife (recommended, but not mandatory. If you use a razor knife, you will need something to cut against. We recommend discarded magazines or catalogs. Remember to observe every safety precaution.)
4. ArtHouse (for presenting the finished artwork)

### Overview:

There's a trick to making tissue paper "papel picado"! Since tissue paper is thin and fragile, it's easiest to cut if you sandwich it inside regular paper. Not only is the regular paper stiffer, but it also provides a convenient surface to plan your designs.

### Instructions:

1. Carefully crease this piece of paper right down the middle (along the dotted line). The crease must be flat and straight. Make sure these instructions appear on the outside.
2. Crease the tissue paper right down the middle too.
3. Assemble the tissue paper and this sheet of regular paper like you're making a book. You can use two or three pieces of tissue paper if you like, but they must be placed one inside another, and this cover sheet must be on the outside like a book's cover.
4. Notice how there's a second dotted line on the pattern. Make a straight, neat crease down this dotted line. The second crease helps to hold the pages of the book tightly together.
5. Carefully observe the pattern on the back cover of the newly assembled "book". Note how there are "islands" in the design (e.g. the skull's eyes). Many people find it helpful to mark or lightly shade these islands of paper with a pencil. Islands will be cut away and discarded.
6. Take a minute to extend lines across the margin to the edge of the paper. Cuts that start at the edge of the paper or along the crease are easy to cut with scissors.
7. Okay... you're ready to begin cutting out your papel picado! Be careful. Make sure that your cuts don't leave the lines on the pattern.
8. If you're cutting with a hobby knife, make sure you always have an old magazine or catalog as a working surface. The idea is to cut right through all layers of tissue paper and pattern into the working surface below. If the surface below becomes too rough, tear away a few magazine pages to get a new working surface.
9. As with most art, it takes practice, so don't get discouraged.
10. When you're all done cutting, flatten creases carefully before removing the cover. The individual sheets of tissue will be very fragile.
11. Have fun creating your own designs.
12. Display your papel picado artwork in ArtHouse!

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