

creative matters

by Christine Marie

Simple Collage



Learn to create simple collages
from everyday materials.



20 - 30
Minutes



Beginner
Friendly



Free
Guide

♥ art, process, and the joy of creativity ♥

Welcome to Simple Collage

Collage is one of the easiest ways to begin making art.

There are no rules to memorize, no drawing skills required, and no perfect outcome waiting for you.

All you need is paper, curiosity, and a willingness to experiment.

This guide will walk you through creating a simple collage with papers you probably already have.

A little reminder

You don't need the "right" supplies.

Some of the most beautiful collages have been made from magazines, envelopes, wrapping paper, grocery bags, maps, old books, and scraps headed for the recycling bin.

What you'll learn

- ✓ Choose interesting papers
- ✓ Build a simple collage
- ✓ Know when to stop

Pause & Notice

Before you begin, take a look around.

What papers catch your eye?

Don't judge them.

Just notice.

Sometimes the best collage begins with something you almost threw away.

What You'll Need

You probably already have everything you need.

One of the best things about collage is that it doesn't require expensive supplies, special tools, or a dedicated studio. Start with whatever you already have. You can make a wonderful collage with what you already have.

Supplies



Papers

Magazines,
maps, junk mail,
tissue paper



Base

Cardstock, mixed
media paper,
sketchbook



Glue

Glue stick, matte
medium or
white glue



Scissors

Optional



Pencil

Optional

Nice to Have (Not Required)

- Washi tape
- Handmade papers
- Fabric scraps
- Paint pens
- Brayer

These are fun extras—not necessities.

Remember...

Start with what you have.

Creativity grows from making choices—not from buying supplies.

What Papers Can I Use?

Almost any paper can become part of a collage.

The best papers aren't always the expensive ones. Some of my favorites come from magazines, envelopes, maps, and scraps headed for the recycling bin.

Look for papers with different colors, textures, weights, and patterns.



Also try...

- Old calendars
- Envelopes
- Brown paper bags
- Scrapbook paper
- Handmade paper
- Sheet music
- Paint chips
- Fabric scraps

Creative Tip

Try combining:

- ✓ smooth + textured
- ✓ bright + muted
- ✓ printed + solid
- ✓ light + dark

Great collages usually have contrast.

Pause & Notice

Which papers catch
your eye?

Don't think about what
you'll make.

Just gather papers
you're curious about.

Curiosity comes before composition.

Remember...

You don't need more papers—you just need a few different ones.

Gather Your Papers

Start by collecting 8–12 papers that look different from one another.

Look for different colors, textures, weights, and patterns.

You don't need a plan yet—just gather anything that catches your eye.



Look for...

- ✓ smooth and textured
- ✓ light and dark
- ✓ printed and solid
- ✓ colorful and neutral
- ✓ large and small patterns

Pause & Notice

Which paper did you pick up first?

What made you notice it?

Don't analyze it.
Just be curious.

It's okay if...

- colors don't match
 - papers seem strange together
 - one paper is wrinkled
 - you only have recycled materials
- Unexpected combinations often make the best collages.

Remember...

Choose papers you enjoy looking at.

You can decide how to use them later.

Arrange Your Papers

Before you reach for the glue, spend a few minutes moving your papers around. Try different combinations, overlap the pieces, and rotate them in different directions. Sometimes the arrangement you least expect becomes your favorite.



Try This

- Overlap some pieces.
- Rotate a paper to see it in a new way.
- Mix large and small shapes.
- Leave a little breathing room—every space doesn't need to be filled.

Pause & Notice

Which paper do your eyes keep coming back to?

Try building your collage around that piece.

Remember...

There isn't one "right" arrangement. If something catches your eye, trust it.

Build Your Collage

When you're happy with your arrangement, begin gluing one piece at a time. Work slowly and let the collage change as you go. Sometimes the best ideas appear after you begin.



Start Here

- Begin with your background or largest piece.
- Glue a few pieces at a time.
- Press each piece gently so it lies flat.
- Step back now and then to see the whole collage.

Creative Tip

Leave a few edges unglued if you like the added texture.

Layers create depth and invite the eye to explore.

Remember...

Your collage doesn't have to match the picture you imagined. Follow where it leads.

Know When to Stop

It's easy to keep adding more papers because you're excited or unsure if the collage is finished. Sometimes one more piece isn't an improvement. Give yourself permission to pause and look before making another change.



Pause & Notice

- Where does your eye go first?
- Is there a place for it to rest?
- Does anything feel distracting?
- Would removing one piece make it stronger?

Try This

If you're unsure you're finished:

- Step away for 10–15 minutes.
- Look at it from across the room.
- Turn it upside down.
- If you don't immediately want to change anything, it may be finished.

Remember...

A finished collage doesn't need to be perfect.

It only needs to feel complete to you.

Continue Exploring

Every collage is a chance to try something new.

Change just one thing each time you create. Small experiments often lead to the biggest discoveries.

Try one of these...

- Use only torn edges.
- Choose one color family.
- Make a collage using only five papers.
- Create a collage using only recycled papers.
- Leave more empty space than feels comfortable.
- Finish a collage in 10 minutes.

Creative Tip

Change just one thing at a time. It's easier to discover what you enjoy when you're experimenting with one new idea.

Remember...

Every collage teaches you something—even the ones you don't love.

Build a Creative Habit

You don't need hours of free time or a studio full of supplies.

Creativity grows through small moments of showing up again and again.

A simple practice

- Collect interesting papers throughout the week.
- Keep a small collage kit ready to go.
- Make one collage whenever you have 15–30 minutes.
- Date your work so you can see your progress.
- Most importantly, enjoy the process.

Pause & Notice

After you've made a few collages, ask yourself:

- What kinds of papers am I drawn to?
- What colors do I use most often?
- What surprises me each time I create?

Remember...

Small, regular moments of creativity matter more than waiting for the perfect time..



Thank you for creating with Creative Matters.

