
MAKING HATS

USE WHAT YOU HAVE

Sustainability-focused artist and fashion icon Debra Rapoport shares the perfect at-home, hands-on activity with you, providing instructions to repurpose and recycle household items to construct fantastic hats. (@debrarapoport)

MATERIALS

15–20 sheets recycled paper; approximately 12–20 inches long x 4 inches wide.

Utilize whatever paper products you have around—newspapers, magazines, wrapping or tissue paper, or a combination thereof will work well.

Craft glue or glue stick.

A length of thick string, yarn, or ribbon measuring approximately 10 inches or a rubber band.

Optional embellishing materials such as:

Ribbon, foil, fabric strips, beads, silk flowers, etc.

We encourage you to recycle found objects around your home.

Use what you have: your imagination and ingenuity!

PREPARATION

Begin by folding the sheets of paper into strips that will form the structural base of the hat. To do so, fold each sheet of paper in half lengthwise, then fold the halved sheets into thirds. Glue down the open flap of each strip.

Once all the sheets are folded and glued into strips, lay out 10–15 strips in tight horizontal rows on your work surface.

Next, take your embellishing material or remaining paper strips, and begin, about 2 inches in from the left side of the horizontal strips, to weave the second material through the rows to form a cross-hatched pattern—over, under, over, under. Continue the pattern by folding the embellishing material back and repeating the weave in the opposite direction, or introducing a new material, until you have formed about 6 columns with the embellishing material while leaving the remaining 1/3 of the horizontal strips loose.

At this stage, you will notice you have formed a woven paper rectangle. Place the rectangle on your head, and manipulate it so that it begins to mold into a hat shape. Then collect the loose strip portion of your hat into a bundle and fasten it together with the string or rubber band, adjusting the ends until you are satisfied with the fit of your hat. Depending on your preference, you can fold the front edges of the strips back and secure them into the weave, or leave them loose.

Wunderbar! Now exercise your creativity to style your hat as you wish. Add some more embellishments, move the hat around your head to find which position you like best, and do not forget to pretend you have sitting for a photo shoot with the inspiring Madame d'Ora and take some pictures with your creation.

TIP

While shaping the hat to your head, you can introduce a bit of wire, elastic, or ribbon to hold the hat's form and help secure it to your head.

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