

Fold Your Book Pages—For Art!

SJI Library



Before you go dog-earing the pages of any library books, let me explain.

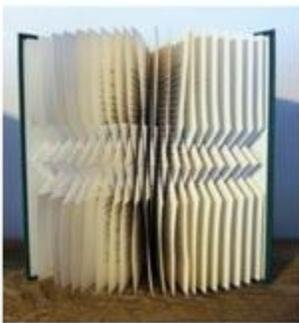
Recently I was asked to come up with a craft for my family reunion. I'm a librarian, so they shouldn't have been surprised when I chose a book craft.

I know, I know—it might seem like desecration to alter a book, so for my project I shopped for used books in our Friends of the Library Treasure Cove bookstore, just inside the main entrance of the Library. The way I see it, these books have served their primary purpose at one time or another, and now they will have a second life as another art form.

A friend at work put me onto folded book art (who knew there was such a thing?!), and suggested I fold a hedgehog. Here's my first project on the left (I like leaving part of the original book as a base); all that's needed is to add some black button eyes and a nose like the example next to it. It took about an hour and was an easy in-front-of-the-TV activity.



Next I tried compiling a few different folding techniques (found online) to come up with a unique pattern all my own. I think the result looks pretty cool on my mantelpiece: It was time for the Big Show!



I Pinned lots of different patterns and ideas for display to show family members for inspiration. I packed about 20 used books into my carry-on. The hardest part was lifting that carry-on up into the plane's overhead bin!

Everyone chose a book and decided on a pattern. A few things we discovered are that the insides of book covers can add artistic elements, such as patterns or colors. If you're thinking of making a group display, choose complementary books. Each project calls for a different number of pages, depending on how many folds are practical.

Here is one book on the left that's ready as it is for display, or still on its way to becoming the Christmas tree in the middle. And check out the cute hut or birdhouse on the right! Can't you just see a whole village made from different-sized books?



Note that the Christmas tree is perched on a vintage silver candleholder, one of several that I picked up from local thrift stores. Later on, I'll add a bright red ornament or star to the top.

Here are two interesting projects. The first I call Japanese Lantern. The second, shown in both pictures below, can be used as a business or Christmas card holder, or a photo holder, or just as it is.



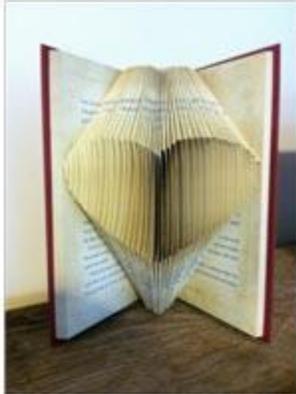
This particular book's bright yellow end papers seem to reflect the Japanese Lantern's glow.



I also bought a cheap pattern online to make a simple heart shape. All I needed in addition to the pattern was a centimeter ruler and a sharp pencil. More complex patterns are available including other shapes and designs, initials, names and other words, like READ!

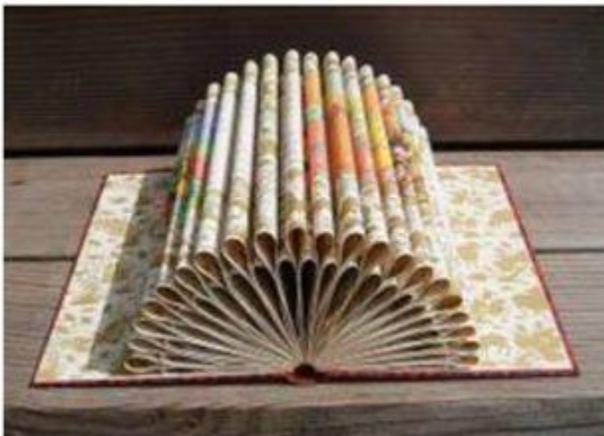
The wonderful thing is you don't have to cut anything; it's all folding. And even I can do that!

including other shapes and



So where to get started? Go to Pinterest and search for “folded book pages.” You’ll find patterns, folding diagrams, and display ideas. Trying searching Google for “folded book art.” You’ll be amazed by the variety of projects to choose from, and, of course, you can always design your own.

The next pattern I plan to follow use soft folds instead of sharp ones. I just need to find a beautifully illustrated book like the one below:



These works of art can be displayed flat or standing up on a table or mantelpiece, framed and mounted on a wall, in the corner of a bookcase or two walls, as lamp shades, mobiles, and many more options.

Do you love your books but are done with them? Give them new life as Folded Book Art.

Laurie Orton