

# PUNCHED PAPER FLOWERS

By Maureen Williams



Very realistic flowers can be made using ordinary coloured photocopy paper or notelet paper, which is available in a variety of shaded colours. Although this can be a very time consuming exercise, the end result is well worth the effort. Using these delicate little flowers takes your creation from something that anyone can buy the pieces to achieve, to that something special, which only a few have the patience to do.

A single hole punch available from a newsagents is all that is required to punch the paper or you can use an ordinary two hole punch which is used in most offices. The normal 6 mm (1/4") size is ideal for making the roses shown on the front of the Gazebo. Other fancy punches are available in a variety of designs that are also suitable for flower making.

The basic procedure for making flowers involves shaping punched paper in different ways depending on the desired result then gluing the "petals" together in the flower shape. Let nature be your guide, examine how different flowers are formed. Also note how the petals are located. Do they over-lap each other or are they spaced evenly with another row in between the spaces, etc? Look in flower books, those with drawn diagrams of flowers are better than actual photographs of flowers.

## SHAPING THE PETALS

Petals can be shaped in different ways using different tools depending on the type of flower you are making. Some petals are smooth and cupped, others may be crinkled and the edges may roll in towards the centre. In other flowers they may roll outwards.

If you are shaping "smooth" petals, it is best to use a piece of vinyl place mat with a little bit of give in the surface but not enough to make the petal crinkle. A thicker (1/4") foam allows you to apply more pressure when you want to make crinkled petals (a computer mouse pad is ideal).

## BASIC REQUIREMENTS.

- Punched paper in desired shapes and colours.
- 2" flat head nails to use as mini turntables. (these should be filed smooth on top)
- Piece of styrene to stand the nails in.
- Tacky glue. (I use Aleene's Tacky in the gold bottle)
- Fine point tweezers.
- Leather tool for shaping the petals. (paper tole tools can also be used)
- Piece of computer mouse pad or thin foam.
- Ball stylus for shaping petals
- Piece of vinyl place mat to shape the petals on. (or use the palm of your hand)
- Optional: Chalks or water-soluble pencils for shading flowers.

## SINGLE ROSES

The roses used on Peter's Gift in Bright Ideas & Facets of Egg Artistry are made from paper using a 6 mm (1/4") single hole punch and then sprayed with porcelain spray to stiffen the flowers.



For each flower you will need 6 "petals". Use a very small dab of tacky glue to secure a base petal to a nail turntable. Use a leather tool to shape the other five petals. Place a petal on the foam mouse pad and press down on the left hand side (LHS) of the petal and move the leather tool across the petal, thus creasing it at the top. This may take a little practice to get the petal creasing sufficiently. Don't worry about the petals being uniform, as nature isn't perfect!

## SHADING THE PETALS.

If you want **shaded flowers** the petals should be coloured using chalks **before** you shape the petals. Use a cotton bud to apply the chalk, which should be brushed lightly over each petal - it isn't necessary to be very particular when doing this.

A "**fringed edge**" on a flower is done **after** the flower has been constructed using water-soluble pencils or paint and a very fine brush. Use a tiny amount of colour on the brush and apply to the edge of each petal.

## MAKING THE ROSES.

Use fine point tweezers to pick up the petals at the top. Be careful not to squash the creases. Dip the bottom smoother part of the petal into tacky glue and position on the base petal. Continue to overlap each petal over the preceding petal. With the last petal you need to overlap the fourth petal and tuck the other side of the petal under the first petal. Adjust petals as required.

The nail turntable makes it easier to construct the flower, as you can turn it as you add the petals. The flowers could also be made by securing the base petal to a piece of plastic or similar. Slip a craft knife under the base petal to release the flower once it is dry. When the flower is dry, place a very small spot of glue in the centre and add crumbed foam for the stamens.

To stiffen the petals, spray with 5 - 6 light coats of Porcelain spray, available from your ceramic dealer.

## VARIATION

Add another row of smaller petals inside the original flower (three petals should be enough) before adding the foam for the stamens to achieve a fuller, double appearance.

## **MAKING BUDS**

Glue a 2.5 cm (1") piece of Jap cord in the centre at the bottom of a flat petal. When dry, roll tightly around tweezers then wrap a flat green petal around the bottom for a calyx. The length of the cord can be trimmed later as required to fit into the flower design.

## **5 PETAL FLOWERS**

Fold a piece of kitchen paper in half and damp thoroughly. Tip a few 5-petal punched shapes onto the damp paper and fold over. This will dampen both sides of the petal.

Place a damp flower shape on a piece of vinyl placemat. Use a medium ball stylus to press down on each of the five "petals" to cup them. Flip the flower over and use a smaller ball stylus to press down in the centre of the shaped petals. This will make the petals stand up.

Use a flat back rhinestone or a no hole pearl as a centre for the flower.

## **VARIATIONS:**

Use smaller 5-petal shapes in a contrasting colour to make double flowers. You can also use the tiny 5-petal shape as a flower centre.

## **TREES & BUSHES**

Lichen (dry seaweed available from model railway supply shops) is ideal to make small bushes and trees. It comes in a variety of colours ranging from bright, light green to mint and dark green, through to autumn colours.

Alternatively, for "flowering" trees cut up small scraps of velvet or Bunka into tiny pieces (don't sneeze!). Use small twigs from the garden, brush thin PVA glue on the tips and then dip into the velvet. For a more realistic look, use a light and dark colour combination rather than just one colour. Crumbed foam can also be used to make trees using the above method.

## **COMPOST**

The dried contents of tea bags makes ideal garden compost for miniature gardens. Coloured sawdust is also suitable.



- A Ball Stylus comes in three different sizes - small, medium and large. A DBS (double ball stylus) usually has a small and medium ball on either end of the wooden handle. The large one comes on a separate wooden handle.
- A metal leather-shaping tool has a spoon shape one end and a bent probe on the other end. This type of modeller is also used for paper tole or bas-relief work. A plastic version of this tool is sometimes ridged and is not recommended, as it won't slide on the paper.
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Each tool gives a different effect so experiment to find which one gives you the petal shape required.

## Stamens

There are a number of ways to prepare stamens depending on the type of flower you are making. Stick the prepared stamens into a piece of styrene to dry. When dry assemble flower as per instructions.

1. Use stamens purchased from a cake decorating shop.
2. #30 florist wire dipped in a 50/50 mixture of acrylic paint and tacky glue.
3. Cotton stiffened with glue and then the ends dipped in paint.
4. Scenic material from a model railway shop makes very realistic centres for briar type roses.
5. To use tiny beads as a base for flowers, dip the wire into thick tacky glue and push into the hole in the bead.

## Petals

To cup petals, use the vinyl placemat and gently rub around the petal with the DBS (the larger end) using a circular motion. As a variation, flip the shaped flower over and press down in the centre to make the petals stand up.

To make "crinkled" petals use the leather tool and the mouse pad. Commencing on the left-hand side of the petal, press down firmly and drag the leather tool across the petal, thus creasing it at the top.

## Leaves

A variety of punched shapes are available for leaves. To make 'blade' type leaves for daffodils, iris & tulips etc use one of the following methods:

1. Cut two short pieces of florist tape - the length depends on the size of the leaf required. Cover one side of one of the pieces with thick tacky glue and position a 2" piece of wire in the centre long ways, approximately 1/2" from one end. Lay the other piece of tape over the top and press firmly together. Use sharp scissors to cut out the desired shape.
2. Use two pieces of coloured paper glued together instead of the florist tape - complete as above
3. Omit the wire, especially for smaller leaves., and cut tape as shown in diagram

## Stems & Branches

One of the easiest and most natural things I have used for the stems are short pieces from the bottom of a millet broom. As the millet is already dried, it can be separated and bends beautifully without being brittle and breaking off. These stems can be painted or left natural as desired. Once dry, they can then be spread out into a very natural arrangement with the flowers and leaves added as required.

Floral tape can also be used to make a multi branching stem. Take a piece of floral tape approximately 1 1/2" long. Cut the tape into three or four, leaving about 1/2" intact on one end. Pull out and twist each piece to make a twisted "branch". Be careful not to separate the small pieces from the main "trunk".



## Using Flowers on Eggs

When making flowers to put on eggs it is better, where possible, to construct the flower using a small "hole" of paper for the base. Glue the base onto a 2" flat head nail, which will act as a mini turntable. File the top of the nail smooth so that the prepared flower can be easily removed by sliding the blade of a craft knife under the base petal.

To use flowers that have been made up on stems, bend the stem wire to 90 degrees and cut off the excess wire behind the flower head. Attach to the egg using tacky glue. Tuck the leaves in and around the flower arrangement.



Barb's Little Girl from Tis An Egg – Book 1