

Woven Paper Lantern

How-To Guide

by Helen Hiebert



Helen Hiebert Studio

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Woven Paper Lantern



I love the glow of light coming through paper and was inspired by this effect when I took a brief trip to Japan and stayed in a traditional inn with papered shoji screen room dividers. Ever since then, I've been experimenting with various ways to enhance paper with light, and along the way I tried paper weaving.

It looks complicated, doesn't it? But it's not! If you follow the simple steps in this project, you can create a gorgeous paper weaving in less than an hour. The clever hinge that brings the lantern into a cylinder adds a bit more time, but the time you'll spend gazing at your creation will make it all worthwhile.

Illuminate your woven paper lantern with a battery operated tea light or a tea candle in a glass holder.

Happy creating!

Helen

Below you see those types of lights plus a lamp cover I made for a glass lamp I purchased from a certain Swedish store that is located in big cities around the world.



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See more paper lights at <https://bit.ly/1DU3Dbg>
Make something by hand and live in its presence. • Design • Make • Enjoy •

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Materials & Tools

MATERIALS

- Two pieces of paper that compliment each other (see paper attributes below)
- One 12" bamboo skewer that is 1/8" diameter
- White glue
- Hinge template printed on card stock
- Battery operated tea light

TOOLS

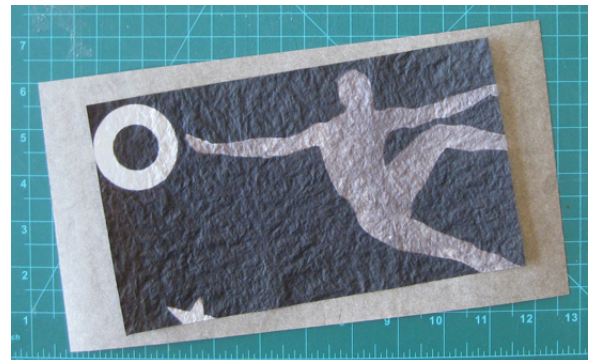
- Cutting mat
- Cutting knife
- Bone folder (optional)
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Glue brush
- Heavy duty scissors or garden clippers
- Thin plastic place mat or something similar

PAPER ATTRIBUTES

- At least one of the papers should be translucent, to allow light through when illuminated.
- One paper (either one) should be a light cardstock weight, to give your lantern some rigidity.



I used an elephant hide paper 110gsm (I found this at talasonline.com) and a handmade abaca paper with a van dyke brown print by Alyssa Salomon.

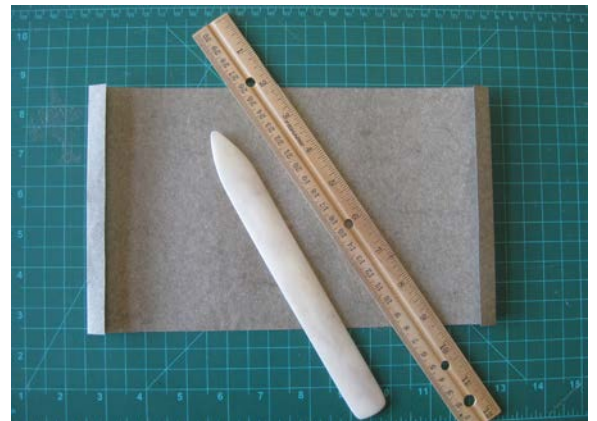


Step-by-Step Instructions

Cut the cardstock to 6" x 11" (grain short - see note below). Cut the other paper to 5" x 8-3/4" (also grain short).

1

Score and fold the two ends of the larger paper in at 1/2". Note that the smaller paper should fit lengthwise between the two folded ends.



Grain direction: Paper has a grain, like wood does. Grain direction is particularly important when the paper is being folded or in this case rolled. When manufactured commercially, paper fibers align in the direction of flow on the machine. When you buy sheets of paper, they have been cut down from larger sheets or rolls. In general, the longer dimension indicates the grain direction (for example, the grain on a 22" x 40" [56 x 102 cm] sheet runs in the 40" [102 cm] direction).

Step-by-Step Instructions

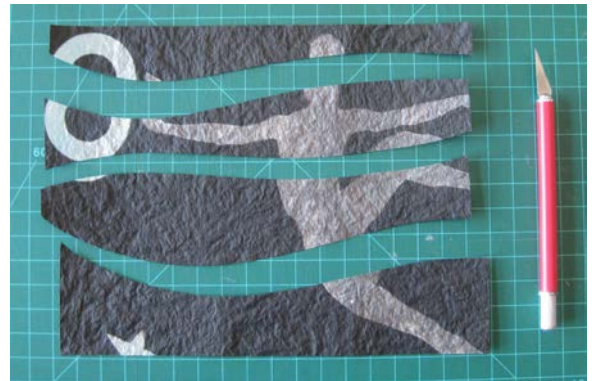
Center the smaller piece of paper (the weft) on the warp and note that there is a ½” margin at the top and bottom of the warp. Remove the weft paper and cut a series of wavy vertical lines between those invisible ½” margins (the margins do not need to be exact, but do not cut all the way to either edge). I cut eight lines that are about one inch apart.

2



Cut the weft paper into four or five wavy horizontal strips.

3



Place the warp on the work surface with the folded ends tucked under. Keeping the weft pieces in order, weave them into the warp one-at-a-time. Alternate the over-under pattern strip by strip. Use the tip of the cutting knife to help prod the paper strips. If the last strip is too wide, trim the straight side to make it easier to weave. Be patient: it can take a bit of finagling to get that last strip woven in.

4

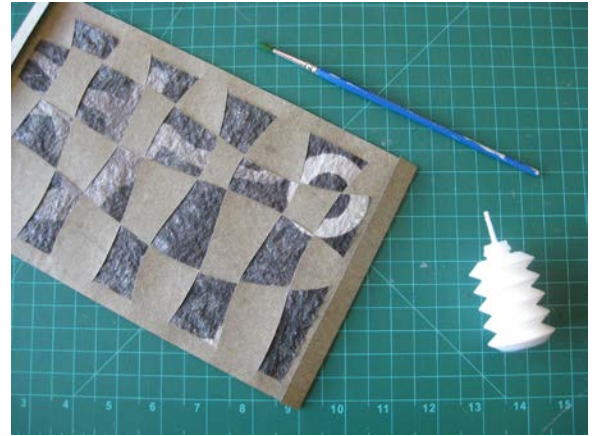


Warp & Weft: In weaving, the warp is the set of lengthwise yarns that are held in tension on the loom and the weft is the yarn that is drawn through the warp yarns to create cloth. For this project, the warp is the piece that remains solid and the weft represents the strips that are cut apart.

Step-by-Step Instructions

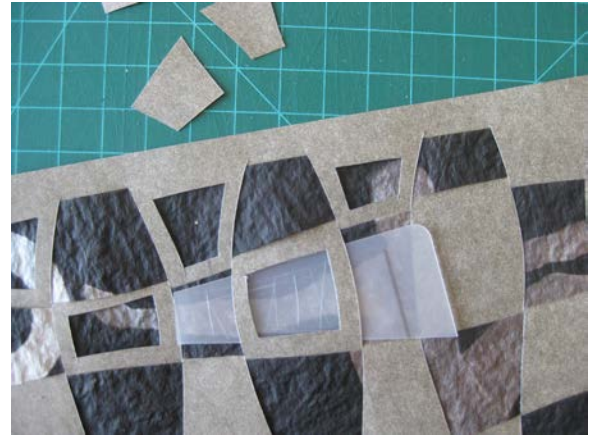
Carefully glue down the loose ends on both sides of the weaving.

5



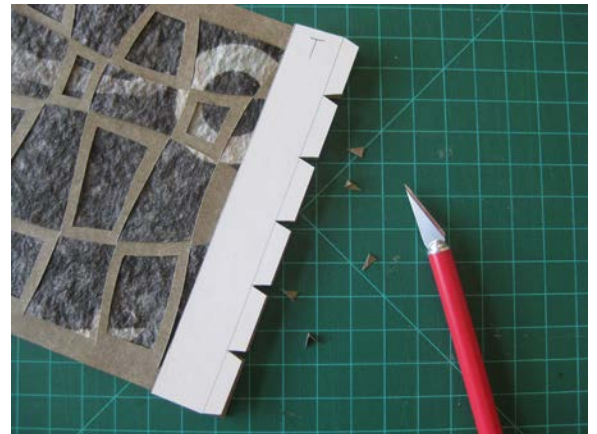
Cut a piece of the plastic placemat (you could use a thick card stock or chip board) into a triangular shape that is @ 2" wide on one end, ½" wide on the other and 3-4 inches in length. Place this mini 'cutting mat' in between the woven paper sections and experiment with cut-outs. I usually cut the opaque paper, but the translucent sheet can also have windows, or both papers can be cut. Just be careful not to cut through both layers or you'll end up with a hole.

6



Cut out the hinge template and place it on top of one of the folded ends of the paper weaving. Cut the small triangles through both layers of the folded hinge. Flip the template over and cut the same triangular slots on the other side of the weaving.

7

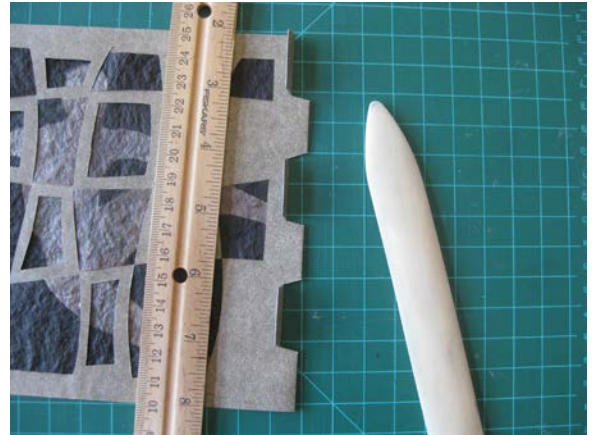


Mini Cutting Mat: I got the idea for cutting these windows when I was making woven paper lamps years ago. I used the plastic styrene sheeting that lines traditional lampshades as my mimi cutting mat initially, but then I found these plastic placemats which work just as well and don't have to be special ordered.

Step-by-Step Instructions

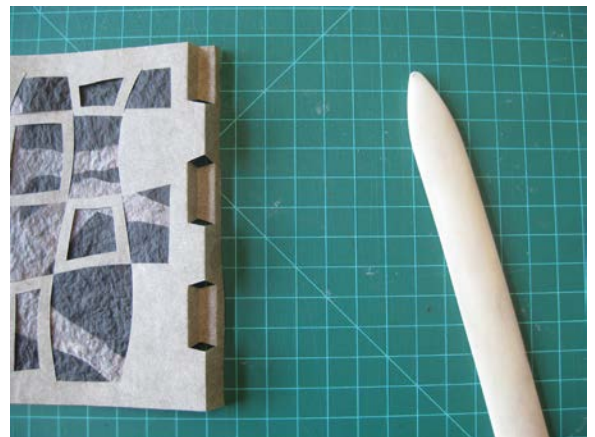
Use a straight edge and bone folder to score every other tab on one hinge. Repeat on the other side of the lantern, scoring and folding the alternating tabs.

8



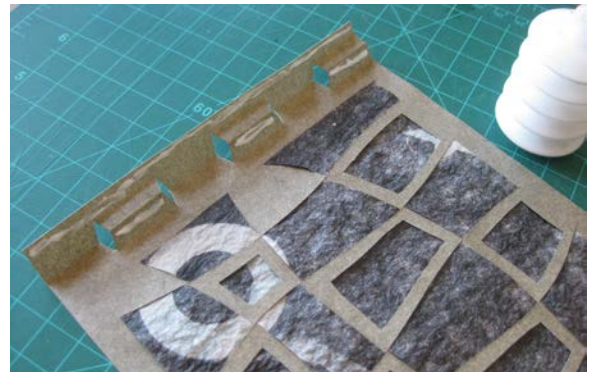
Fold the scored, alternating tabs back and forth and then tuck them inside, as shown.

9



Carefully apply glue to the inner edge of the hinge (take care not to get glue into the space where the skewer will go). Also apply glue to the bottom edges of vertical 'stair steps' on the tucked tabs. Apply pressure to glue the hinges in place. Repeat on the other side.

10



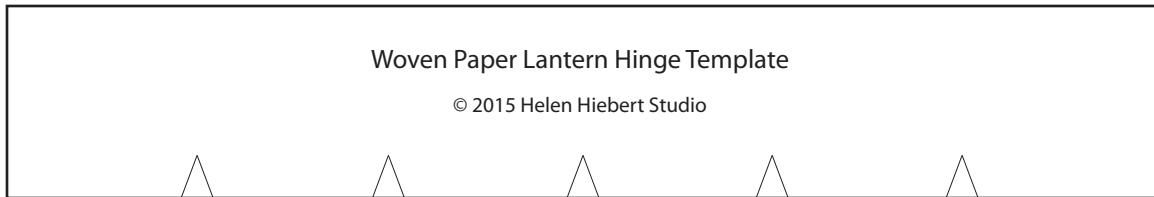
Thread the skewer through the alternating hinges and trim the end of the skewer. Grab a tea light (battery operated or a candle in a glass holder) and illuminate your lantern!

11



Template

Print this template on a light weight card stock and cut it out.



About Helen



Helen Hiebert is the author of five **how-to books** about paper: *Playing With Pop-Ups*, *Playing With Paper*, *Papermaking with Plants*, *The Papermaker's Companion*, and *Paper Illuminated*. Helen has appeared on **Sesame Street**, has produced of two **films**, and writes a blog called **The Sunday Paper**. She teaches, lectures and exhibits her work internationally, often involving the community in her installation projects such as **The Wish**, a permanent installation at Anythink Huron Street Library in Denver, Colorado. She creates limited edition **artists' books** and holds an **annual retreat** in her studio near Vail, Colorado.

If you enjoyed this How-To Guide, you might also enjoy the **Woven Table Runner** and other projects in my book *Playing With Paper* and the Shadow Lantern project in **Paper Illuminated**.