

Welcome to the More Journal Making for the Fiber Artist online workshop! If you took my first class in this series of journal making workshops then you already know how much fun it is to create your own journals to write, draw, sketch and doodle in. If this is your first journal making class with me then you're in for a treat!

Making your own journals is easy and fun and once you use one that you've made you'll never want to use a store bought one again. In this class we'll be using a variety of traditional book binding techniques that I've adapted to work with fabric. Use the patterns and techniques in these lessons just as they are written or use them as a jumping off point for your own designs. Experiment and have fun!

I'm going to start this lesson with a basic tri-fold design. This configuration has a lot of options for you. You can make it with up to three full sized signatures, several different sizes of signatures, change the shape or the size of the journal and even add extra length to add more panels. I'm going to show you a house shaped variation for this design but we'll start with a basic tri-fold first so you can see how the design works.



Ready? Let's get started!

Cut piece of pelmet vilene interfacing 9" x 24" and fuse your outside fabric to one side and your lining fabric to the other. Choose a fabric that can withstand some heat and steam. We'll be using both of these to set the folds in this journal so you'll want to choose a fabric that can hold up to both.



I'm using a cotton flower print for the outside and a green cotton print for the inside. Zig zag the edges to create a nice finish or if you prefer you can bind them like you would a quilt.

A note about finishing the edges:

When I zig zag the edges of my journal shells I use a 40wt rayon thread in both the top and bobbin. I like the sheen that the rayon threads add to the overall look of the journal. I like to use either an 80/12 or 90/14 Schmetz needle. This is what works well for me and my machine. You may need to experiment to find what works best for yours.

I use a wide zig zag stitch that is not set too dense. I prefer to go around twice (sometimes three times) rather than trying to do a heavier stitch around the edges once. I find I get a better result that way.

Take your journal to the ironing board and fold it half right sides together. Notice that my fold is on the left.



Press the fold really well. You'll want to use a good dose of steam and pressure to really set the fold well.

Now fold back the top right hand short edge to meet the fold on the left. Press it really well.



Flip the journal over and repeat this step for the other side. When you are finished your journal should look like this:



Set your journal shell aside while you work on creating the signatures. A signature is just a fancy word for a set of pages.

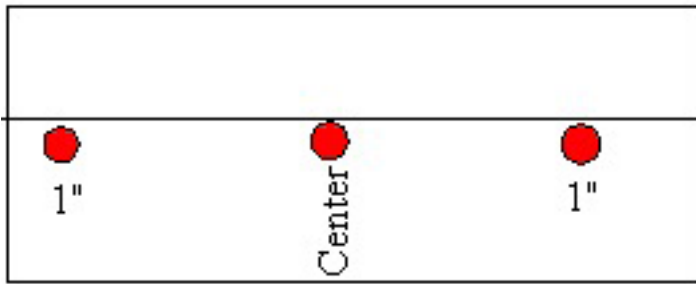
For this size journal I use a piece of 8 1/2" x 11" paper folded in half to create a page measuring 8 1/2" x 5 1/2". I've made three signatures and each is made of 10 folded pages.



I've added some colored paper and some decorative scrapbook paper in my signature as well.

Now it's time to sew your signatures into the journal shell. The first thing you need to do is make a hole punching guide. Take a piece of paper the same size as one of your signature pages and fold it in half.

Along the fold line make three marks; one in the center and at 1" in from each edge. Make a mark on the left edge of the paper to indicate the top. When you use this guide to punch your holes in the signatures and the journal shell make sure this mark is always along the top edge.

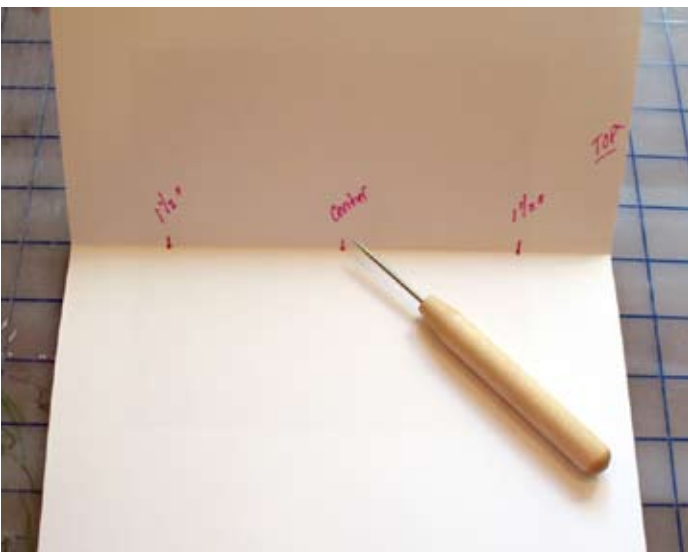


Use your awl to punch the holes in the journal shell.

Now we'll sew the first signature in.

Thread a tapestry needle with an 18" length of embroidery floss or linen twine. Line the signature up with the holes in the journal and starting from the inside sew through the inside center hole of the signature to the outside of the journal through the center hole in the journal shell leaving a 6" tail on the inside.

Place your hole punch guide in one of your signatures and use a sharp awl to poke a hole where your marks are all the way through the entire signature.



BE CAREFUL not to poke yourself with the awl! Do this for all three signatures.

Place the hole punch guide in one of the folds of the journal shell.



Then sew through the top outside hole back through to the inside top hole of the signature.



Then come out through the bottom hole back to the outside and sew back through the outside center hole back through to the inside.

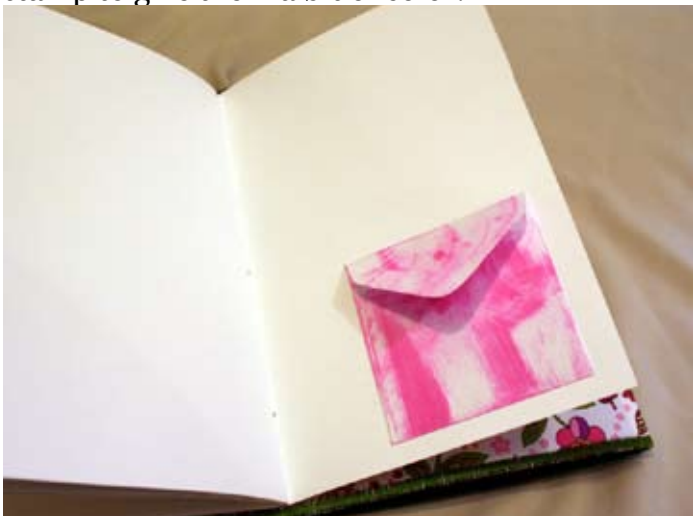


Tie off the thread using the tail that you left hanging. Tie the knot so that each tail end is on the opposite side of the center thread.



Repeat this entire process for the other two signatures in the other two folds of the journal shell.

If you like you can embellish some of the inside pages with envelopes or rubber stamps. I added some small envelopes that I rubbed with a rubber stamp to give them a bit of color.



You could also add library pockets or use small gift bags that you've cut to size and glue those into your signatures for pockets.



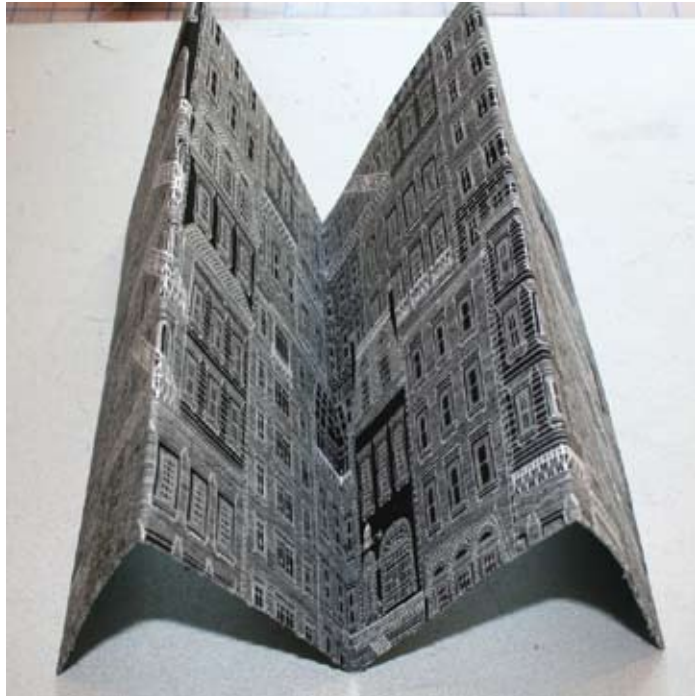
As an alternative to a ribbon tie closure you could sew a button on and use some cording wrapped around the journal.

Now that you have the basics of how this design works it's easy to alter it and make different sizes and shapes.

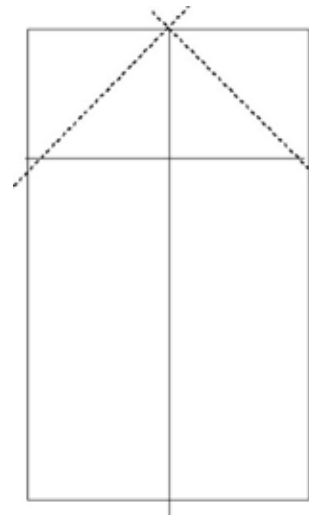


The house journal is made the same way as the first one we made by starting with a piece of pelmet vilene 9"x24". Fuse your outside fabric to one side and your lining fabric to the other and then set the folds in your journal shell just as you did for the first journal we made in this lesson.

Then draw a line from the corner of each of the 3" blocks to the center line.

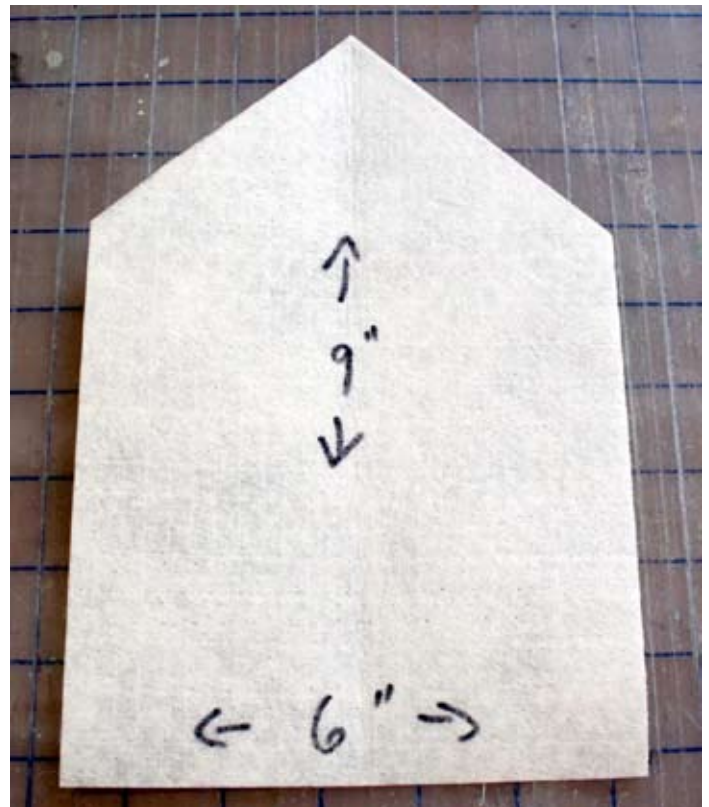
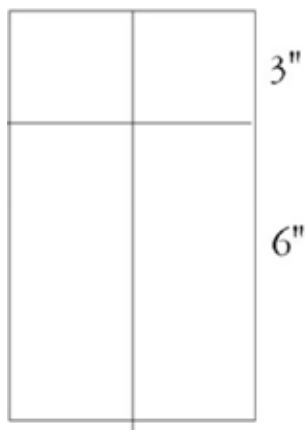


Your journal shell folds should look like mine in the photo above.



Cut those corners off and you should have something that looks like this:

You'll need to make a house shaped template to use to cut your house shape from your journal shell. Cut a piece of paper 6"x9" and mark a line down the center and 3" down from the top.



Place your template on your folded journal shell

and cut out your house shape by clipping off those top corners.



You can use a rotary cutter and ruler for this but you'll probably have to make several passes with the cutter to get all the way through the layers. You could also use a piece of chalk to mark the cutting lines and then cut the corners off. When you're finished cutting off the corners, zig zag stitch all the edges.

To make the pages for the inside of this journal you'll need to make a template to cut those as well. Take a folded piece of 8 1/2" x 11" paper and insert it into one of the folds in the shell.

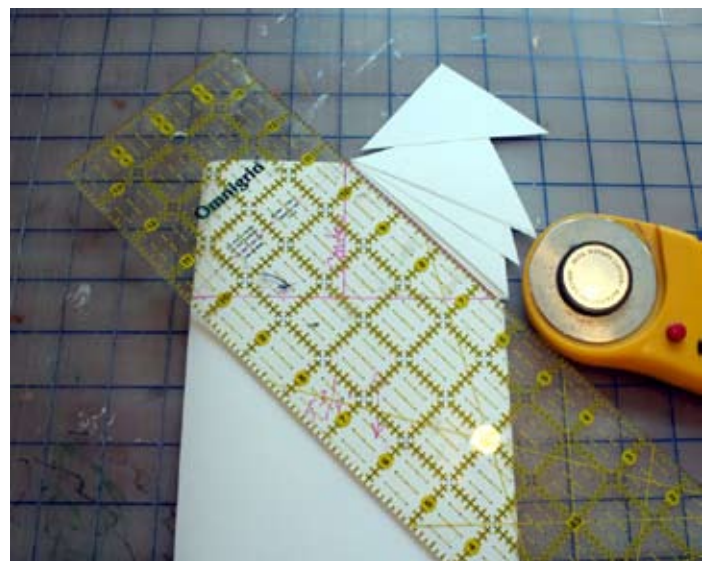


Close the journal and mark along the upper edges where the paper extends past the journal shell.



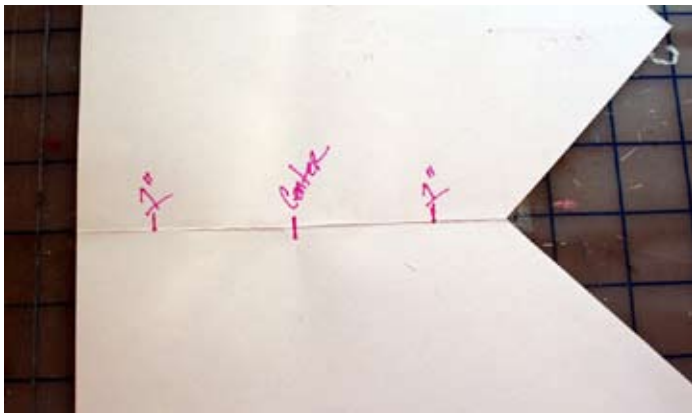
Take the paper template out of the shell and cut along the lines you traced. Trim a 1/4" off the bottom and you have your template to cut out your signature pages.

I do this by preparing my signatures and then placing the template as the outer page. Using a rotary cutter and ruler I cut off the corners as indicated by the template.



Once that's done I make sure that the signature fits in the folds of the journal and doesn't need any additional trimming to fit.

Then all that's left to do is to sew the signatures in. For these house shaped pages I made my hole punch guide with a hole in the center and then 1" in from each edge:



Sew in your signatures and you're done!



Try experimenting with some other shapes!

I hope that you've enjoyed this first lesson in the More Journal Making for the Fiber Artist workshop! Next week we're going to be making a coptic stitch journal...

