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Book / Piano Binding

Green Bookmaking



One Part Book and one part sculpture, this project uses a number of recycled and found materials from used coffee filters to bamboo skewers.

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If you have comments or suggestions about this project, please feel free to email me. I would love to hear from you.

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What You Will Need

Materials:

45 Used coffee filters
Cardstock
15 Bamboo skewers, 1 1/4 inches long with similar diameters
Old wooden candleholder
1/2 yard of waxed linen thread
White glue

Tools:

Firm brush - such as a shaving, stencil, or paintbrush
Iron
Pressing cloth
Household candle
Matches
Scissors
Ruler
Pencil
Utility knife

Prepare The Pages For Your Book

If you drink one pot of coffee per day, this will take about 1 1/2 months, less time for heavier coffee drinkers.



Once the coffee has brewed, remove the filter from your coffee pot and place it on a flat surface to dry. Leave the grounds in the filter and make sure the edges of the filter are positioned in the air. The darkened edges and various lines and patterns will develop during the drying process.

By experimenting with the placement of the grounds on the filter as it dries, you can achieve a marvelous variety of patterns. Using different kinds of coffee will create different colors and textures as well. Organic coffee produces dark, dense patterns while softer shades of brown are achieved with milder roasts.

Collect 45 used coffee filters.

Let's Get Started



1. Use a firm brush to remove the grounds from 45 coffee filters. Save the grounds to fertilize your acid loving garden or house plants.

Hint: For stubborn wrinkles, place a moist pressing cloth between the iron and the filter.

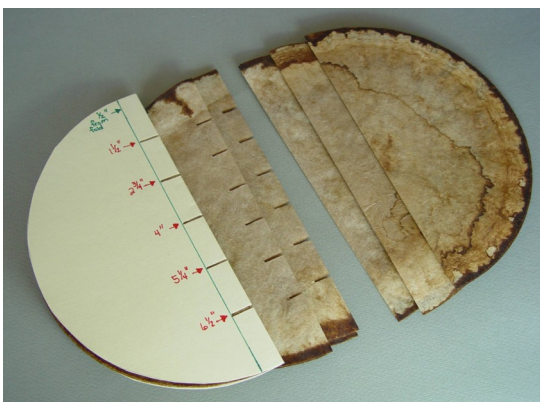


2. Set your iron to the cotton, dry setting and place a protective cloth on the ironing board. Press to remove any wrinkles and then fold the filter in half and press a crease down the center. Arrange the coffee filters in fifteen signatures of three.

3. To make a template for notching the coffee filters, position a pressed coffee filter on top of a folded piece of cardstock, aligning both fold lines. Trace around the outer edge of the filter and cut out the half circle to form the shape of your template.

Next, measure 1/2-inch from the fold line of the template and draw a line. Measuring from the top, mark five points along the line you just drew; The first mark should be 1 1/2 inches from the top, followed by 4 marks at 1 1/4-inch intervals. Then cut a 1/8" notch in the template, centered at each mark.

Place a signature inside the template and cut slits in the filters corresponding to the notches in the template. Repeat the process with each signature.



Hint: A file folder works great for this.

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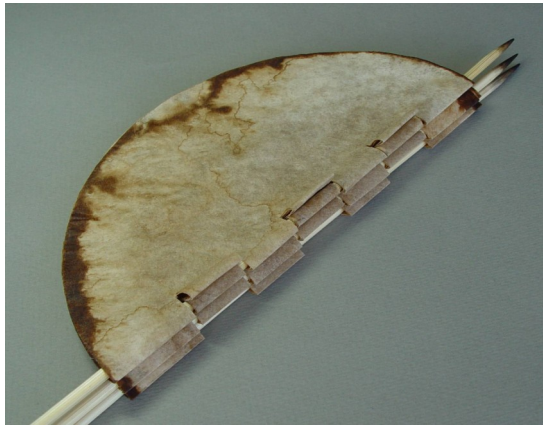
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4. Light a household candle and singe the tip of each skewer just enough to darken it. For safety reasons, do this outside or in a well ventilated area and keep a cup of water nearby.

Putting It All Together



5. Weave a bamboo skewer through the center of the first signature. Alternate the weave pattern (skipping every other loop as you work) and connect each successive signature by weaving through the loops you skipped with the previous skewer. When you get to the end, connect the last signature to the first signature to form a circle.

Tip: Candleholders have various depths so you may need to adjust the length of the bamboo skewers. To test for size, insert a skewer into the center hole of the candleholder. The length should measure between 8 3/4 and 9 inches from the upper edge of the candleholder to the tip of the bamboo skewer. If necessary, use a utility knife to shorten the skewers before weaving.



6. Place white glue inside the center hole of the candle holder and also on the blunt ends of the bamboo skewers. Insert the bamboo skewers into the hole.

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7. While the glue is still wet, cut a 1/2-yard length of waxed linen thread. Weave it in and out through the tips of the bamboo skewers. Pull the thread tight, while maintaining the integrity of the circle of bamboo skewers. Add a touch of white glue to the ends of the thread to hold it in place. When the glue is dry, clip the thread.



These are fun variations on the use of the piano binding technique. You could also make a traditional book with waxed linen thread as the binding material or use other sorts of nontraditional materials to make your book special and unique. Enjoy the process.



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