

VICTORIAN PUZZLE PURSE VALENTINE

Northwoods Book Arts Guild - Connie Stricks - January 22, 2022

Instructions based on the following:

Cheryl Moote "All Tangled Up"

Puzzle Purse Valentine, OCP (Orange County Public Library) - YouTube

Carmen's Curious Tutorial: Paper Puzzle Purse - YouTube

History: Puzzle purses are origami style foldables, used world wide, made from a square piece of paper. They were a popular way to send a love note in the 18th and 19th centuries. During the Victorian period they were used as baptismal certificates as well as Valentines and could contain everything from a lock of hair to a poem or message of love. Puzzle purse squares were often numbered so their message could be read in order as each leaf was opened.

Paper: For ease of construction, use a 9" square paper to create a 3" purse or 12" for a 4" square. We will be dividing paper in thirds, so a size that divides evenly by 3 avoids having to work with fractions. A 9" and 12" sheet of paper offer more surface to decorate than smaller sheets.

Although text weight paper is fine for the puzzle purse, Elephant Hide*, Colorplan, Strathmore 400 Series-80#, and Japanese lightweight linen are better, offering greater flexibility for embellishment, e.g. markers probably won't bleed through. (Cardstock is too heavy to fold easily and manipulate for this foldable, although a crisper paper works better than soft ones like Lokta or many Japanese papers.) Two-sided papers can be quite effective for puzzle and box .

*Available at Paper Birches

Materials:

9" and 12" sheet paper for puzzle; 12" for box (2-3 of each - just in case you need or want them)

Rulers 18-24"

Cutting Mat with grid

X-acto knife or utility knife with blades

Bone or teflon folder

Pencil and eraser

Double sided tape or MacTac*

Embellishing materials of choice - pens, markers, hearts, ribbon, stamps, stickers, even stitching

BONE FIRMLY TO CREASE IN EACH STEP

1. If paper has two sides, **place right side down**. Score paper in thirds in one direction.
2. Turn paper 90 degrees and score in thirds in opposite direction. You now have 9 squares.
3. Open paper and fold at 2 creases you have made in the vertical direction. Turn paper 90 degrees and fold along 2 creases made in horizontal direction.
4. Fold diagonally in one direction (creating a triangle), being careful to make sure the edges line up. Bone.
5. Open paper, fold diagonally in opposite direction. Bone. You should now have 9 squares with a big X crease in the center, from corner to corner,
6. Open. **Turn paper over** (right side up, if 2 sided). Fold bottom right corner to meet top left corner of the center square. Bone. Open. Fold bottom left corner to meet top of right corner of the center square. Repeat for two remaining corners.
7. **Turn paper over**. Pinch each of the 4 corners together. Holding two opposite corners, gently turn and twist until a pinwheel forms, Flatten. Fold two opposite arms in; fold the remaining two in, tucking them into the adjoining folded arms.

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PUZZLE PURSE BOX

This box template and its construction were found in Cherryl Moote's book, *All Tangled Up*. Her template was designed to hold zen tangle cards, but with a few measurement adjustments, it works for our Valentine. It also can be readily adapted to any size book.

The template here is not the actual size needed for our valentine, but the measurements are given to create it. The folded valentine is a 3" square. Adding an $\frac{1}{8}$ " to its height and width allows it to fit perfectly in the box. The folded valentine has depth, too, so the $\frac{1}{2}$ " depth of the box is just perfect.

Materials:

12 x 12 paper - Suggested paper: Canson Mi-Teintes,* cardstock, Khadi*, St Armand*

MacTac* or $\frac{1}{2}$ " double sided tape

Rulers: Several; a 3" w is very helpful;

Cutting mat with grids

Knife with extra blades

Scorer*

Bone or teflon folder*

Pencil/eraser

Metal edges* very helpful

*Available for purchase from Paper Birches

USING ILLUSTRATION AS A GUIDE: Measure, draw, and cut out box.

(Don't forget tabs!) Cut on solid lines; score on dotted lines.

Hints:

1. Remember scorers have some width, so make sure your scoring is on the dotted line(s).
2. It's helpful to have a hard surface to slip into the box to press against as you are securing the taped areas, e.g. ruler, any $\frac{1}{2}$ " structure,

1. Score along the dotted lines; fold each side into the inside to check fit.

2. Cut two $\frac{1}{2}$ " strips of MacTac; fold tabs, and put tape on outside of each tab (leave protective paper on)

3. Fold over one of the sides (flaps), fold the other side on top of it. Check fit. Cut two, $\frac{1}{2}$ "w x $3\frac{1}{8}$ " strips of MacTac (or double sided $\frac{1}{2}$ " tape) and attach to each edge of one side to hold the second side in place. Fold and secure.

4. Cut two $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $3\frac{1}{8}$ " strips for the front side and put on either edge of underside. Leaving protective paper on, fold up, tucking in tabs, to check fit.

5. Fold top flap (lid) down over the box. Measure 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " from bottom of box and place a pencil mark on either side of the V-lid to create the ends of the slit that will hold the lid in place.

6. Remove protective cover from each tab, and as you fold flap over the front side of the box make sure that the flaps are tucked into the box. Secure them to the inside of the box. This is a bit fussy! Secure the top flap to the other two.

(N.B. This box actually functions perfectly well without tabs, but the tabs give the box a more finished look.)