



Create an Altered Book

Tutorial for beginners

Take your creativity to the next level by upscaling an old book.

This tutorial shows you the major steps for how to make an unusual sculpture that you can hang directly on the wall, display in a shadow box, or put on an easel. The video lessons give more detail and demonstrations of technique.

Gather tools and materials

You'll need some common tools to complete this project.

- One or more books to cut up
- Tracing paper
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Ink pen (0.1, 0.5, and brush tip)
- PVA glue and a brush or applicator
- Papercraft glue stick
- (Optional) One or more methods to color the pages
 - Acrylic paints and brushes
 - Colored pencils
 - Colored tissue
 - Images from a magazine
- Drill
- Screws/washers
- Wooden 12-inch ruler with metal strip
- Pliers
- (Optional) Picture wire

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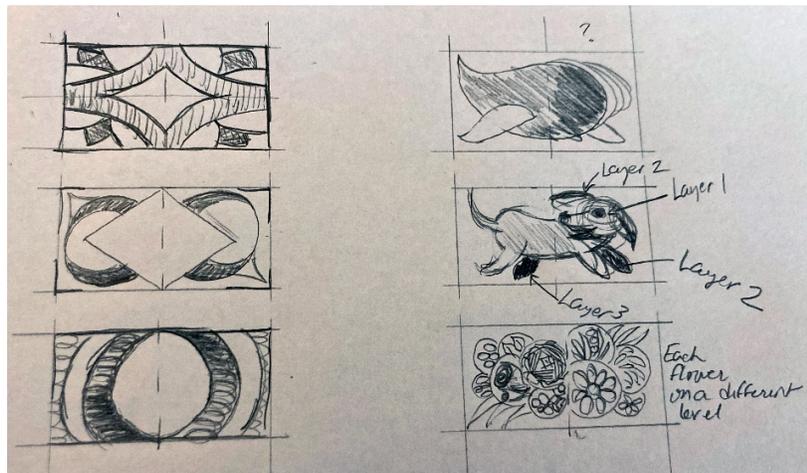
Design the sculpture

For this part you'll need these items:

- One or more books to cut up
- Tracing or letter-sized paper
- Pencil
- Scissors

Steps

1. Trim the tracing or letter-sized paper to the size of the book.
 - a. Fold the tracing paper in half.
 - b. Open the book to the middle or from wherever you want to "center" the sculpture.
 - c. Cut the tracing paper to fit the pages of your book.
2. Draw your design.
 - a. Draw some thumbnail sketches to see what might work for you.



In the video instruction, I selected to make the top left thumbnail sketch.

- b. Using your thumbnail sketch and the pencil draw several shapes inside of one another on a piece of paper.
 - c. Cut out the patterns for each section. Refer to the video for this lesson for demonstration.
3. Transfer by tracing the design to the top page of each section of pages. Refer to the video for demonstration of this process.

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Cut the sections into rough shapes

For this part you'll need:

- Scissors

Use your scissors to cut the sections into shapes which you'll draw on later. You do this so you can see how much to draw on the other levels.

I usually cut at least 15 pages deep on each side of a book to make that section "pop."

Tip: Save some of the larger cutoffs for the next steps.



Draw on the sections

For this part, you'll need:

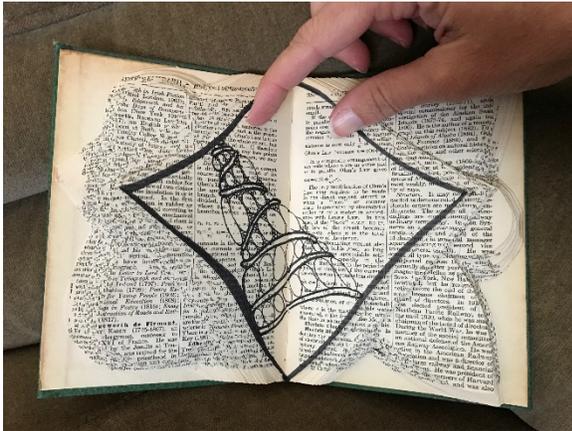
- Ink pens

Tip: Use the cutoffs to practice drawing in ink. Some paper can accept a lot of ink; other paper doesn't and will break or melt if you apply too much ink.



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Use the ink pens to fill the shapes with patterns of your choice.



Every so often, put your book down about 3 feet away from you, so you can admire it and decide what to draw next.

Add color

You can use whatever techniques you like to add color to your book. Be sure to test the media on the scraps that you used with the ink before you use them on the book. In my experience colored pencils, crayons, colored tissue, dry brush techniques with acrylic paint and inks work best.

Note: The wetter the media, the more warpage you might experience.

Refine the cuts

Use your scissors to cut each section more precisely and in harmony with the inked lines.

Secure the pages

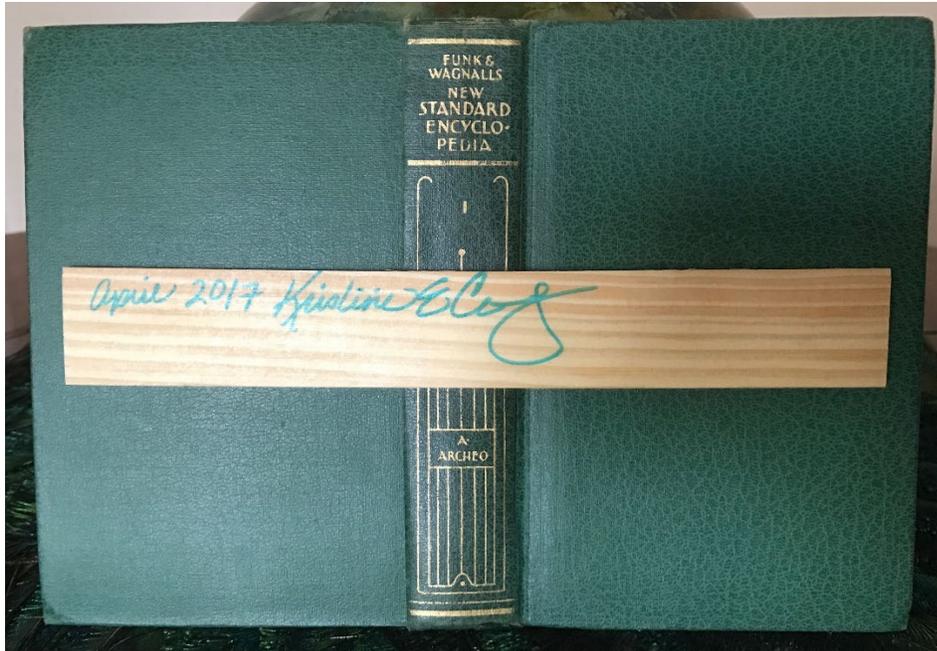
For this part, you'll use these tools:

- Drill
- Screws
- Washers
- Wooden ruler

Steps

1. Use pliers to remove the metal strip from the top of the ruler.
2. Drill holes through a significant number of pages.
3. Drill holes in the ruler.
4. (Optional) If you intend to hang the sculpture directly on the wall, attach picture wire.
5. Use a thin layer of glue to hold down the few pages that aren't held in place by screws.

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Celebrate your accomplishment

Put your sculpture about 3 feet away from you so you can admire it.

