

The Ultimate Guide to Cardstock Paper and Craft Paper

Cardstock History and Definition

Cardstock (card stock) is a type of paper that is thicker, heavier, and sturdier than regular or standard paper. The earliest known history of paper was traced back to China, back in 105 CE, by the Han court eunuch Cai Lun. Initially, paper production started with simple fiber sources such as recycled fibers from used textiles called rags. The advent of construction paper, also known as sugar paper, led to the creation of **cardstock paper**.

In the late 19th century, industrialized paper and synthetic dye technology were combined, paving the way for the first construction paper. The term "sugar paper" was coined because construction paper was used as bags for sugar. Back in 17th century England, confectionery bakers used "blue paper" in baking "Regency ratafia cakes (or macaroons)." This was how construction paper became known as "sugar paper."

Construction paper is **colored cardstock paper**. Since it is mainly wood pulp, the paper's surface is slightly rough and unfinished. This has been one of the very first **craft paper** used for different projects. Construction paper also gained popularity when, initially, the animated television series Blue's Clues and South Park used it along with stop motion animation.



What is cardstock?

To put it simply, cardstock is a thicker and more durable type of paper. It is more flexible and thinner than paperboard and cardboard, making it perfect for arts and crafts. Since it is heavier and sturdier than standard or regular paper, it is also the best choice for paper crafting and card making.

Due to its durability, this type of paper is generally used for business cards, postcards, playing cards, catalog covers, and scrapbooking. Its smooth surface can be glossy, metallic, or textured. According to Wikipedia, “when *card stock* is labeled *cover stock*, it often has a glossy coating on one or both sides and is used especially in business cards and book covers.”

Industry Updates (Latest News and Trends)

Cardstock Paper in Paper Crafting

Cardstock paper has been a staple in modern paper crafting because it lends itself to a wide array of techniques such as folding, curving, bending, cutting, gluing, molding, stitching, or layering. With regular paper, using too much liquid or applying heavy

embellishments will cause it to warp or tear. In the past, there were fewer **cardstock colors** and **cardstock sizes** for paper crafters to choose from. Today, however, a wide range of colors, textures, and weights are available for any kind of paper crafting project.



Even in the digital age, paper crafting is a booming industry worldwide. According to **Statistica**, the total spending on paper craft supplies in the U.S. from 2010 to 2016 was \$4.57 billion. While painting and drawing take the number one spot as the “craft and hobby that Americans spend the most money on,” paper crafts aren’t far behind, taking the number five spot. In 2019, the combined sales of arts and crafts stores Hobby and Lobby and Michaels was six million US dollars. With paper craft supplies being popular, **cardstock** and **envelopes** also became in demand. In fact, the value added by paper products manufacturing in the US (from 1998 to 2019) reached \$61.2 million.

Cardstock Paper in Card Making

The history of card making can be traced back to either the ancient Chinese sending greeting cards on New Year’s Day or the early Egyptians sending greetings using papyrus scrolls. According to Wikipedia, it was in the 1850s when “the greeting card had been transformed from a relatively expensive, handmade and hand-delivered gift to a popular and affordable means of personal communication, due largely to advances in printing and mechanization.”



This led to the increased demand for **cardstock paper**, **cardstock for invitations**, and **cardstock crafts**, among other paper craft supplies. Creating handmade cards, either for personal or business purposes, has become so popular that **craft paper** (mostly card stock) is now a staple in a paper crafter's stash.

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Manufacturing and Materials

Before the industrialization of paper production, recycled fibers from used textiles, also known as rags, are the most common fiber source. These rags were usually from hemp, linen, and cotton. With the introduction of wood pulp in 1843, paper production became

independent from ragpickers and other recycled materials. Over the years, the papermaking process has evolved. Wood pulp is created either through chemical pulping or mechanical pulping. Recycled paper, on the other hand, is produced by mixing either chemically or mechanically produced pulp with water and applying mechanical action.



Manufacturing of Construction Paper

Construction paper (also known as **colored cardstock**) has been around since the late 19th century. During that time, it was “primarily advertised for classroom settings as an effective canvas for supporting multiple drawing media.” **Colored cardstock paper** was created through “a machine-oriented process that exposes the paper to dyes while it was still pulp, resulting in a thorough distribution and brilliance of color.” Back then, Germany was the leading producer of aniline dyes, the primary dyes for producing construction paper. However, its involvement in World War I made them cease the export of these dyes. This led to a shortage in dyes, forcing manufacturing to use substitute coloring methods instead.

Card stock is typically made with a combination of hardwood and softwood materials. The paper’s proper formation is due to the hardwood, and the softwood fibers provide strength. Because every mill uses different fibers at different ratios, there is a wide range of **cardstock sizes**, weights, finishes, and qualities.

Types of Cardstock

There are different types of **cardstock on sale** either in arts and crafts stores or online. Check out the different kinds of **paper cardstock** based on **cardstock sizes**, **cardstock textures**, weights, finishes, and **cardstock colors**.

Weight and Size

Paper cardstock dimensions are usually measured in inches, while its weight ranges from 65 lbs to 110 lbs. The standard weight is 80 lbs. A piece of card stock's weight is determined by the weight of 500 sheets of paper that are 20 x 26 inches.

Cardstock Sizes

- 6 x 6 inches
- 8 x 8 inches
- 8 1/2 x 11 inches
- 12 x 12 inches (standard scrapbook page size)



What is GSM?

GSM stands for “grams per square meter.” This article states that various paper types’ weight is measured from a sample sheet cut to one square meter in size. No matter the length or width the paper becomes, the weight measurement is always taken from the square meter sheet.”

A paper that weighs 55 GSM will be much lighter and thinner than a paper that weighs 400 GSM. The latter will be heavier, thicker, and much more durable. In short, the higher the GSM, the sturdier the paper is.

Cardstock Weight (according to OfficeXPress)

- **75-90 GSM** – This is found in sketch pads or notebooks. It’s thick enough to draw on with a pencil, but heavy ink or marker may bleed through.
- **90-100 GSM** – This is the weight of most types of household printer paper.
- **120-140 GSM** – The weight of your average promotional poster. Some examples are movie posters hanging on a teenager’s bedroom walls or product posters hanging in store windows.
- **210-300 GSM** – This thicker type of paper is stiffer but still bendable. You’ll see it used for some magazine covers and higher-quality flyers. This is also the weight of most paper used for watercolors or painting.
- **350-450 GSM** – The highest GSM paper is pretty much **cardstock paper**. This is the stiffest, sturdiest paper and is used for business cards and **cardstock for invitations**.



Texture and Finish

Here are the most common types of **paper cardstock** based on texture and finish.

- **Glossy Cardstock** - This has a shiny or lustrous coating.
- **Matte Cardstock** - This one has a dull or lusterless coating.
- **Vellum Cardstock** - Vellum is a fine parchment paper made from a calf, kid, or lamb's skin. It can range from almost transparent to almost opaque.
- **Textured Cardstock** - This is made up of various fiber or other content that gives it a unique texture. Standard textures include linen, canvas, wood, etc.
- **Glitter Cardstock** - This has a colored glitter coating.
- **Iridescent Cardstock** - This one's coating displays a spectrum of colors that shimmer and change as the observer's position changes.

(Source: Create For Less)



- **Gradient Cardstock** - To make crafting easier, Altenew has come up with gradient **cardstock sets**. These are 80lb in weight and 3" x 6" in size. Each set comes with eight sheets in three different shades from the same color family. These color-coordinated **cardstock sets** will make creating embellishments easy peasy! You can use them with **3D dies**, **layered stamps and dies**, or simply use them as colorful accents on your project.

Get Your Cardstock Paper Now!

Uses of Cardstock

Since **cardstock** is basically just paper, it is very versatile, flexible, and easy to use. There is a plethora of **cardstock crafts** readily available online - from Instagram to Pinterest. Whether it's paper crafting, card making, scrapbooking, journaling, or mixed media art, the possibilities are endless when it comes to **cardstock ideas**.





Cards	Scrapbook	Mixed Media	Altered Art	Cardstock for Invitations
handmade cards and greeting cards	background pages or layouts	journals	Artist Trading Cards (ATC)	cardstock for wedding invitations
announcements	embellishments	planners	embellishments	birthday invitations
place setting cards	tags	cards	tags	Thanksgiving

gift tags	borders	scrapbook layouts	borders	Christmas
menus	matting photos	home decor	photo mats	Barbecue
postcards	mini album	DIY projects	envelopes	New Year

From clean and simple to more complex and decorative ones, there are so many **cardstock crafts** that you can try today. With just a few **craft paper** and other paper craft supplies, you can whip up something in no time! Here are a few quick and easy **cardstock ideas** for you!



1. DIY tags and bookmarks

Creating DIY tags and bookmarks is probably one of the easiest ways to use your **cardstock paper** and **craft paper**. In **this blog post**, design team member Maryam showed how to create three different and elegant DIY bookmarks with **paper cardstock**, a mini stamp set, some embossing inks and powders, and other mixed media supplies. The process is the same for each bookmark, but the results are different.

You can also whip up some quick gift tags or holiday tags with just **white cardstock**, some embellishments, sequins, ribbons, and a handful of paper crafting supplies. **This blog post** will teach you a fun and easy way to create DIY gift tags in less than 10 minutes!

2. Handmade cards

Let's face it; it's easier just to drop by a store and grab the first greeting card you see. After all, it's already been made for you! All you need to do is write your name and the recipient's name, and you're good to go. However, there is nothing better than the thoughtfulness and heartwarming feeling of a simple handmade card. Whether you use **colored cardstock** or **white cardstock**, here are several card making ideas that you can try today.

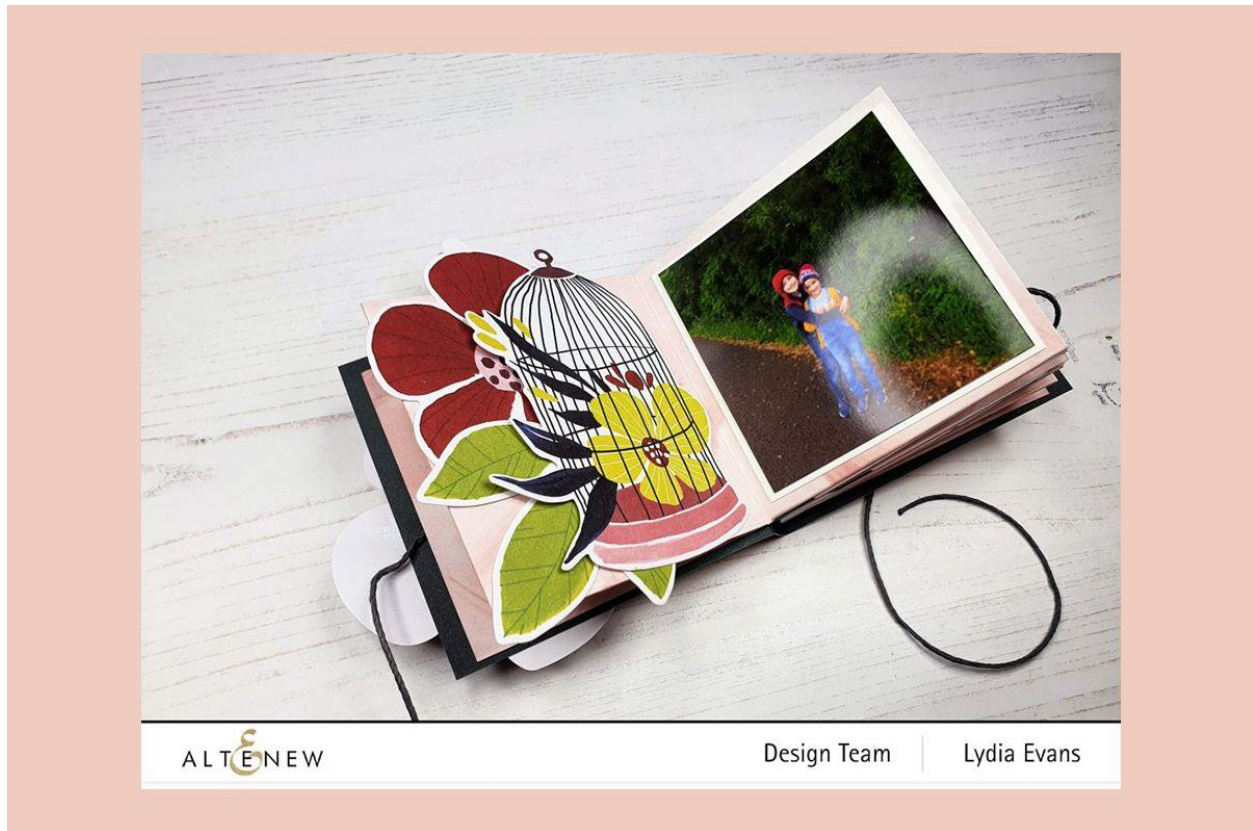


- Thank you card
- New Year card or Christmas card
- Inspirational card
- Motivational card
- Greeting card
- Congratulations card
- Birthday card
- Masculine and feminine cards
- Cardstock for wedding invitations

The video below shows five different ways of creating beautiful, classy and elegant wedding invitations using vellum paper and **colored cardstock paper**. Check it out!

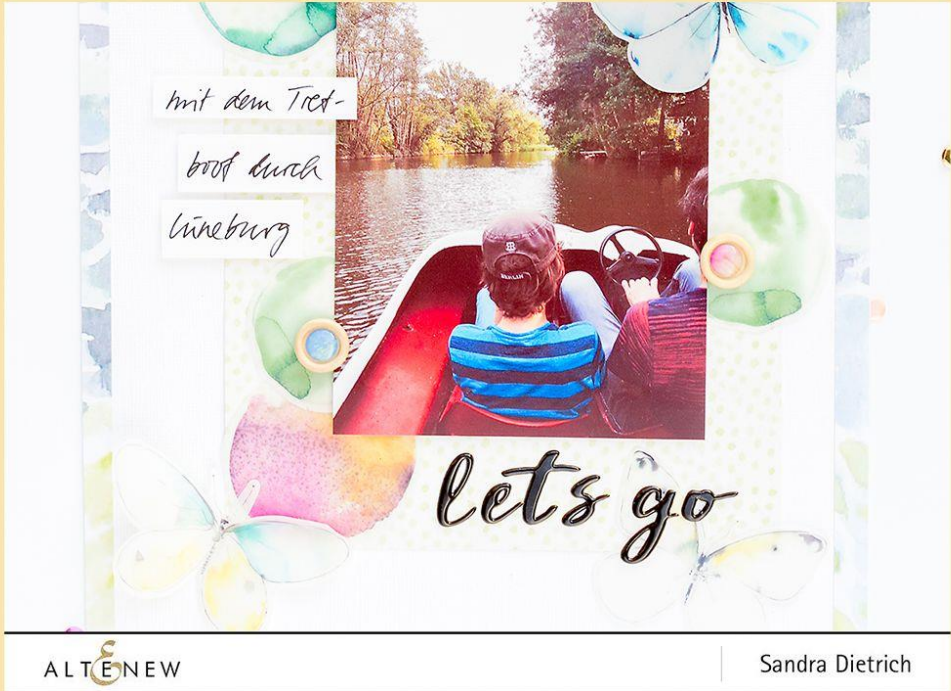
3. Mini album

What better way to preserve your precious memories than to create your own mini photo album? If you have a few **paper cardstock**, you can go for white or **colored cardstock**, you can start doing this right away! Check out the blog posts [here](#) for some quick and easy **cardstock ideas**.



4. Scrapbook layout

Using your cardstock to create scrapbook layouts or pages is one of the most fun **cardstock crafts**. To start, grab a few 12" x 12" white cardstock, some adhesives, embellishments, pens, and photos. If you need **colorful cardstock**, Altenew has a variety of **cardstock on sale** right here. Check out some of these scrapbook layout ideas.



- Simple scrapbook page with acetate die-cuts and stickers
- Fun and colorful scrapbook page using a **scrapbook kit**
- Pocket scrapbook
- Travel scrapbook
- 8" x 8" scrapbook layout
- Baby scrapbook page
- Family-themed scrapbook
- Scrapbook journal

5. DIY home decor

Decorating your home is always fun! Did you know that you can easily create DIY home decor and other **craft paper ideas** with just a handful of **colorful cardstock**? You can make Christmas ornaments like these, holiday decor, Easter decor, Thanksgiving decor, a vision board like this, embroidery hoop decor, door decor, framed decor, altered book page, gift box, tea light box, and more!



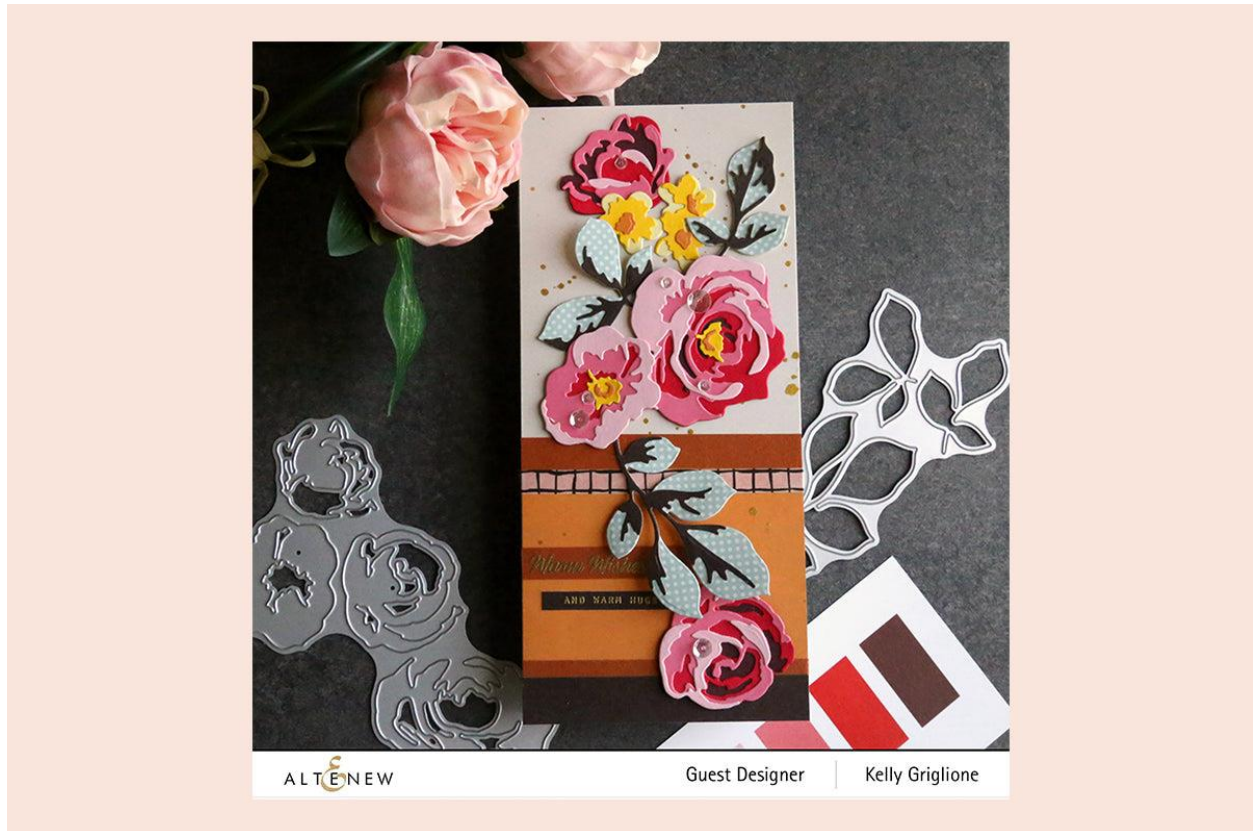
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Design Team

Agnieszka Malyszek

6. Cardstock Flowers

Do you remember creating beautiful flowers out of paper when you were young? This easy DIY paper craft has made a comeback - thanks to crafting stores and companies offering a wide variety of paper and **cardstock for paper flowers**. Why are paper flowers popular, you ask? Here are some of the reasons why you should create your own paper flowers:



- It's cost-efficient! **Cardstock for paper flowers** is relatively cheaper than other arts and crafts supplies.
- You can make as many as you want in batches and use them to decorate your home.
- You can use them to zhuzh up your gift wrapping!
- It's the perfect activity for your family and friends. Why? Paper flowers are super easy to create - even the little ones can make them.
- It's a better alternative for real flowers. They will never dry out or wilt!
- It's super easy to maintain - it just needs a little dusting now and then.

Whether it's paper roses or paper peonies, **cardstock flowers** are fun and easy to create, especially when you have beautiful and high-quality paper. So what are the best paper and **cardstock for paper flowers**? It should be something high-quality, heavyweight (35lb to 110lb), and sturdy. Here are some of our recommendations:

- a. Patterned Paper Pads
- b. Colored Cardstock
- c. Gradient Cardstock
- d. Gold Foil Paper
- e. Vellum

Whatever type of paper or cardstock you use, make sure that you get something decent and high-quality. You don't want to save money, buy cheap ones, and end up with **cardstock flowers** that tear easily.

Find the best cardstock paper for your next paper crafting project!

Cardstock is an essential and staple tool in any arts and crafts enthusiasts' stash. It is similar to a painter's or an artist's canvas. Most arts and crafts start with plain **white cardstock**. Not only is it simple and easy to use, but it's also versatile and durable. Whether it's **white cardstock, colored cardstock, glossy cardstock, or craft paper**, there is an abundance of **cardstock on sale** both online and in physical stores. If you are still searching where to buy **cardstock paper**, you can check out Altenew's collection [right here](#).

Buy Cardstock and Craft Paper Now!

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

Where can I buy cardstock paper from?

Cardstock paper is available in every arts and crafts store. While you can find some on Amazon or Walmart, it is still best to buy cardstock paper online from reputable and trusted crafts stores such as Altenew. You can also check out Neenah Paper since they are well-known for their white cardstock.

What do you use cardstock paper for?

Nowadays, cardstock paper is mainly used for paper craft, crafting, card making, scrapbooking, mixed media art, and other DIY crafts.

Is cardstock the same as scrapbook paper?

While all cardstock can be considered as scrapbook paper, not all scrapbook paper is considered as cardstock paper. In short, you can use cardstock paper for scrapbooking. Other types of scrapbook paper are patterned paper, Kraft paper, vellum paper, metallic paper, glossy paper, parchment paper, etc. Because of its durability and size, a 12" x 12" cardstock paper is ideal for creating scrapbook pages.

How do you scrapbook with cardstock?

You can scrapbook with cardstock by choosing a 12" x 12" white cardstock paper. This will serve as your base or your background. Next, decide on the color scheme or the theme of your scrapbook page. Then, start adhering embellishments, stickers, and photos onto your cardstock paper. Finally, add some journaling, stamping, die-cuts, or other mixed media art.

What is the best weight cardstock for making cards?

The standard and best weight cardstock for card making is 80lb. It is recommended to use cardstock paper that weighs somewhere between 80lb to 110lb especially for stamping, die-cutting, and other mixed media techniques.

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