

Paper Arts

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Below is a list of minimum supplies needed to make a standard-sized greeting card, all of which can be found at your neighborhood craft stores (e.g. Michaels; Hobby Lobby):

- 1) Half of an 8.5 x 11" piece of **Card Stock**. Card stock is typically sold in single, full-sized, 8.5 x 11" pieces, and in packages of full and half-sized sheets. It is best, but not necessary, to use a light color for the base of your card. A half sheet of card stock, folded in half will yield one 4.25 x 5.5" card base. A full sheet will make 2 standard-sized card bases. (Note: construction paper can be used, but it will yield a less substantial base and is not advised.) Keep your scraps! You never know when a scrap will be just the right size for that word stamp, or to mount a stamped image. Remember, when creating an image, there are two sides to the card stock. If you're not happy with your image the first time, you get a second chance with that piece. Card stock is relatively cheap (it's often on sale) so don't stress yourself out. Just toss the unsatisfactory image away and start again.



In addition, 4.25 x 5.5" envelopes are nice, but not necessary.

- 2) **Paper Trimmer**, large enough to cut an 8.5 by 11" sheet in half. Naturally, scissors can also be used to cut card stock, but you will get a more precise cut with a trimmer.



- 3) Detail fine-point **Scissors** (to "fussy cut" images or words to embellish.) Also consider edging scissors that cut designs along edges.



- 4) **Bone Folder** – used to create a sharp crease at the fold of your base card.



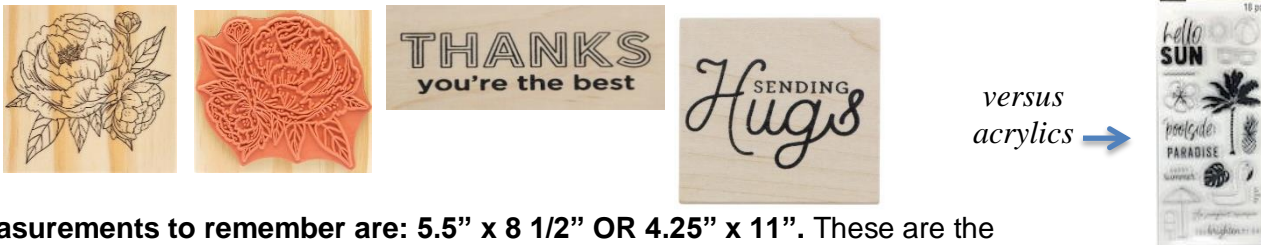
- 5) **Adhesives** – There are liquid and stick-type adhesives for card making and they are cheaper options however, I find that a tape runner or double-sided Scotch tape adhere better and are less messy. Foam mounting tape is nice to add dimension to card layers.



6) **Ink**, for rubber stamping or coloring. A black Archival Stamp pad is good for stamping images or words but is not necessary. If you're just beginning your card-making journey, avoid Pigment ink. Pigment ink is used along with embossing powder to produce a raised image. It is a nice technique but is a more advanced technique and requires extra equipment. Pigment ink must be heated, with a heat gun, to dry. "Marvey", or other Dye-based ink markers work well. It is easy to color the black ink directly onto the stamp, then huffing on the stamp and stamping the image. A set of Dye-based ink markers can also be used with a brush and water, to watercolor. If you can only afford one, a set of quality dye-based markers with a large tip on one end and a thin tip on the other, will go a long way and cover many aspects of card making. The larger tip makes it easier to apply ink to stamps while the thin tip is good to writing and coloring. **DO NOT** use permanent markers (such as Sharpie) to ink stamps! They will dry too fast and will permanently stain you stamp.



7) **Assorted image and word rubber (or acrylic) stamps.** Either rubber or acrylic stamps work well. Rubber stamps are usually one image only, mounted on wood, while acrylic stamps usually come in sets that include images and words. With acrylic, you will get more bang for your buck. However initially, with acrylics, you will also need to purchase an acrylic block, on which to mount the unmounted stamps. If you intend to use acrylics, a nice set of assorted sizes of blocks would be a good investment. The closer the block size is to the image size, the better your stamped image will turn out.



Measurements to remember are: 5.5" x 8 1/2" OR 4.25" x 11". These are the measurements for a half sheet of Card stock (CS). Either will give you the 4.25" x 5.5" folded card base you need to start a standard size card. The difference between the two measurements will be whether you fold on the short or long side of the card.

Images and words from magazines and books can be copied or cut out and used in place of stamped images. Anytime you want to "Mat" an image or word (by placing the cut image on a slightly larger contrasting color of CS to frame it,) be sure to cut the mat 1/4 – 1/2" larger than your trimmed image, on both the short and long edges. This is just enough to pop the image. Speaking of "pop", after matting your image/word, you can use foam mounting tape to three-dimensionally "pop" the matted image off the page. This is an especially nice effect on the face of a card. Try not to get too carried away with popping though, as too many "pops" will make your card too bulky. When mailing a card, too many popped layers can end up costing more to send.

If you're looking to kick it up a notch, you can add **glitz and sparkle** by adding some of the many embellishments you will find in the paper crafting area of your local craft store. Who doesn't love a rhinestone or two? As rhinestones can be more costly, you can get a similar effect by adding some glitter glue to the finished image. I highly recommend glitter glue over glue with loose glitter. Glitter glue is less messy and can give a better result. When adding embellishments, especially glitter glue, make these additions last. Then set the finished card aside to dry thoroughly. Nothing is more disappointing that to have a beautiful card ruined by smeared glitter glue!

There are countless samples and ideas on the internet (Pinterest is a good source), where one can get inspiration. The designs can be tweaked to accommodate any occasion (a birthday card example can be made into a thank you card by simply changing the words and/or image.)

Most of all, enjoy the process because you're bringing smiles to others who often need it the most!