
Make a Pop-Up Flower Greeting Card with Bel Mills of Scrap Paper Circus

Chapter 1 - Make a Pop-Up Flower Greeting Card

Overview

- It's so much fun to open up a greeting card and find a pop-up surprise inside. I'm gonna show you how to make a stunning pop-up card brimming with paper flowers without a crash course in paper mechanics. I'm Bel Mills, a book artist, mail artist and educator. I'm also an avid upcycler, and I love to make handmade books and creative mail out of paper you can find around your house. In this class, I'm gonna show you how to cut 3D flowers from upcycled book pages. Then, we're going to attach them to our card, add a variety of found embellishments and finish it all off with a custom envelope. This card is perfect for birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's Day, or anytime you wanna brighten the mailbox of someone you love. (gentle upbeat music)

Materials

- To make our pop-up flower greeting card, we're gonna need paper in a variety of weights, as well as some basic craft supplies. You'll need two sheets of eight and a half by 11 card stock in contrasting colors. These are gonna form the body of your card. You'll also need a couple of templates, which are available as a PDF. We'll be using a variety of ephemera that's postal related, whether it's canceled postage stamps to/from labels, vintage postal stickers, whatever you have on hand. We'll also need some patterned card stock. This will decorate the outside of your card. Then you'll need some paper that you'll be using for your flower petals. I like to use pages from an old book but if you don't want to remove pages from a book, you can also use photocopies of envelopes or old letters. As long as the paper is fairly lightweight. You'll need a stapler, mini glue dots, a small paper fastener, double-sided tape, a couple different colors of washi tape, a glue stick, paperclips, a metal ruler, a bone folder, an awl, circle punches, including a one inch and a 5/8 inch, and a corner rounder. You'll also need thread. This is wax linen thread but you can use embroidery floss, baker's twine, or string. Finally, you'll need a pencil, a craft knife, scissors and if you have edging scissors, that's a bonus, and a cutting mat.

Make the flowers

- The first step in making our greeting card is creating the pop-up flowers. I've chosen this book to use for the petals of my flower. Since I don't yet know how many flowers I'm going to be able to get out of each page, I'm gonna start by just tearing out a page and seeing how the measurements come out. So I'm just using my ruler so that I get a nice straight edge. We'll be using 3 1/2 inch squares of paper to make our flowers. So I'm gonna start out by just measuring my sheet to see how many flowers I'm going to be able to get from each page. And I can see here, lining this edge up with the zero mark on my ruler, that I've got more than seven inches in this page. So I will be able to get two 3 1/2 inch flowers out of this page. I'm just moving this over a little bit to try and center the page on the seven inches. That way, none of my flowers will have too much white space. So I'll move my page over and I'll make cuts at the seven inch mark and at the zero mark so I can get a page that's nice and full of the patterned text that I want. I can now take this seven-inch wide piece of paper and cut it in half at the 3 1/2 inch grid line. And lastly, I will be cutting this dimension, this long dimension down to 3 1/2. And I'm going to do this in a similar way that I did my first cut, which is to try and get as much text as I can into the 3 1/2-inch space that I'm cutting. I'll just turn this

around and make it easier. Now that I have a 3 1/2 inch square, I can begin making the folds that are going to create our flower shape. The first step is to put a diagonal fold into the square by matching two of the corners. You can use your bone folder to make that fold nice and sharp. Now we're going to fold this triangle that we have in half, and when we have this smaller triangle, we are going to fold it in half. This will be our last fold. Now we're ready to cut out our petal shape. You'll notice that there is a petal template at the bottom of your gluing pdf. I've already cut mine out, so now I'm going to use it to cut this petal shape. I just wanna make sure that, as you place the petal on top of your triangle, that these open edges of your folds are at the top and the bottom point is closed. I'm not going to trace around this petal shape. If you like, you can add that step. I just find it easier to just cut around it and make the process a little quicker. We don't have to be super exact, after all, we're making flowers and there are no flowers in nature that are exactly alike. Opening up your flower, you can see we have a shape that's essentially like four hearts, but in order to make it 3D, we're going to have to remove one of these petals. However, before we do that we wanna put a center on our flower, a contrasting center. I'm using this patterned card stock. You don't have to use card stock and you don't even have to use patterned paper, you just wanna use a paper that contrasts with your flower petals and that also coordinates with the color scheme that you have for your card. I have two paper punches here, circles in two different sizes. One is 5/8 inch and one is one inch. Both of them work for the center of your flower. I can show you later both options. Right now I'm going to use the 5/8 inch. I have my center. Now I'll take my glue stick, apply a nice layer to my punched-out circle, and then place it right in the center to the best of my ability. I just wanna eyeball it. Using your bone folder to really make sure that those edges are adhered will help us in our later steps. Now that we have this flower center in place, we can flip our flower over and choose a petal to remove. It's basically like taking a piece out of a pizza pie. If it helps, you might just draw the edges of the petal that you're gonna remove. Depending on how much you creased those folds, they may or may not be very visible. I'll take my scissors and cut out the petal. Having removed this petal is what now allows us to create a cupped 3D shape for our flower. And we're gonna do that by basically layering these two petals on top of one another. If you used card stock for your center like I did, you'll find that there's some resistance. What you'll want to do first to help with that is, I pointed out before how you have these kind of heart shapes, these petals that are sort of coupled together, I'm just going to take this heart and I'm gonna layer it on top of the one next to it and put a fold in the card stock 'cause our card stock has not been folded at all yet which is why it's sort of resisting. Now we're gonna do the exact same thing on the other side, just layer those two heart shapes on top of one another. After you do that, you'll find that moving these two petals on top of one another is much easier. We'll use our glue stick to adhere the petals to one another. And as you're doing that, you want, at the same time, to sort of flatten your flower so that it is three petals on either side. When your card is closed, this is the shape that your flower is going to assume within your card so you want to kind of establish this position for your flower ahead of time. And then just make sure that the center is adhered. If you find that any of the edges of your flower are beginning to pick up, you can get a little bit of glue stick on your finger and stick it back down. You'll need a total of seven flowers for your cards so go ahead and repeat the flower-making process six more times. This is our PDF, and I'll point out all the spots on your flowers where you'll be placing glue. So, basically, all these darker spots are areas where you'll be applying a mini glue dot. We can start by layering our flowers on top of the template. At this point, you'll want to think a little bit about the positioning of your flower. So the flower that is in the center of your template is also going to be the flower that is in the center when you open up your card. So if you have a flower that is your favorite

for one reason or another, it might be that you photocopied a letter and you really like a word that appears on one of your flowers or you like a stripe that showed up on a flower when you photocopied an air mail envelope, whatever reason you have, you wanna make sure that the flower that you like the most is in that center position. If you've never used glue dots before, it takes a little bit of getting used to. They're basically very small dots of pure adhesive on this backing paper. You'll have to move the backing around to be able to locate the dots. They're nearly invisible. You can only see them when the light reflects on them just so. I'm going to tear the backing to isolate one dot. I put my finger behind the glue dot and apply it to my petals. I know from looking at my template that all three of these petals need a glue dot right at the tip. You can also use glue stick for this part. I have done that in the past. I prefer glue dots for a few reasons, first of all, glue stick can get a little messy and then you have the flowers just sticking to each other, flowers sticking to other flowers that aren't supposed to be stuck to other flowers. It can just get a little bit out of hand. Also, these glue dots have superior holding power, much stronger than glue stick in a very short amount of time. I mean, they basically don't require any drying time, which glue stick does. So for all those reasons, I really like using them. And I'm just checking my template to make sure that I'm getting all these spots in the right place. I usually put all of my spots in place before I start connecting them. So keep going until all your glue dots are in place. If you find that your release paper doesn't want to release, usually you just need to burnish the glue dot a bit more. There we go. Okay, we are ready to connect our flowers. The arrows on the template show you sort of how to move the flowers, but I'll show you here step by step. Here's number 2. We're basically matching up the petal shapes so we're keeping that sort of pie structure. It's important that, as you're layering them, that you are sort of spotting the shapes, because as you layer these, they fit precisely on top of one another. So as you can see, we've got this three petal shape here and that's going to fit right exactly on top of this three-petal shape that incorporates all three of the flowers that we have already layered. You should be kind of gingerly as you're adhering these as you go 'cause if you touch those glue dots too firmly with your finger, you will get stuck. All right, now we're doing these next ones, again, making sure that we're lining these up precisely with the underlying flowers. Also, we are not flipping any of these flowers. So we are simply lifting them off of their position on the template and moving them into place. So this last flower is in the same position as our first flower. Now, this last flower doesn't have any glue on it as you can see yet. So at this point, we can really get our bone folder or our fingers or whatever and just make sure that everything is stuck together and we won't end up stuck to our project. Okay, now, since we're using glue dots and not glue stick, we are now able immediately to test out our flower, our pop-up flower action. We'll take a moment to just enjoy our structure. It's really kind of a very cool thing that just by attaching these flowers in this pattern we get this very cool action. When our card opens, these flowers are going to appear to bloom right before our eyes because pulling on these edges causes the top and the bottom to come forward, which is really fun.

Create card and assemble

- Let's make the card to hold our blooming flowers. Before we cut out the paper, that will be the foundation of our card. We have a design choice to consider. I've chosen two contrasting colors for my card, blue and brown. At this point I need to decide which color is going to be the exterior of my card and which color is going to predominate on the interior of my card. So if I put my papers in this order, the exterior of my card will be blue and the interior will be predominantly brown. Alternatively, I could do it this way. Some things that you might think about is how much contrast

there will be between your flower petals and the background. Obviously, there's more contrast if I make the blue on the inside versus making the brown on the inside. However, I know that I'm going to be adding a lot of ephemera on the inside of this card that is quite colorful so I'm gonna choose to put brown on the inside because I feel like it's going to need a neutral to sort of ground everything and keep it from becoming a little bit overwhelming. Anytime we have a project involving folded paper, we should always take into account the grain of the paper. Manufactured paper is always going to have the grains lined up either vertically along the long edges of the paper or horizontally along the short edges of the paper, and we always want to fold our paper with the grain. To show you what I mean, I have these two pieces of corrugated cardboard that can help illustrate the effects of paper grain. So this piece of cardboard is basically showing you what happens when a piece of paper is grained long, and that makes it much easier to fold along this long dimension, whereas a piece of paper that is grained short with the grain positioned horizontally, is going to want to bend along its belly rather than along its length. Looking at these two pieces of card stock we might assume that they're grained in the same direction. We basically do kind of a folding bounce test. You can tell that the paper has such a resistance to folding in this direction that it almost bounces right out of my hand. So this piece of card stock is grained long. It cooperates when I fold it in this direction. Now if we check this one, I'm actually feeling quite a bit of resistance on the long dimension and the short dimension is very cooperative. So it's important not to assume even if you get two pieces of card stock, say you have a multicolor pack you cannot assume that every piece of card stock is going to be grained in the same direction. In fact, even if you buy a multicolor pack, you will have occasions where one color is grained in a different direction than another color. Now that we know that this sheet of paper is grained long and this one is grained short, I need to orient them on my workspace so that both of their grains are vertical in front of me. I'm going to start by cutting out the exterior of my card which is the blue. The exterior is slightly larger than the interior and the dimensions are eight by six. I'll start by cutting the eight. I'm going to be using my cutting mat as a ruler since I have a numbered grid on here and I can easily line my ruler up with one of the with the eight inch vertical grid mark and cut with my knife. So there's the eight inch dimension. Now I'm going to cut the six inch dimension using the same technique. I find the six inch grid line, line up my ruler and make my cut. I have the outside of my card. One thing I always do at this point because you'd be surprised how easy it is to make a mistake with grain, is I just test it and make sure that I did it right. I have on more than one occasion cut out a piece of paper thinking that I had it exactly right only to discover that somehow the process had gone awry. So I'm testing this one again. This one has the grain going up and down. And instead of eight by six, this is the interior which needs to be slightly smaller and I'll be cutting it to a dimension of seven and a half by five and a half. I'll start with the seven and a half. I'm going to move my paper up so that I can see those half inch lines on my mat. Oops. Cut went a little off course. I'm going to redo it. There we go. So there's seven and a half. Now I'll do five and a half. Again, I'm gonna test it. Feels good. Now I'm gonna make sure that it's even. This looks great. Our next step is to create the folds. We will be folding these what's called hamburger style. When we fold something in the short dimension that's called a hamburger fold. Folding along the long dimension is called a hotdog fold. So this will be a hamburger fold for our card. I smooth out my fold with my fingers, and then I'll come in with my bone folder and make it a nice sharp crease and repeat with the exterior of my card. We have the inside and the outside of our card ready to go, but we're not going to connect them yet. Our next step is going to be to glue our pop-up flowers on the interior part of our card. We'll be using our glue dots once again to adhere our flowers to the inside of our card. But we're only going to

need two dots in this case, one on this middle petal on the front and one on the middle petal in the back. The reason that we don't apply glue anywhere else is that we need all of the other petals to be very freely moving in order to create our popup action. I'm going to tear out another glue dot, apply it to the tip of my central petal. I might need to burnish that to get it to release. There we go. That one is stubborn. Now we're going to center our flower and our card. We don't want the pedals necessarily to touch the fold so you wanna leave a little bit of breathing room there but you also don't want these petals to go all the way to the front edge. So those are the things that I'm kind of looking at as I'm positioning this flower. Once you're happy with the position, you're just going to take your front cover and close it and use your bone folder to adhere the cover to your glue dot. Now we're going to repeat the exact same process on the back of our pop-up structure. Put that glue dot right on the tip there, burnish it and close the cover of our card. Now it's time for the magic. Ta-da! Here we go. This part is so exciting. Sometimes you might find that when you open the card, your top and bottom flowers are kind of inhibited like they're not sort of spreading to their full capacity. This happened to me actually just recently, and I found that if you grab underneath them and you just give them a tug, just pull them kind of out and give 'em a little bit of instruction about what you want them to do. Then you'll find that the pop-up action is really fantastic. It fixed it right up. So another great thing about using glue dots as opposed to other adhesives is that they are so strong that you can really kind of tug and manipulate your pop-up structure without pulling any of your flowers apart.

Embellish and add closure

- I'm gonna add some extra embellishment to the inside of my card. You may be wondering why I didn't embellish the inside of my card before I added the flowers. The reason has to do with composition. I like to preserve some negative space in any composition that I'm working on. Without adding the flowers first, there's no way for me to know how much space my flowers are gonna take when they expand. So even though it's a little bit more fiddly to have to work around my flowers, I really like to be able to take them into account as I create my collage. I'm gonna start out by rounding the corners of the inside of my card. This, of course, is optional. If you don't have a punch, you can round them by hand or you can leave them sharp. I just really appreciate the look of a rounded corner. Now I'm going to take some washi tape and begin embellishing some of the edges of the card. I'm going to tear this end to give it a little bit of a kind of a directional point and have it taper off gradually instead of coming to an abrupt end as it goes across my card. Just creating some overlap here with the two tapes that I've selected. Looks like one of my tapes is wider than the other. I'm going to let it hang off the edge a little bit. See if that's better. It's getting a little tricky to trim this. There we go. (scissors tapping) These washi tapes that I have chosen, there's some things that I was thinking about in my choices. One is the way that they relate color-wise to the exterior of my card. You might be wondering, for example, why I wouldn't choose a red washi tape, especially since the centers of my flowers are red. For me, I like to always keep in mind what is the focal point of my composition. And since my flowers are the focal point, I'm very careful in all the choices I make not to put elements in my collage that command more attention than my focal point. Since the red in these flower centers is quite small, for me to put a large strip of washi tape that's red anywhere on this card would really be competing with those flowers. So I'm really, I'm choosing something that relates to the exterior of my card and that is a little bit more subtle. I'm also deliberately choosing geometric patterns. Since I already have words on my flowers, I'm not going to use a washi tape that also has writing on it. I'm gonna keep working on the composition of

my card until it feels balanced. I've really stuck with a postal theme with this card. I really love mail art, so that's sort of the direction that I've gone. Some of the things I was thinking about was picking up on the red that's in the center of the flowers, but just kind of other little pops of red. Nothing that's too overwhelming. I have also stuck two very geometric shapes. I have a to-from address label. Again, that's just bringing in a little bit of red, but I was careful not to bring in every color of the rainbow. At one point, I decided that a little bit of yellow kind of broke up the red blue scheme, which I liked. I like something that has just a little bit of a sparkle that's different from everything else. So those are really the things that I was thinking about as I put this together. Next, I'll add embellishment to the outside of the card. I'm gonna keep the outside of the card a lot simpler than the inside. I'm just going to incorporate this piece of paper, but I liked the idea of creating a torn edge, so I'll kind of wrap the cover like this. I don't like it ending abruptly like that on the back, so I'll add another piece here to finish it, though I also kinda like the idea of maybe putting that on the front. I think I'll do that. Actually make it go all the way. There we go. We'll just use some glue stick. I left this little edge here, which I'm not loving. I'll probably just add another little strip of paper here to fill that in. This patterned paper is cardstock that I embellished myself. All I did was utilize a stencil and some acrylic paint. I pushed the acrylic paint through the stencil with a makeup sponge. Kind of making a little mark here to tell me how much or up to what point to extend my glue. (glue stick thudding) Now I'll trim that flesh with the edge of my card. And finally, I'll add some other postal paper here, kind of like this photocopy I have of an air mail envelope. This is fun. So just continuing my postal theme and also the overall color palette. Do wanna be careful about not introducing anything that's too different from the inside of the card. I want it to be cohesive. (scissors snipping) (scissors tapping) I'm not a huge fan of leaving sharp edges like this, so I could either tear this to give it more of a gradual slope or I can take something here, repeat an element that I have on the inside of the card. I like that idea. This is just a rubber stamp that I applied with blue ink onto some graph paper. I really like using this motif because it's a circle, but it also is very dynamic with the kind of triangular rays that it has coming out from it. I feel like that really helps to soften that raw cut edge of the air mail envelope that I applied. But I'm really loving how all of this writing came out. You'd be surprised how well this sort of thing can reproduce on a copier. It really looks quite good. Something I do like to do when I'm using photocopies though, this is, the stamp is photocopied, so you can't feel it. I do like to add a real stamp, so that when the person who receives the card touches the cover, they can actually feel a raised stamp. I think it adds a little bit of authenticity to the project. These stamps that I am working with now that are on paper, I bought at the National Postal Museum, the Smithsonian National Postal Museum. But you can also get stamps online on Etsy if you search for vintage canceled postage or just vintage postage. There are museums that will, that just sell stamps in bulk. You can even get them in specific color palettes or specific themes, butterfly stamps or stamps with animals on them. There's really a wide variety of things that you can get. I might add one more, 'cause this is all very kind of straight. I wanna put a stamp a little bit offset to put some diagonal motion into my composition, 'cause it's all very straight without this little extra. We're almost finished. Our last steps are going to be to attach the inner and outer card and put on the button closure, but not in that order. You might be wondering why we waited so long to put the front, the inside of the card and the outside of the card together, why we have waited until this late stage. And it's because we're going to put a button closure on the outside and it's gonna have a raw, some sort of a raw finish in this inside portion, and we'll be able to hide it once we add our inside. I'm gonna grab this paper I used on the inside to pull that color that I used to the cover of the card. I feel like that'll help things hold together. I have my paper fasteners. First,

I'm gonna put a hole in the middle of this circle. I'm using some crosshairs on my grid, centering my hole on those crosshairs, and then that really helps guide me to the middle of this circle, and I'm widening the hole with my pencil. I can put a mark. I'm being careful not to put this button too close to the edge. If I put it too close to the edge, then the back of it will not be hidden by our card. So I'm kind of keeping an eye on that as I go through this process. Just making a hole in my cover. Now it's time to attach the button. These are small paper fasteners. I recommend using these smaller ones. They're not necessarily what you would call a mini brad or a mini paper fastener, but you don't want to use the very large ones that you typically see at office supply stores. I feel like they don't leave enough of a border of paper around the edge to make a good closure. So I'm inserting those prongs in the hole that I made. Now I'm just gonna spread them on the back. Keep that fastener in place. You can see how that's gonna be well-hidden by our interior card. Since I've rounded the corners on my inside card, I will do the same to the outside for consistency. I'll use double-sided tape to connect the inside and outside of my card. I have this tape runner, but you can also use just a regular roll of double-sided tape, will also work well. I don't feel like glue stick would be strong enough for this application. I'm just doing the top, bottom, and outside edge, and I'll start with one side and then move to the other. So I'm kind of visually centering this first, making sure that they're well-nested. I'm really kind of pushing my thumbnails into that fold. And then closing the cover. Can also open it up and hit that connection with your bone folder. And now we'll repeat on the back. This is gonna be quite lumpy and bumpy. That is one thing about these flowers is that all those layers create quite a large kind of lump right in the middle of this card, but I think it's all worth it. Now I'm just burnishing everything down with my bone folder. And the final, final detail will be to put a little bit of string on our button and string closure. I'm just lifting up these edges a little bit. That will help me get the string underneath. I'm going to be using this wax linen thread, but you can use baker's twine or any kind of thick thread or string. I've chosen yellow, because I wanted to pick up a color from the inside that would still contrast with the outside. I'm not going to cut a piece off of my roll. I prefer to just, if I can, work off of the roll. And that way, I never make a measuring mistake. I'm just tying a knot around the shank of the paper fastener. And now I can wrap around, I think I might go twice. So I'm gonna round the corner here, loop around my button, and then reverse my direction. Come around the other side. You can see why lifting the edges of your button is important. I like the look of kind of having a doubled string there on the front. You can choose to trim this extra one off completely, so that you don't get confused about which one is sort of the business end of your thread. So you know which one gets wound and unwound. I'm gonna just go ahead and put a knot. That's usually what I do. I put a knot in the thread that gets wound and unwound. That way I know which one to use. 263 00:20:50,580 --> 00:20:54,150 Look at that. It looks really good. I'm very happy with how that turned out. 266 00:20:59,370 --> 00:21:00,390 And now that we've finished our closure, our pop-up card is finished.

Final details

- As a little bonus, I've created an envelope template to help you get your card through the mail. Printing it on card stock will make it a lot easier for you once you get to the tracing. Here's our PDF. I've already cut mine out and traced it onto a piece of card stock. All we have to do now is score some lines so that we can fold this into an envelope shape. I'm wearing a brace on my hand. As somebody who works with my hands almost on a daily basis, sometimes I find I need just a little bit extra support. I'm just going around, and I'm creating these score marks in all the places that this envelope is going to fold. This should make it a lot easier to get this card stock folded. You can use

glue stick here on your envelope to attach the bottom flap to the side flaps. I'm going to use double-sided tape. One thing you want to notice is that this flap doesn't come all the way up to the top, so you'll wanna apply the tape to your flap and not to the little side flaps. And that's it. Our envelope is ready to put our card inside. And now you have a custom envelope that is perfectly sized for your card. I wanted to show you some more examples of the card. Here's one that actually got mailed. This is the exact same envelope template that we just made. So here's one that uses air mail envelopes, photocopies of air mail envelopes for the flowers, and I used security envelope paper for the centers of the flowers. That's a little bit different. This one is more similar to the one we just made. I did use a slightly different punch for the center. That's something else you can consider. If you have a punch that is kind of star-shaped or flower shaped, you can create a little bit more definition in your flower centers. This offers you some other options. You'll notice that the centers on these flowers are larger. So instead of using the 5/8-inch punch, I used the 1-inch punch. And that gives the centers of those flowers a lot more presence. I also cut out some little leaf shapes. And I just glued them to the undersides of the blooms that were not attached to the cover or to the inside. Here's one that has graph paper. This is a cherry blossom theme. That's sort of what I was thinking about when I made this one. Living in the DC area, that's always a fun time of year. Here's another option. This one's a little bit smaller, but this is what it looks like when you make your flowers out of the security envelope paper. And then I used green stamps for the leaves to kind of keep with that postal theme. I also made the centers of the flowers different colors. And they're also made out of stamps. That might give you some more ideas. Here's one that gives you an idea of what it looks like to use photocopied letters for your flowers. And finally, this one is kind of a hybrid of some of the things we've looked at. It's got different color flower centers. It's got larger flower centers and leaves. I encourage you to experiment with all of these design ideas, and then you'll be ready to brighten the mailbox of someone you love.