
Paper 101 with Courtney Cerruti

Chapter 1 - Paper 101

Paper 101

(pop drum music) - Paper is one of those medium's that really is so versatile, and can be used for so many projects. I love to make a-million-and-one different things out of paper. Anywhere from book crafts, to paper crafts, things like making cards, doing collages, or even something like making paper flowers. And for all of those projects, I would use a different weight of paper. And it's really helpful to understand a little bit more about paper when you start to work with it. How to find grain and what projects should be used with which types of paper. If you're familiar with the concept that fabric has a grain, paper also has a grain. And that just indicates which way the fibers of the paper, when it's made, are running. If they're predominantly running vertically or horizontally. So, we do this things called the "bounce test," which always you to just fold the paper in one direction, and just gently bounce it to see how much resistance you have, and then you would turn it the opposite direction, and do the same thing. And you can see, that I really press this down. So, that means, that my grain is going parallel to where I'm creating this little fold. So, my grain runs this way. If we go back to that other direction, we can see how hard that is to press it down. And that's against the grain. So, the fold goes this way, and the grain is running perpendicular to that. You always want to fold with the grain. So, if I were to make a little accordion book, I have two samples here, Where I just fold a piece of paper, back-and-fourth, Now because it's an accordion, it's going to be fairly springy anyway. But this is folded with the grain, and you can see how it kind of how it lays on it's own, this is folded against the grain, and I can't even press this down before it pops right back up. It won't even lay that flat on the table. It's always springing open. 'Cause that's folded against the grain. If we compare these two folds, you can see that there's this cracking here, where I get a cleaner fold. This one's folded with the grain, and this cracked one is folded against the grain. That's really helpful in book making, and when you're gluing two pieces of paper together, because things will warp if you are attaching them against the grain. So, once you've determined grain, then you can go out and select your papers. And like I said earlier, I use different weights of paper, depending on what project. I've got a sample of just 8.5 x 11 papers here. And the way paper is measured can be sort of confusing. They take a large bulk amount. Usually it's the ream of paper. So, that could be 100 sheets, it could be 250 sheets, it could be 500 sheets, or it could be 1,000 sheets, depending on the manufacturer, and they take what that ream weighs, and that determines the weight. So, you might have a 20 pound paper, or an 80 pound paper, depending on the weight, and in general, the higher number, the heavier the paper. That's in general. There are some caveats to that. You can walk down the aisle at an art supply store where all the sketch books are and they're all going to clearly label their weight on the cover and you can really feel the pages and get a sense for what it means for something to be maybe 30 or 40 pounds versus what it means to be 60 to 100 pounds. You're average copy store paper is called "bond" paper, and this ranges anywhere from 18 to 24 pounds. It's gonna be a very light-weight paper. It's fairly transparent. You can see that if I lay it over this bright pink, I can really see through it. And this has it's purpose, it's good for writing, it's good for making photo copies, it's not necessarily a craft weight, it makes excellent scrap paper. Fun paper also comes in all these great colors. If you go to the photo copy store, you can get these. AstroBrights in neon, and you can also get pastels. It's the same weight paper, anywhere between 18 to 24, usually around 20 pound paper. It's also transparent, it's gonna be very light-weight. And this

is gonna be more susceptible to rippling and so forth if you're using it with a wet glue. But these also have their place. I use them sometimes for making a certain type of paper flower. They're good for cutting out or punching out shapes, and they're good for collage and other things, anywhere you want to add a pop of color. Then we get into our text weight papers. This is gonna be heavier. It's somewhere near 60 to 80 pounds in weight. It's not like card stock, it's still very flexible. This isn't something that you would make a card out of, but it is something you might make an envelope out of. This weight would still be good to wrap a gift, or do anything where you have to make folds around corners or angles, something that's not too stiff. This is a nice medium-weight paper, and you can see that it's not transparent, unlike the pink, which I can see through when I lay it over other colors. You're not gonna be able to see through this paper, this text-weight paper. It's heavy enough where it's not transparent. And this might also be something like a resume paper, if you were to pick it up at the craft store, or at your office store. Before you get to card stock, which is our heaviest weight, there are a couple weights in between text and card stock, which are more your specialty papers. Things that are similar to a text weight, but just slightly heavier because they're a specialty paper. Something like a metallic paper has a coating, and that's what gives it its metallic sheen. That's gonna be just slightly heavier than a standard text weight paper, but it's still in the text weight range. You might also find something that's like a resume paper, but it has some texturing to it, almost like a water color. It has these tiny little soft dimples or textures. Again, it's still a text weight paper, but it's gonna be heavier, closer to a card stock, but still pretty flexible. And last, you'll have a card stock, or cover stock. This is heavy. This can be anywhere between 110 to 200 and even higher pounds per page, per weight here. And this is the thing that you would actually make your card out of. It's gonna hold your folds and your creases really nicely. It's good for making templates out of, or anything that you want to have a lot of body. If you're like layering paper components for a card, or you're making an ornament, something that's going to hold its weight, card stock is the way to go. And this is something that you can find very easily at the craft store. A lot of scrap book pages are made out of card stock. Then, you get into your decorative papers. These are usually a text weight. They can be softer or supple, something like a Japanese paper is gonna have more fabric-like qualities, but still be light enough where you can make your folds, cover books, it'll take glue nicely. These papers are more like a gift-wrap weight. Not that gift-wrap that comes on a roll and is shiny, but the kind that you buy individually, like a sheet. It's gonna be a heavier weight text paper. It's not transparent. So, if I layer these on top of each other, you can't see through them. And this is gonna be great for collaging, decoupage, any paper-to-paper mixed media pieces that you want to make. These papers work really nice. They hold glue well, and they just have a nice medium weight to them. Origami papers tend to be a little thinner. You can get several kinds of Origami papers. This is a printed Origami paper. It's a lighter weight. It's gonna fold really nicely. It's not going to take glue as well because it is so light-weight. There are other types of Origami papers, or large sheets of Japanese paper, that are gonna be more fabric-like, and more supple, and those are gonna take glue really well. I make a lot of paper flowers, and one of the most common ways to make them are with crate paper. You're probably most familiar with this kind of crate paper. This is called crate paper folds, and it's the same thing that streamers are made out of at the party supply store. I cut off a little portion here. This also has a grain, in the sense that this paper is stretchy and it will stretch in one direction. So, that's stretching, these little tiny divots in the paper allow you to stretch across it, whereas I can't stretch this way. I just tear it. So, I can stretch horizontally, but not vertically. So, I would want to keep that in mind when I'm making paper flowers, for example, and I cut out a petal. See, I cut out a petal. I want to make sure that the

orientation of my petal is-- So that I can stretch to cut that petal to give it its shape. I want to make sure that I'm cutting out, so that I can stretch along this horizontal part here. I wouldn't want to cut it in the opposite direction because then I wouldn't be able to stretch it to give it this nice curve shape. There's a heavier weight crate paper. This is an Italian crate paper, and you can see how deep those little divots are in the paper itself. If I cut out a similar sized piece, to make a paper petal, you're gonna see how stretch this really is, and this is heavier, it's really gonna hold its shape. Here's my petal, and watch what happens when I stretch this. This is huge. This is twice the size that I cut. Those deep folds really allow to stretch. This heavier weight paper is what I would use for a larger flower because it's really gonna hold the shape and the structure much better. You can find this at some craft store. It's a little more specialty item, and you can also find it on Etsy and online. The lighter weight paper, however, you can find in a lot of places. If you can't get it in those long folds, you can often find streamers, and those are gonna make great fringe and great texture on a pinata, for example. Tissue paper is something we all know. This comes in all those gift bags you get during the holidays. And your average tissue paper is great for making things, like those pom-pom decorations that are so popular. It can be really nice for certain types of paper flowers. You can make fringe out of it. It's just a transparent, very light-weight tissue paper. It has a very absorbent papery feel, and it comes in a lot of different colors. It's not something that you can really have in a window or outside. It's not gonna hold its shape if it gets wet, or it'll fade in the sunlight. So, you just have to keep that in mind. It's more for a temporary installation or a temporary craft. There's also waxed tissue paper, which is a little bit more specialty. This is something that is usually found in floral supply houses or flower markets. You can see that the waxed one is transparent, but it's gonna really hold the shape really nicely, 'cause it's a little bit heavier bodied. This also makes pom-poms and really nice paper flowers. Something you might also come across is book cloth, which is fabric on one-side and paper on the back. This is used to cover book. So, if you were to go to the book store, or the library, and get a hard-bound book and take off the dust jacket, this is what you would find below. And it's something that you can actually make yourself, or buy in a craft store. You can definitely buy these things online at specialty book-binding houses, and places that sell book-binding supplies. It's not something I would use in most crafts, except for in book-binding. (light drum music) Paper is so familiar to all of us. It's probably one of the first materials you ever got your hands on and were able to craft with, and you glued it to something else, but there are so many qualities and characteristics, and really understanding and knowing those, is what's gonna give your projects that professional look, and add depth and dimension.