

Postcard Workshop

By Patti Kupferer

Supplies:

Orphan block (cut to 5" x 7")

If you don't have an orphan block, you can make a simple log cabin, flip and sew (on muslin) or nine-patch - anything 5" x 7" Batting piece (if quilting)
5" x 7" muslin (optional- needed only if you don't like sewing with batting against your feed dogs)
5" x 7" support piece (see choices in the Support column of chart on last page)
5" x 7" fusible web (needed depending on your choice of support- you may need 2 pieces) or fusible powder
4" x 6" index card or your choice (see choices in the Writing Side column of chart on last page)

Threads – you need some sewing, but you might like to use embroidery or quilting thread and they might be variegated (have fun)

Sewing machine with a zig zag stitch

Iron and mat or ironing board

Parchment or baking paper (in case you get fusible on your iron, have a used dryer sheet available)

Rotary cutter, mat, and ruler (6 x 12 ruler recommended)

Scissors

Pencil

Ink pen, archival ink pen or thin Sharpie (depending on your writing side choice)

Optional: Glue stick, needle, thread and thimble, or safety pins for basting batting to fabric piece

Background:

There is a large variety of ways to make your postcard. In general, you need a top, a support and a writing side.

The size of the postcard can vary but 4" x 6" is the standard postcard size. For this workshop, you work with a 5" x 7" and trim to 4" x 6". The larger size allows for any shrinking during construction and may make it easier to handle. I have made some postcards that started much closer to 4" x 6" because that's what I had on hand.

The top can be like a quilt – fabric piece, and perhaps batting and a piece of muslin for backing should you choose to quilt. The fabric piece can be pieced, appliqued, whole cloth, embroidered, embellished or any combination. You can use the first three columns of the chart (Format, Technique, Quilting) for inspiration. However, I recommend that you start with an orphan block for your first postcard. I use a glue stick to hold the batting to the fabric piece when I chose to quilt. I use fusible interfacing for hand embroider or decorative machine stitches.

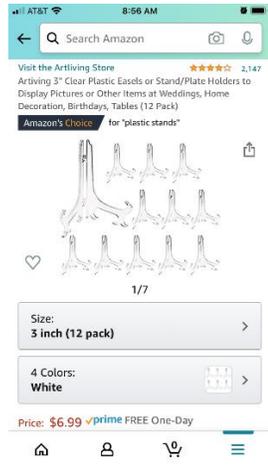
The "support" stiffens the postcard to make handling by the post office easier. Use what you have on hand. I layered three pieces of fusible interfacing as a support for some cards. If it isn't a "fusible", use fusible web to adhere the top and the writing side to your support. I use parchment or baking paper to adhere to one side when both sides of the support are fusible. By letting my project cool completely before removing from the parchment paper, the fusible material stays with the project.

The writing side makes your project a postcard and not a mug rug or bookmark. It is divided usually into two sections by a vertical line in the center creating two almost square spaces. The right side is for the name and address while the left side is for your personalized message to the addressee. (But not too personal because anyone who sees the card, can read the message and who doesn't like a little snoop?) The term "Postcard" must be written clearly on the writing side for the post office. I center the term at the top of my vertical line and below the edge treatment. (See photo on next page)

You will need to "seal" your edges together. This is usually done by some form of stitching but you can bind your card like a quilt with a fabric strip. If you use binding, keep it very narrow. I have used a variety of different decorative stitches available from my machine with a variety of outcomes. My favorite is a slightly loose satin stitch, usually using a variegated thread. Remember you can use a different thread in the bobbin. There are a large number of ways to finish the edges – see the Edge Treatment column in the chart.

If you are going to mail it as a postcard, you need a 35¢ postage stamp. If your card cannot be put through an automatic cancelling machine, you will need to request hand cancelling and add a 21¢ or 22¢ stamp. (The USPS website stated 21¢ when I looked it up but all the YouTube videos I watched said 22¢.) Hand cancelling is definitely needed if your card is very thick or you have buttons, dangling loose bits, and/or other fragile or thick embellishments. Some people love seeing the cancellation marks but we've all seen mangled mail. If you are worried about the postcard arriving pristine, place the card in a business size envelope and request hand cancelling. Probably due to the timing with mail-in ballots, a postcard I sent to the next zip code took almost two weeks to arrive using a Forever stamp. I mailed another postcard 5 days later in an envelope to Florida with a Forever stamp. It took only 5 days to arrive. Both were mailed in the latter half of October near election day. The first was picked up by our fabulous mailman from our personal mailbox and the second was dropped in the mailbox outside the post office. Who knows?

You may wish to use the postcards you make or receive. They can be used as mug rug or drink coasters (although the ink may run.) I like to display the mini works of art. I purchased twelve little plastic display stands (plate stands) from Amazon fairly cheaply. You can store several postcards on a single stand and rotate when you wish a change. Mine are on bookcase shelves in line of sight of my favorite chair but the stands let you put them on coffee tables, counters, desks, shelves or pretty much any flat surface.



Construction: (Using an orphan block)

1. If you wish to quilt your block, layer batting to the wrong side of the block. You may wish to pin, baste (sew), or glue (glue stick) the batting to the block. Quilt as desired. Use muslin as a backing if you don't like the batting against your feed dogs.
2. If you wish to embroider your block, use batting or fusible interfacing on the wrong side of your block for support. You might be able to use a small hoop for hand embroidery but I just worked with the interfaced reinforced block.
3. If you wish other embellishments (beading, buttons, sequins), determine when it would be best to add these but probably after the card has been constructed.
4. Create your writing side (I draw a 3" vertical inked line in the center of the 4x6 (3 inches from each edge) on the blank side and write "Postcard" centered at the top of the line or where it is prominent. (See photo above)
5. Use the most logical sequence of the following steps
 - Adhere the top to your support
 - Adhere the writing side to your support
 - Trim to 4" x 6"
6. Use a zig zag or satin (or other decorative) stitch to seal all four sides of your postcard (I couched rat tail to the edge of the postcard in the photo)
7. Write your personal message and address your card. Don't forget a stamp!
8. Add other embellishments like buttons, beads, sequins, ribbons, etc. if desired
9. Mail or keep your miniature masterpiece

We can probably brainstorm more ideas for the columns in the chart below during the workshop. Have a pencil ready!

Postcard Options:

Format	Technique	Quilting (optional)	Support	Embellishment	Writing Side	Edge Treatment
Orphan block (larger than 6 x 4) Abstract Word/Phrase Scene- Landscape Seascape Landmarks Skyscape Still life/ Indoor Mosaic Portrait Life drawing Animals Plants/Flowers Stars / Moons / Planets Nautical Improv Holiday/Seasons Signs Symbols Collage (ala Laura Heine) Architecture Hawaiian Appliqué Art Deco Art Nouveau Impressionism Cubism Modern (Art or Quilt)	Applique Fused Needle-turned Machine (glue basted) Reverse Appli-quilt Sew and Flip Straight piecing Curved piecing Foundation (paper or muslin) English paper piecing Embroidery Hand Machine Red work Ribbon Sashiko Ink/Paint Featured Fabric Thread Painting Yo-yos Trapunto Whole cloth Snippets/Toile Vintage crochet, linen etc.	Domestic Walking foot Free motion Concentric Spiral Hand Traditional Big Stitch Couching by machine	Batting Bosal In-R-Foam Fusible fleece Cardboard Corrugated cardboard Posterboard Tag board Index cards Peltex Tintex Fusible interfacing Interfacing Fusible stabilizer Stabilizer	Embroidery Hand Machine Beading Sequins Ink/Paint Buttons Decorative stitches (machine) Ribbon embroidery Lace Crochet Tatting Angelina fibers Couching by hand Vintage crochet, linen etc.	Index Card Poster board Muslin Printer paper Fancy paper Preprinted fabric	Zig zag Satin Stitch Blanket stitch Rat-tail (zig zag) or other couching Binding Envelope style