

A Fabric Art Postcard Tutorial

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A Fabric Art Postcard tutorial



Postcards are FUN! And who doesn't like to receive a little bundle of happiness in the mail? It's easy to personalize a postcard using various techniques; best of all, they are small. That means they require few materials and don't take long to make.

Postcards are similar to quilts in that they have three components: the front, the middle, and the back, with the front being the most fun to make. The most common size of a postcard is 4" x 6". The small size provides an excellent opportunity to try a new technique – hand embroidery stitches, decorative machine stitches, or machine embroidery. Try a new sewing technique – paper piecing, collage, weaving, or curved seams. What about landscapes? Or an unusual fabric such as cork, burlap, or velvet?

Look for fabrics that fit the scale of the card size. Need an element? Cut out small shapes and fuse them on. If you have leftover bits of ribbon, lace, or other embellishments, add them to the postcard!

Another benefit is that postcards are small, so if you don't like the technique, they are quick to finish and won't become a UFO.

I think you get the idea – postcards are fun, fast, and a great way to experiment.

Postcard 1

I used burlap as the background and stitched silk maple leaves I found at the local craft store. Easy! *Photo 1*

Postcard 2

A bit of improv piecing to make the background; add a few decorative stitches by machine. Stitch on some wide ric rac and add hot fix crystals. Fast! *Photo 2*





Postcard 3

I used a sky fabric as the background. I made a small quilt by fusing a small-scale print onto a piece of acrylic felt. I used hot glue to secure a piece of kitchen string for the clothesline. The quilt is attached to the line using two mini clothespins, which are also hot glued to the background. *Photo 3*

Postcard 4

I used a mottled print for the background. Using fabric paint, I stencilled a dragonfly to one end. I added two pieces of collage fabric, one with dragonflies, and the other a small piece of linen. I added a dragonfly charm and a few lines of straight stitching to add some interest. *Photo 4*

Postcard 5

Appliqué! Use your digital cutter to cut shapes or cut them with scissors. Fuse the shapes onto a colourful background. Experiment with the decorative stitches on your sewing machine to finish the raw edges. Did you note that I didn't use a satin stitch as is traditional for machine appliqué? I used my mirror end to end to change the direction of the stitch around the tip of the leaf! A great way to learn the functions of your sewing machine! *Photo 5*

Postcard 6

This postcard is woven using various ribbons and lace. I started with a piece of *BOSAL Craft-Tex Plus Double-Sided Fusible Heavy Weight White Interfacing* and wove the ribbons on top of the fusible side. Then, using a press cloth, press everything in place. Baste around the edges to secure the ends that do not touch the fusible interfacing or use a dab of glue until you secure the edges with stitching. *Photo 6*

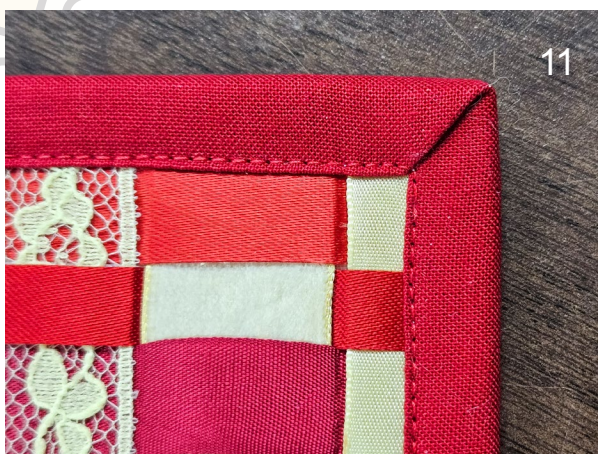
The middle of the postcard

The product I like the best for the inside of the postcard is a stiff, *BOSAL Craft-Tex Plus Double-Sided Fusible Heavy Weight White Interfacing*. If the product is not double-sided fusible, then I'll use a fusible web to adhere the front and back to the interfacing. This stiff interfacing gives body to the postcard yet is easy to stitch through.





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The back of the postcard

There are options for the backing as well. You could leave it plain, but where's the fun in that? I found a postcard stamp many years ago and used a fabric ink pad to stamp the postcard image on my backing fabric, which is muslin. Ensure you have plenty of ink on the stamp and press with an even pressure over the entire surface to get an excellent impression. I found a couple of small stamps that I could use to make a different style. *Photos 7 and 8*

Another option is to create the postcard image in your embroidery software. Depending on the hoop size, one or several can be made to have a few on hand. *Photo 9*

Alternatively, you could find or create the "postcard" image on your computer and print it on fabric using your inkjet printer. I've also seen backs available for purchase.

Do not use cardstock, as it can become perforated and fall off when you finish the edge with decorative stitches.

Finishing the outer edge

You could use a straight stitch, but it doesn't finish the edge nicely. Some of my favourite stitches include a satin stitch, a mossy satin stitch, a blanket stitch, or a zigzag.

Alternatively, serge the edge with a decorative thread in the loopers or try binding the postcard. Binding the project is tricky because of the size, but it's possible. *Photo 10 and Photo 11*

Mailing the postcards

YES – you can mail the postcards! If you want to protect the postcard from dirt in the mailing process, there are plastic envelopes you can purchase that are postcard size. The postcard must be hand-stamped at the post office, as it will not go through the sorting machine. *Photo 12*



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Keep the dimensional embellishments to a minimum for postcards you wish to put in the mail, as they will not fit through the letter slot and could end up in the higher postage bracket.

Use a permanent pen, and write the name and address of the person you are sending the postcard to. Include a message if you wish.

Displaying the postcards

You may wish to store the postcards in a decorative box or a photo album. *Photos 13, 14, 15*

Or you may want to keep them out to admire by creating a visual vignette on the wall or a door. *Photo 16*

Constructing the postcards

1. Choose a theme for the front and assemble the components.
2. Construct the front. I make the front 4½" x 6½" and trim the postcard down once the layers are fused. I sometimes fuse the background to the stiff interfacing as I need the stabilizer for decorative stitches. Otherwise, I work on a single layer and fuse as per Step 5.
3. Cut the stiff interfacing to 4½" x 6½".
4. Make the backing 4½" x 6½" centering the postcard image, so as not to trim any parts off in Step 6.
5. Fuse the three layers into a single layer. Use a press cloth if necessary.
6. Trim the postcard to 4" x 6". Be sure not to trim off.
7. Finish the edges.

Postcards are FUN and FAST to make. They are a great place for new techniques or materials, and they are as fun to make as they are to receive! Perhaps you can swap postcards with a friend or a group!

Be prepared to get addicted to making postcards.

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In 2021 I reviewed the Husqvarna VIKING Designer Ruby | 90 where I made this postcard for a friend. See more information on making fabric postcards following this link <https://quiltsocial.com/creating-a-machine-embroidered-postcard-to-mail-to-a-friend/>.

