

MAKING PAPER FROM MILK CARTONS

Milk cartons are made from white board that is lined on both sides with a thin layer of plastic (polyethylene). You can make paper from milk cartons but the layers of plastic must be removed first.

CAUTION
Children should ask an adult to help with this activity.

To remove the plastic

- You will need:**
- medium size saucepan
 - two forks
 - 1 litre milk carton
 - plate
 - Water

What to do:



- 1** Tear the milk carton Down the sides and remove the base. Throw away the base and the side with join.
- 2** Tear the strips into squares about 5cm by 5cm
- 3** Half fill a saucepan with water and add the squares of carton.



- 4** Place saucepan on the stove and bring the water to the boil. Simmer until the pieces of carton have completely changed colour. This indicates that water has penetrated all the way through the paper. This should take about 30-60 minutes.
- 5** Turn off the stove and place the saucepan on a mat on the bench. Using a fork, try to prise the plastic away from the paper. It should just lift off.
- 6** If the plastic doesn't peel off easily, use a fork to lift a piece of carton from the water and place it on a plate to cool. When you are sure that the carton has cooled enough to touch, use your nails To carefully tear off the plastic. A thin layer of paper may come away with plastic but this doesn't matter. Repeat for the remaining pieces of carton.

To make a sheet of paper

You will need:

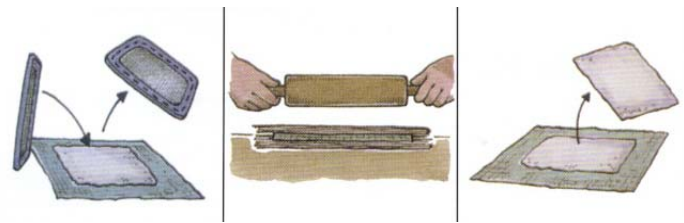
- blender or food processor
- Jug of water
- Pieces of carton board without plastic
- Pieces of absorbent cloth
- Empty ice cream container
- Mould and deckle or frame made from an ice cream container lid and some fly wire screen
- Two newspapers
- Rolling pin



What to do:



- 1** Soak the pieces of carton board in the jug of water for a few hours.
- 2** Tear the pieces of board into smaller pieces and place in a Blender or food processor with 1-2 cups of water. Blend for 1-2 mins or until the board is reduced to pulp—a mixture of fibres and water. *(Children should ask for help with this step)*
- 3** Pour the pulp over the screen until you have a layer about 2mm thick. Allow the water to drain away.



- 4** Lay the paper and the frame over a sheet of absorbent cloth, then carefully remove the frame. Sandwich the sheet of paper and the cloth between two whole newspapers.
- 5** Roll with a rolling pin to squeeze out excess water. Remove the sheet of paper and the cloth from the newspapers. Leave to dry for several days on a table, with the paper on top.
- 6** When dry, remove the sheet of paper.

Did you know?

* Milk and juice cartons are currently recycled in many regions in Australia.

* About 5 sheets of office paper can be made from one recycled milk or juice carton.