

# Upcycle Odyssey Patch Program



Upcycling is the art of transforming old or unused items—such as clothing, furniture, or bottles—into something new and useful. Unlike recycling, which breaks materials down into raw components, upcycling gives them a fresh purpose through creativity and innovation.

For instance, you could turn a bottle cap into a necklace or repurpose old jeans into a stylish tote bag. This approach not only reduces waste but also promotes sustainability while allowing you to showcase your personal style and save money.

By minimizing landfill waste and decreasing the demand for new resources, upcycling benefits the environment in a fun and practical way. It's a chance to unleash your DIY skills and create unique, custom-made pieces. Think of it as reinventing everyday objects with a touch of creativity!

## Steps to earn your patch:

- [Order your patch](#) (available while supplies last)!
- Complete the required activities.
- Complete 2 additional activities of your choice.
- Share your photos with us at <https://form.jotform.com/83506611351147>

Activities marked with \* have additional resources attached to this document.

Activities in [green](#) are linked to online resources.

### Required:

- ☐ Research why upcycling makes our world a better place.
- ☐ Learn the 10 R's of sustainability.\*
- ☐ Sign the upcycling pledge.\*

☐ Junk Journal\*

☐ Kite\*

☐ [Water Bottle Pinwheels](#)

☐ [Upcycled Necklace](#)

☐ [Upcycled Container](#)

☐ [Floral Gift Box](#)

☐ Cookie Box Picture Frame\*

☐ Thank You Box\*

☐ Room Decor\*

☐ [Rubber Boot Planters](#)

☐ [Mason Jar Lanterns](#)

# UPCYCLING

recycling: transforming waste into new products

upcycling: reusing waste to CREATE new product

## Recycle

materials are treated & Processed



sorted, crushed, or melted



used to make new products

## Upcycle

Discarded or old materials are gathered



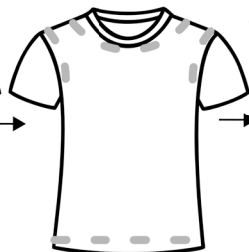
refashion, cut, paint



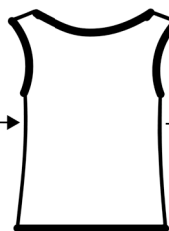
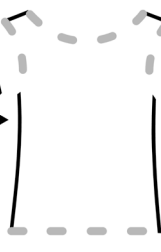
new product



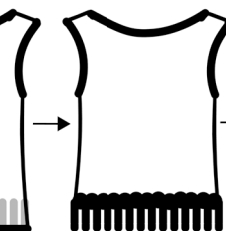
Upcycled t-shirt bag



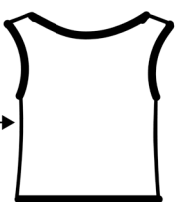
1. Cut neckline, sleeves and hem off shirt



2. Cut slits into the bottom about 1 inch.



3. Ties slits together 2 at a time



4. Flip bag so ties are on the inside.



Upcycled can/mug planter



# 10 R's of Sustainability

The “10 R's of Sustainability” are a fun and simple way to think about how we can help the Earth stay clean and healthy! Here's an easy explanation of each one:

1. **Refuse** – This means saying no to things you don't need. For example, if you don't need a plastic straw or a free toy at a store, you can refuse it to help reduce waste.
2. **Reduce** – This is about using less of what we don't need. If we buy fewer things or use less plastic, it helps save resources and reduce trash.
3. **Reuse** – Before throwing something away, think if you can use it again. A glass jar can hold pencils, or old clothes can be turned into rags for cleaning!
4. **Recycle** – This means turning old things like paper, plastic, and glass into new things. When you put these items in the recycling bin, they can be used again instead of becoming trash.
5. **Repair** – If something breaks, try fixing it instead of throwing it away. Repairing things helps reduce waste and keeps items in use longer.
6. **Refill** – Instead of buying single-use items, try to refill things like water bottles or soap containers. This helps keep trash down and saves money!
7. **Repurpose** – This is like giving old things a new job. You can turn an old shirt into a fun pillowcase or use cardboard boxes to make a toy car.
8. **Respect** – Treat the Earth, animals, and people with kindness. This means taking care of nature, not littering, and being kind to others in your community.
9. **Rethink** – Think about the choices you make and how they affect the planet. Maybe you can walk or bike instead of driving, or use reusable bags instead of plastic ones.
10. **Restore** – This is about fixing things that are broken or damaged. Planting trees, cleaning up parks, and helping animals are all ways to restore the Earth.

These 10 R's help everyone do their part in making the world a better place!

# Upcycling Pledge

I promise to take care of the Earth and be creative by upcycling! Here's how I'll do it:

1. **I will find new uses** for things I already have, instead of throwing them away.
2. **I will think outside the box** and turn old stuff into something cool and useful, like making a kite from newspaper or a picture frame from a cookie box
3. **I will share my upcycled projects** with my friends and family, so we can all learn how to help the planet together.
4. **I will have fun** by being creative and turning trash into treasure!

I promise to be an upcycling champion and help keep the Earth clean and happy!

# Junk Journal

A junk journal is a collection of miscellaneous items bound together in a creative format. The beauty of a junk journal lies in its imperfections and the story each page tells.

The finished junk journal can become anything you want. It can be a gift, a scrapbook, a journal, a planner, an art journal, a mood board, a project keeper, an e-zine and the list goes on. The pages can be used to write, draw, paint or record memories, thoughts, ideas, and inspiration.

## Supplies

- Mix of recycled and found materials, for example, cardboard boxes from food pantry items, old books and magazines, old sheet music, old university notes, pages not used from school books, old recipe books, maps, sewing patterns, junk mail, etc.
- Adhesives (double sided tape, duct tape, glue dots, etc)
- Decorative tools (paint, markers, stencils, stamps, etc)
- Cutting tools including scissors, paper trimmer, and ruler
- Large eyed, strong, sharp needle
- Reclaimed wool, cotton, or ribbon
- Small screwdriver
- 4 paper clips or bulldog clips



## Instructions

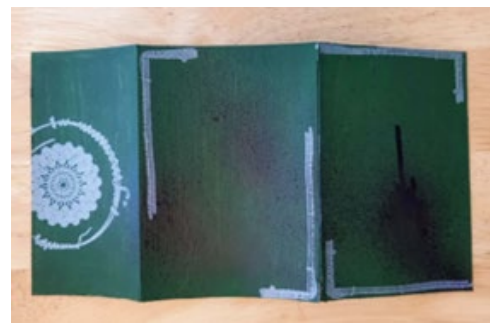
1. Choose a cardboard box roughly the size of an exercise book or smaller.
2. Carefully flatten the cardboard box (photos shown are from two different tea bag boxes).
3. Examine the unfolded box and pick out which shapes will make your inside and outside covers (must be the same size).
4. Choose an extra shape for the flap (can be thinner in width than your cover).
5. Cut out your chosen shapes leaving as many existing folds and tabs in place as possible.
6. Cut, then glue together using tabs to help strengthen spine. Fold into book shape. Trim off any tabs not required.
7. Paint, decorate, collage, or color the cover any way you like.



8. Open your cover and measure the height and the width (across front and back covers excluding flap).
9. Subtract 1 inch from height and width measurements and write down on a piece of paper.
10. Cut papers to this recalculated length and width as a MAXIMUM size. Remember – the papers will be folded in half to make the pages of your journal. Pages DO NOT have to be the same color, weight or size.
11. Assemble pages on top of journal cover
12. Fold all papers in half.
13. Then assemble about 12 pages, depending on how thick you would like your journal, then stack on top of open cardboard cover.



- Binding - Have an adult help you with this process
14. Once you have your pages designed, use paper clips to secure papers and the cover together, to help them stay in place during binding.
  15. Mark out three evenly spaced pencil dots along the inside of the journal's center fold (leave about 2 cm from top and bottom of cover).
  16. Place journal on a craft mat
  17. With adult supervision, use a screwdriver/awl/skewer to push holes through the paper and cardboard spine at pencil marks.
  18. Cut a 16 inch piece of cotton/wool/ribbon and thread your needle.
  19. Push your needle through the center hole from the outside of the spine (for a decorative knot or bow on the outside of finished journal) or push needle through center hole from the inside of the journal (for a knot hidden on the inside of the journal). Push back through bottom hole in spine. Again, push needle through center hole (middle hole will have two pieces of thread through it) and then thread through top hole of spine.
  20. Tie a knot or bow.



21. Binding in this way means the journal will lie flat when open and will not impede the decorations/artwork on each page.

Junk journals are inspired by collage. Use materials to create pockets, mini books, tabs, peek-a-boo flaps, tags, and windowed pages as desired.

Color, collage, paint and decorate. There are no limits. Be creative! Remember the best thing about this project – THERE ARE NO MISTAKES IN JUNK JOURNALS!



# Kite

## Supplies

- One large, full-sized sheet of newspaper – alternate materials include plastic tablecloths, thin fabric, grocery sack
- Kite string
- Thin strips of scrap fabric
- Two thin sticks of bamboo
- Clear packing tape or scotch tape
- Elmer's or craft glue
- Sharp scissors (garden shears)

## Instructions

1. Choose and prep your bamboo sticks. You'll need one that's stiff and runs the width of a newspaper sheet, and one that's a little more flexible that matches the length of the newspaper.
2. Cut your stiffest bamboo stick to match to the length of the newspaper, and your flexible stick to the width of your newspaper.
3. Use some of your kite string to wrap the two sticks together at the center, making a "t" shape.
4. Cut small slits into the end of the bamboo sticks. Insert the end of the kite string in the little slot on one side of the shorter, flexible stick, wrap it around the end of the stick a couple of times and knot it so it's attached to the end of the stick.
5. Pull the string tight across the stick, making the stick bend a little, and slide the string through the slot on the other end of the stick. Tie it off and cut the string.
6. Insert the end of the kite string in the slot on one end of the sturdier stick, wrap it around the end of the stick and continue until you've wrapped your kite string around every end of bamboo. (The string should make the shape of the kite.)
7. Place the kite skeleton on top of the newspaper, wrap the corners of the newspaper over the string and glue it to itself.
8. Tear an old sheet into long thin strips and tie the strip to the bamboo at the bottom of the kite for a tail.
9. Turn the kite over so the bamboo is not visible. Make two holes in the newspaper to thread the kite string onto the bamboo stick behind it. Put two small pieces of clear tape on the newspaper to reinforce it.
10. Poke the string through that hole on the front, loop it around the bamboo stick behind it and knot it, then cut the end of the string so it's about two feet long. Poke the other end of the string through the other hole, loop it around the bamboo stick and tie it in a knot.
11. Tie the whole spool of kite string to the center of that two-foot loop.
12. Pick a windy day and have fun!



# Cookie Box Picture Frame

Whether you're selling Girl Scout cookies with your troop, swimming with friends, or camping with family; memories are captured with photos. What better way to make the world a better place and upcycle than by creating custom picture frames with cookie boxes?

## Supplies

- Cookie boxes
- Paint or markers
- Tape or glue
- Photos of fun memories
- Scissors

## Instructions

1. Lay the cookie box and cut out one side of the cookie box.
2. Place your picture on top of your cut-out. Trace the picture onto the cardboard.
3. Cut out the picture area with scissors. Allow for room on all sides to create your frame.
4. Now is your time to be creative! On the side without the cookie box print, color or paint your design.
5. On the left-over piece of cardboard, glue on your picture.
6. Finally glue your frame to the backboard. Make sure your picture is centered in the frame.



# Thank You Boxes

Turn your empty cookie boxes into cute favor boxes. Use them to give a small gift to volunteers you would like to thank; as gift boxes for a birthday and more.

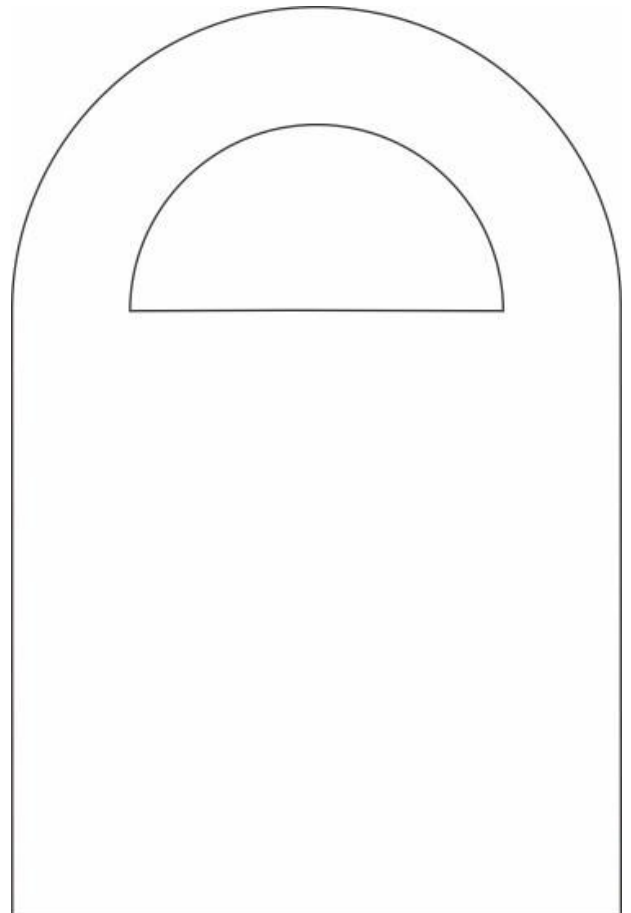
## Supplies

- Empty Girl Scout Cookie Box
- Pattern – this template is for the Trefoils box
- Tape
- Low Temp Glue Gun
- Tissue Paper
- Scissors



## Instructions

1. Print template.
2. Trim close to lines.
3. Open up the box and lay flat upside-down.
4. Line template up with edge of box bottom.
5. Tape in place.
6. Cut out.
7. Repeat for other side of box.
8. Reassemble with using hot glue along the side and bottom.
9. You can use scrapbook paper, gems, stickers to make your gift box even more beautiful.



# Room Decor

## Instructions

1. First, find a material you can upcycle to create your favorite initial. Old cardboard, wood scraps, and thick Styrofoam are all great materials. Be sure to have an adult assist you with cutting if the material is thick.
2. If you want, you can first cover your initial with scrapbook paper, fabric, paint or burlap.
3. Look around your home, garage sales or thrift store for old jewelry, pins, belt buckles and similar items to decorate your initial to fit your own fashion. Be sure to ask before using items found at home!
4. Lay out your items to create a fun design that makes you smile.
5. Use hot glue or heavy-duty crafting glue to secure the items onto your initial.

