

Holiday Cardmaking Made Easy!

By Jan Bryson, [Sam & Hailey Designs](#)

It's that time of year again! The weather has turned cold, thoughts of Thanksgiving turkey and pumpkin pie fill your head, the you can taste the first snowfall on its way. The first think you think of? *"Oh my! I haven't started on my holiday cards yet! I guess I'll just have to go buy a couple of boxes of those impersonal mass market greeting cards and get over it."* Well, stop that thought before it starts! With these simple tips, you'll be over your anxiety and your holiday cards will be done before you know it!

Pick your Card Design. Decide whether you are making one design or multiple designs. By making just one design you can keep the supply list short, but you might get bored making just one card over and over. By choosing two or three designs, your supply list will be longer, but you are less likely to suffer from cardmaking burn-out. *What not to do?* Don't pick too many designs to make, your supply list will get long and complicated and you are likely to forget something, plus you'll lose time every time you switch designs and have to start from scratch.

Cut the Fat. Look at the design you chose and find one or two things to leave off or find a simpler way to accomplish the same look. For example, if the card you've chosen has each piece inked around the edges, try adding ink or chalk after the card is assembled with a q-tip, sponge, or eye shadow applicator. Instead of handwriting or doodling, find a stamp with the same look. Instead of cutting and scoring card bases, use precut card blanks. *What not to do?* Don't go crazy with detail on each individual card. Simpler is better!

Decide How Many. Update your address list so you will know how many cards to make. In a real crunch for time? Buy some mass market cards for acquaintances and make the handmade cards for family and close friends. *What not to do?* Don't make all your cards and then look at your list. You'll likely have made too many or too few cards!

Plan Ahead. Make a supply list and when you go to the store, try your best to stick to it! Don't get distracted by things that are pretty but won't work for the design you've already chosen. *What not to do?* Don't randomly make many different cards without planning ahead, you'll waste time digging out supplies or running to the store for things you didn't realize you need.

Don't Forget The Envelopes. Make sure you have the correct size of envelope for your cards and that you have enough of them! Also, be sure to check on postage for specific envelope sizes. In the US, first class mail must be at least 3-1/2 inches high by 5 inches long by 0.007 inch thick, but not more than 6-1/8 inches high by 11-1/2 inches long by 1/4 inch thick. Also, thick or square envelopes incur an extra charge! *What not to do?* Don't make an odd sized card! It's relatively easy to find the following envelope sizes in the US:

Format	Dimensions (in)
A2	4 3/8 × 5 3/4
A6	4 3/4 × 6 1/2
A7	5 1/4 × 7 1/4
No. 6 ^{3/4}	3 5/8 × 6 1/2
No. 9	3 7/8 × 8 7/8
No. 10	4 1/8 × 9 1/2

Make A Special Place. Set aside the supplies for these cards in one place so you won't have to search around for anything when you have a few moments to sit and work. Keeping everything in a box or basket is a good way to keep them separate from your other supplies. *What not to do?* Don't borrow things out of that special stash thinking you'll replace it later. Odds are, you won't, and then you'll come up short in the end!

Divide and Conquer. Divide up your tasks and do all of the same thing at once. For example, cut all your pieces, then assemble sections of the cards, then stamp on sentiments. *What not to do?* Don't try to make each card from start to finish. You'll waste time switching between tasks.

Schedule Your Time and Start Early. Estimate how long you think it will take you to make your cards, and then plan time each week to work on them. Try to have your cards ready for the post office one week before the holiday. *What not to do?* Don't go crazy making the cards all at once or you might burn yourself out before you get them all done. Conversely, don't think you have all the time in the world and then be in a crunch right before the big event.

By following these few simple tips, your holiday cardmaking will go much more smoothly. Hey, you might actually get them done this year!!!

