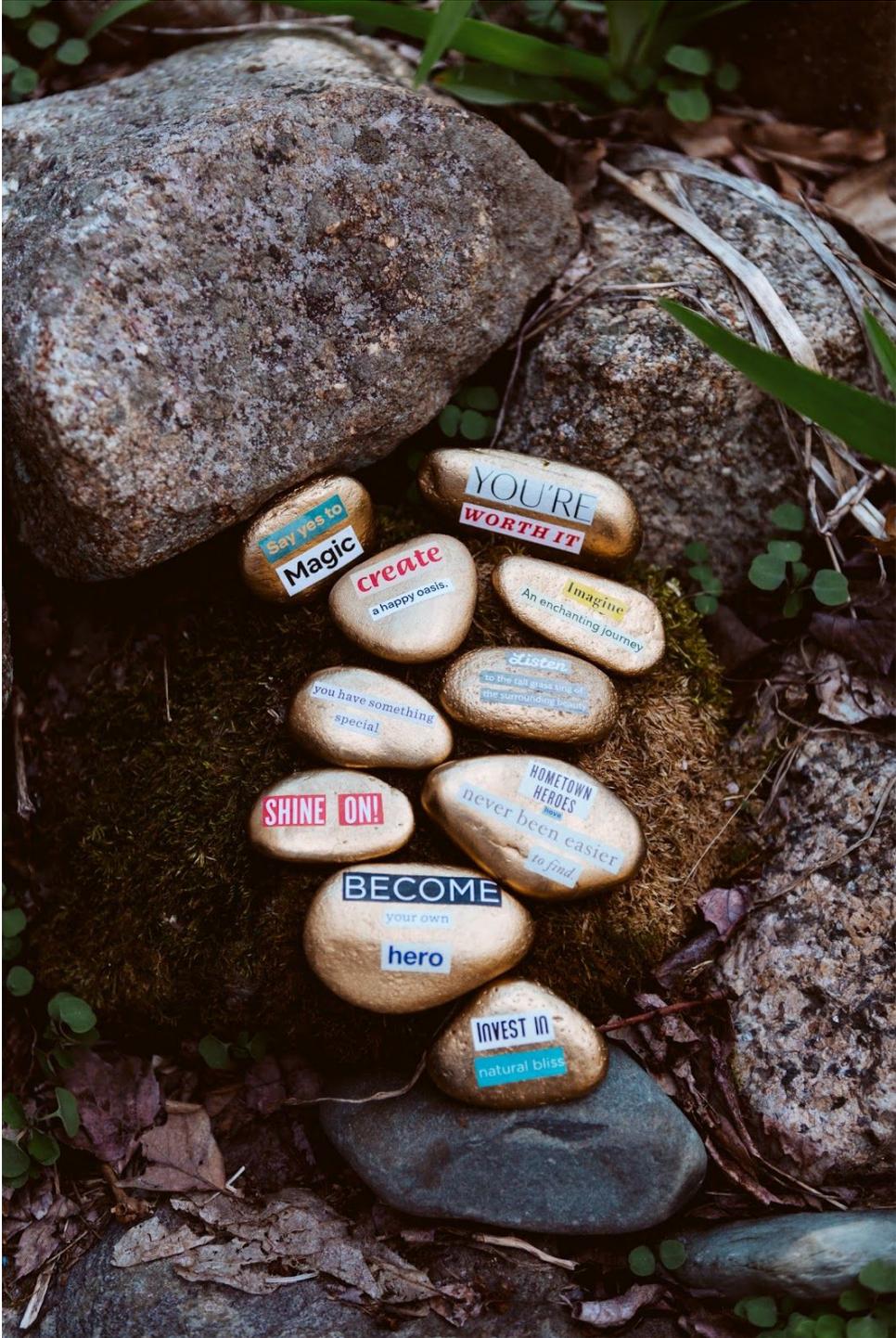


Creating Word Confetti Rocks of Kindness

A Beginner's Guide to Decoupage Rocks - Kathryn Wilkinds - Giocosamente Online Festival



When you uplift others, the delightful side effect is that YOU feel amazing.

Confetti rocks of kindness are beautiful stones decoupage with one of a kind collections of uplifting words designed to sprinkle happiness, inspiration and joy to those who happen to find them.

Why create your own confetti rocks? Perhaps you're looking for a relaxing activity to lower your stress and boost your well-being, in search of a creative outlet or an excuse to enjoy a blissful evening thumbing through your favorite magazines. Searching for just the right words is a thrilling treasure hunt of inspiration.

Maybe you've heard about the fun game of [Happiness Hide & Seek TAG](#), a safe way to play during social distancing. As an agent of joy, you'll need confetti rocks for sneaky missions to tag friends, family and the unsuspecting public alike with positivity bombs lighting up smiles all over the world. Every rock starts a new game of tag where you'll get to track the ever expanding impact of your message. You'll also get to watch the journey your rock makes as those who get tagged become "it", leaving your rock out in new places for new accomplices to become part of the game.

I bet you're also interested in supporting your community, especially now...we could all use a little more love and encouragement. Did you know that current research in positive psychology shows we personally receive huge bumps in happiness from giving to others, with long lasting results? Making confetti rocks is playful self-care turned into mischievous others-care, which happens to feel amazing each step of the way.

And guess what? Word confetti rocks are super easy to make and require absolutely zero artistic talent. Yup, no painting skills or hand lettering required! With a little help from this tutorial, in five easy steps you'll have all of the knowledge needed to create lovely rocks of your own.

Let's get started.

SUPPLY LIST

- Rocks
- Spray paint (a bright/bold/metallic color)
- Magazines (or other paper with text)
- Scissors
- Mod Podge
- Paint Brush (foam brushes recommended)
- Spray sealer

MISSION ONE: Selecting & Preparing Rocks

The first step to making confetti rocks is... well... finding rocks. Although this sounds easy enough, here are a few important things to consider. You'll want to use rocks that are fairly round, flat and smooth. Decoupage is a technique that involves gluing things, paper in this case, to various hard surfaces. It's pretty challenging to do it well on any old garden rock. So where to find these illusive beauties?

My first thought when starting this project was...ohhh the dollar store sells bags of these types of rocks (for a dollar of course!). What I've learned through experience is that these don't work well at all. First off, they aren't big enough for the words you'll want to use. Second, they are covered in some type of finish that makes glueing things to them very tricky indeed.

It's time to go on a rock hunt. Start wandering around outside and see what you can find. Nature does a fantastic job of polishing rocks using wind, water and time. Look for rocks in stream or river beds and along beaches and coastlines. Make sure that you only take a few rocks from each location so as to respect the ecosystem and its environment. Don't have any of those near you?

The second best place to look for rocks is within the world of fancy landscaping. People pay big bucks for these types of rocks (often polished in a factory) to decorate their yards, office buildings, water fountains, parks/public spaces, gardens or other cultivated outdoor spots. Try talking to a home improvement store, garden center, a landscaping company (the smaller the better) or local gardener for an estate. Often, if you explain to them what you want the rocks for, they are happy to give you a few for free. You can also look for places already decorated with rocks and approach the owner to see if they are willing to donate some. If so, don't forget to repay the kindness and make a confetti rock for them. NOTE - it's never a good idea (and generally illegal) to take rocks without getting permission first.

If all else fails, you can order rocks online. Amazon has tons of rocks for sale and rockpainting101.com has already put together a recommended [collection](#) for you to check out.

When you are considering rocks for this project, here is my advice. Size is incredibly important. You'll want flattish rocks (they don't have to be perfect) that are large enough to add your uplifting words to (small ones get frustrating quickly). HOWEVER, you also want to keep your rocks small and light enough to be easily carried around and possibly sent in the mail. Trust me, no one wants to pick up and lug around a heavy rock (including you) which thus defeats the purpose of making them. And, in case you want to surprise far away friends and family, mailing heavy rocks gets expensive quickly.

After you have collected your rocks, the next step is to clean them. I am a HUGE fan of shortcuts whenever possible. They don't look dirty, so no need to clean them right??? Don't make the same mistakes as me. For a beautiful finish, take the take to rinse your rocks first. It's pretty simple. You can use an outdoor hose or just put cold water in a bucket/sink/bowl and dump your rocks in. Give them a quick swish or scrub if they're *really* icky to get the dirt or sand

off. Then leave your rocks out to dry overnight (again...I HATE waiting but trust me overnight is best).

MISSION TWO: Painting Rocks

Now it's time to start getting creative. These rocks are meant to be noticed. In order for them to be seen and not to blend into the landscape, you'll want to paint them bright colors. WAIT A MINUTE I can hear you grumbling now. I thought there weren't any artistic painting skills required. Not to worry. Sure, you COULD use acrylic paint (and go for it if that's your thing). I find that the easiest, fastest way to paint rocks is with spray paint. It's like a push button magic wand. You can also do several rocks at the same time and I HIGHLY recommend you paint a large batch of different shapes and sizes.

All you'll need is one can of paint, which you'll likely already have at home. I recommend any color that isn't found in nature including fluorescent, metallic and my favorite... glitter! The shinier the better to help catch people's eyes.

When you're ready to set up your spray paint work station, make sure you do it outside. You'll need a surface to paint on and I'm a big fan of Amazon or other shipping boxes. Here is another pro-tip. Place parchment paper inside the boxes and put the rocks on top of wooden grill skewer sticks.

When it's time to start painting, be sure you do several light coats. I tend to get spray happy, wanting the rocks to look completely covered on the first go. This generally leads to paint dripping down the sides and ugly paint streaks. If you accidentally spray too much, the parchment paper and sticks help make sure the paint doesn't dry half on the rock and half stuck to the bottom of the box, thus leaving an unsightly paint bump. Like I said before, several light coats is the way to go, making sure they dry inbetween. Spray paint dries fast (read the side of the can), so this generally isn't a problem. I would aim for painting the tops of the rocks first and then the bottoms. Leave the sides for last. The easiest way to paint the sides is to vertically lean the rocks against the walls of the box. You'll be able to get about half of the sides on one spray and then rotate to get the other.

MISSION THREE: Gathering Inspiration

Now that you have prepped your rocks and are ready to go, it's time to start looking for the words that you'll be glueing to them. My favorite source of text is magazines. Printed words come in a variety of sizes, colors and fonts, all of which help give your rocks an artistic style. Of course you can use any text you like. I will often scan through junk mail before recycling it and look for free or inexpensive books at yard/garage sales and at thrift stores.

Personally, magazines are my go-to source for text. Buying magazines at the store can get pretty pricey, so here my pro tips.

Tip #1 - First ask your friends, family and neighbors. Often people have stacks of magazines hanging around that “they’ll get around to reading sometime soon” or are saved for other reasons. You’d be surprised how many people have collections in the bathroom, on coffee tables or stashed away in storage.

#2 - Take a trip to your local businesses that have waiting rooms for their clients. Think doctors, chiropractors, dentists, nail salons, rehab facilities, laundromats etc. They generally subscribe to a selection of magazines for people to read while they wait. Since magazines keep coming monthly, these businesses end up recycling the old ones which you can just collect from instead. If you explain the project you are doing, most places are happy to donate their old ones for a good cause. Just remember to make a rock for them as a thank you.

#3 You can also buy magazines at seriously discounted prices on Amazon. Just search for magazines on their site, and then filter by ones on sale. If you do decide to buy magazines, be sure you get ones that you know you’ll enjoy reading. If you invest in the experience of getting pleasure from reading it, any words you cut out after the fact are a bonus.

#4 Many thrift stores also sell magazines for almost free! One day I was looking for “self-help” type books and came across a stack of magazines for \$0.20 each - what a score.

#5 Buy magazines you love and want to read anyways. One of my favorite indulgent activities is going to Barnes & Noble, grabbing a drink at the Starbucks stand (that happens to be right near the magazine display), and slowly browsing through their sea of their more exotic magazines that you can’t find in other places like a drugstore, grocery store or big box store. There are so many choices sure to delight whatever hobbies or interests that tickle your fancy. I will often choose one or two that really grab my interest and then bring them home to savor.

What magazines are best for projects like these? Free ones of course! More specifically, I’ve found that women’s interest is a good place to start. You’ll want to look for magazines that cover inspirational and motivational topics. Travel magazines are also great because their articles are about exploring new places, learning new ideas and having new experiences. Some of my favorites are: Oprah’s O magazine, Happinez, Breath, Magnolia Journal, Women’s Health, Live Well, Air BnB and Travel & Leisure.

Since I only buy magazines that I also enjoy reading, I tend to have a lot of food ones lying around that I already subscribe to for cooking inspiration. After I have ripped out the recipes I plan to try, I’ll repurpose them and start looking for inspirational words. Magazines like Eating Well, Food (Food Network) and All Recipes are a great source of fun adjectives like saucy, spicy, sizzlin, hot etc.

Let the treasure hunt begin. Once you have a magazine (or 10... I can get a little obsessed), start flipping through the pages looking for uplifting words. You will not necessarily find complete sentences, finished quotes or complete phrases ready to glue on your rocks. Instead,

look for any types of words that touch your heart, have a positive message or could be used in playful ways. You also want to pay close attention to the ads in magazines. They are trying to sell you something by telling you how amazing their product/experience is, and often use positive words hoping you'll buy what they are offering.

As you begin a "word collection", you'll start to gather a lot of bits of text that starts to look like confetti. It's helpful to keep your words organized. I use trays or plates (which I stack on top of each other for storage) and sort the words generally by phrases and parts of speech. It's much easier to craft a personalized or inspired message that way. I also have a large foam board (stored under the futon in my office/studio) where I keep completed or almost completed rock sayings. I tend to do things in batches, so I'll gather a bunch of words one evening, then sort them and start to create uplifting phrases or sentences another time, finally moving on to glueing when I have a bunch ready to go.

MISSION FOUR: Glueing Text to Rocks

Once you have words to glue on your rocks, it's time to talk application technique. There are TONS of tutorials out there on the best adhesives to use for decoupageing paper onto paper but none about attaching paper to rocks. After much trial and error, at this point I have found that the best thing to use is Mod Podge. It strikes a good balance between stickiness which you need for adhesion, and a thin liquid that is easy to flatten out. No one wants wrinkles under their beautiful words, and it's especially hard to get the words flat on bumpy curved surfaces like rocks.

Let me be clear. Mod Podge is good for attaching paper to rocks. It is NOT waterproof, so we'll get to sealers in a moment.

First, decide on what words you want to glue on your rock. This will determine the size and shape rock you'll need, so it's a good thing that you've already painted a few. Place the words on top of the rock to see if you like the layout. You can always cut words apart to leave spaces. Play with this a bit until you find something that works. Then apply Mod Podge to the back of the paper using a small bristle paint brush, a foam paint brush or by dipping your paper along a puddle of glue. After a lot of practice, I've found a small foam brush works best and leaves the least amount of streaks.

With a good (but not dripping) amount of Mod Podge on the back of the paper, place it on top of the rock. You'll want to smooth the paper down, making sure there are not any wrinkles and that all parts stick to the rock surface. If there is extra glue (which there usually is) seeping out the sides, wipe it up with a paper towel. To help flatten the paper, I have used an old credit card, a vinyl scraper, a brayer or just my fingers to make sure it's wrinkle free. Mod Podge dries quite quickly, so after smoothing it out, leave it for just a minute or two and then give it a second flattening.

The next step is critical! Once your words have been glued to your rock (and are pretty much dry... about 15-30 minutes or so), go back over the text with Mod Podge and the foam brush. You can do it once in a vertical direction and again a few minutes later in the opposite horizontal direction to minimize brush marks. This is important because the last step is to seal your rocks so they are weatherproof, using a spray sealer. If you don't first Mod Podge over the top, the spray sealer will leave wet marks on the paper that remain splotchy even once the sealer is dry.

Mod Podge Pro Tip: you don't want to dip your brush directly in the bottle or container. Find a surface to squeeze/pour a small amount on, each time you are actively using it. Since this stuff dries so quickly, you don't want to get the dried crumbles from the sides of the paintbrush into the jar (which leaves icky bumps on your work). Also, when you are waiting for things to dry, store your paint brush in a cup of water. No need to actively rinse it out in between uses but the water keeps it from drying out. Just squeeze the water out before you use it again (very easy to do with foam brushes).

MISSION FIVE: Sealing rocks:

The final step is preserving your gorgeous work. The goal of these rocks is to travel all around to different outdoor locations, so in order to keep them looking their best, you'll need to use a waterproof sealer. Just as with adhesive options, you can find a myriad of sealers for sale (paint-on and spray). I prefer spray sealers because it's just easier and you can do several rocks at once. Simply follow the same directions as spraying the paint, being sure to do at least two light coats on the front and the back. The sides are not quite as important but I tend to give them a quick spray as well.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT SEALING ROCKS. This is not an area to skimp on the drying time (which I tend to do with the Mod Podge). Follow the directions on the can of sealer, otherwise you'll end up with a finished coat that never really seems dry.

For the purpose of this project, I have not found a noticeable difference between different sealers. You can buy them online or at any craft/hardware store. They even sell it at Walmart. The one I currently am using is Rustoleum Gloss Clear (seals, protects and revitalizes, fast drying/non-yellowing/uv resistant)

Happiness Hide and Seek TAG

If you are interested in not only spreading confetti rocks around your community and you'd like to also use them to play [Happiness Hide & Seek TAG](#), there is just one additional step you'll need to take. Before you spray sealer on the back of your rocks, you'll want to include the custom [QR code](#) so others know how to play.

A QR code (short for quick response) is a small image designed to be read/scanned by cell phones, somewhat like a barcode, that directs you to a piece of digital information, typically a website. In this case, anyone who scans the custom QR code on the back of your rocks will be able to read the directions on [how to play](#) the game.

Simply print out the code, and follow the same process for Mod Podge and sealing.

IMPORTANT. If you decide to use your confetti rocks to play, before sending them out into the world you'll first have to create a custom tag for them in our open [Facebook](#) group. It's quite easy. Just join the [group](#), create a NEW post that includes a photo and #genjoyrocks+whateversayingisontherock. For example, #genjoyrockskeepglowing.

When you go to hide your rock (either for strangers to encounter or to play tag with your friends), simply comment on your post what the words mean to you and leave clues on where to find it. If you also add #genjoyrocks+city and #genjoyrocks+state, other people in your area will be able to search for your rock.

Fun fact - Since you have created a post on Facebook, you'll automatically receive notifications any time someone else finds/comments on your rock.

One Final Note: Storing Rocks

If you have created a few confetti rocks and are looking for places to hide them, it's a good idea to keep them in a bag, purse or your car. That way you'll be ready when inspiration hits as you move about your life. It's also a good idea to keep them apart so they aren't overly touching or banging into each other. Sealed rocks should be able to withstand outdoor weather conditions, but constant pounding and rubbing will start to wear away the beautiful work you put so much love into creating. Try wrapping them in tissue or putting them in a bag with shredded paper.

You now have all the information you'll need (plus quite a bit more I dare say) to create your own word confetti rocks. It's time to sprinkle a bit of happiness around for yourself and those around you. Go out and play with purpose, on purpose.