ARTIST TRADING CARDS

Starter Kit

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You Have Permission To...

Make something messy

Not know what you're doing

Change your mind halfway through

Create something just for you

Let it be imperfect

Try again tomorrow

Still not sure where to begin? Look inside

What Are Artist Trading Cards?

Artist Trading Cards (ATCs) are small pieces of original art, each measuring 2.5 x 3.5 inches.

They are created to be shared - often traded - rather than sold, making them a simple and meaningful way to connect through creativity.

There is Only One Rule

They must be 2.5 x 3.5 inches

Everything else is up to you.

You can paint, collage, doodle, layer, experiment, or play. There is no right way to make an ATC - only your way.

How to Make Your First ATC

Steps:

- Cut a sturdy base 2.5"x3.5"
- Choose your approach - Collage, Drawing, Painting, Mixed media, Create freely
- Try not to overthink it
- Add your information to the back
- Share, trade or keep it - it's up to you

Done is better than perfect.

Not Sure What to Make? Try This...

Play-Based

Use only one color
Tear paper instead of cutting
Add texture you can feel

Reflective

Create a card based on your current mood
Represent a memory using only shapes
What does "home" look like in a tiny space?

Or This...

Hive/Community

Add something for the next person to respond to
Leave a question on your card
Create a card meant to be traded with a stranger

Fun/Experimental

Close your eyes and make the first mark
Use your non-dominant hand
Set a 5-minute timer and stop when it ends

What Goes on the Back?

Name:
Title:
Date:
Contact (optional):
Series (optional):

You can keep this simple or skip it entirely... this is just a guide.

Using a Random Generator for Ideas

Using a random generator like a die can be a fun way to take the pressure off when the ideas aren't quite flowing. Here are some different options for you to explore whenever you are feeling stuck or just in for a little random fun!

Use these options in whatever way works for you. Some options include:

- Roll first to pick s section below to use. Roll again to pick one of the 6 options listed.
- Pick a group below to start with and roll to see which option in that group is waiting for you.
- Use the ideas below to begin your brainstorming. See if any of them grab your attention or lead to you towards something else.

1
A Starting Point

1 Create something soft and calm
2 Use bold marks or contrast
3 Focus on texture or layering
4 Tell a tiny story
5 Express a feeling or mood
6 Make something playful or unexpected

2
Theme / Intention

1 A memory
2 A feeling
3 Nature
4 Connection
5 A question
6 Transformation

3
Creative Twist

1 Use only one color
2 Add texture
3 Include a hidden element
4 Use your non-dominant hand
5 Work in layers (at least 3)
6 Stop after 5 minutes

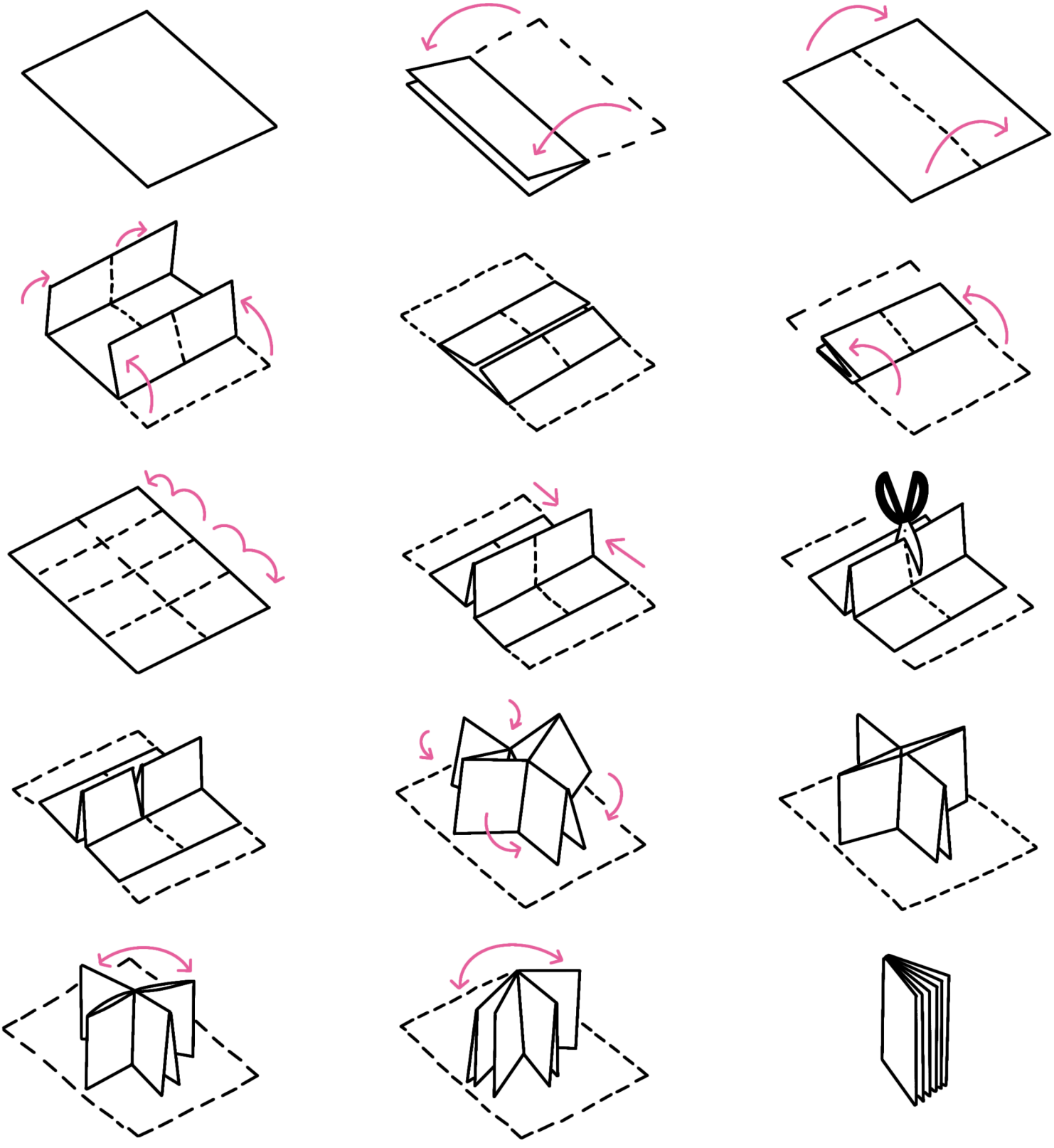
4
Style + Focus

1 Collage
2 Drawing
3 Painting
4 Mixed Media
5 Minimal
6 Try something new

5
Emotions

1 Calm
2 Joy
3 Tension
4 Curiosity
5 Nostalgia
6 Hope

6
What Appears on Your Card

1 Symbol
2 Person
3 Object
4 Place
5 Words
6 Abstract Shapes

Folding a Zine