

# PAPER BAG UTILITY VEST



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

How can a person's shelter and belongings be portable and moveable? [Survival Architecture](#) artist [Mary Mattingly](#) designed *Wearable Portable Architecture*, a hexagon-shaped, poncho-esque outfit designed to carry objects and zip together with others in order to create a tent-like shelter. Based on Mattingly's ideas of wearable, functional art, design your own utility vest using a paper bag and other simple materials found around the house.



## RECOMMENDED AGE/SKILL LEVEL:

Recommended for children ages 4 and up with adult supervision.

## MATERIALS

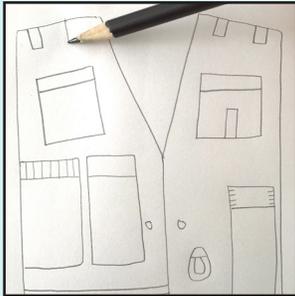
- Paper Bag
- Scissors
- Tape (masking, packing, or duct tape preferred)
- Pencil
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- White scratch paper
- *Optional: wrapping paper, washi tape, and other decorative elements, glue*



## INSTRUCTIONS

- Sketch your vest design on scratch paper.
  - Does your vest have a specific function? (ie: art, cooking, exploring...)
  - How many pockets will you need?
  - What will the pockets hold?
  - Will you paint, draw or collage a design on the back?

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- Place the bag flat with the bottom fold “up.” Cut out a half circle in the middle of the bottom of the bag for your neckline.
- Flip the bag over and cut up the middle of the bag all the way to the neckline. Be careful to only cut the “front” side of the bag/vest!
  - Cut off the handles, if any.
  - Create a “V” neckline, if desired. Just snip off the top corners of the middle cut.
- Save your scraps in case you choose to use them for pockets later.
- Cut arm holes on the sides of the bag.
  - Hold the vest up to yourself, and ask for help if needed to measure location. The arm holes should not be tight, so make sure they are large—probably going all the way across the sides of the bag.



- Choose whether you want your vest to have the printed bag material visible. Carefully turn the bag inside out if you want a blank brown vest. Be patient and gentle!
- Gently flatten the bag and begin to decorate your vest. Look at your design sketch, but feel free to change it!
  - Does your vest have a specific function? (ie: art, cooking, exploring...)
  - Cut out a square or rectangular shape, then tape to the bag on the bottom and both sides of the shape. You can fold or bend the shape to create more space between the vest and pocket, which will allow more room to hold things.
  - Crayons and markers will work especially well on the bag. Use scraps, other colors of paper, newspaper, or recycled envelopes as additional pockets and patches. Can you create a camouflage print like the one on Mary Mattingly’s piece?

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- Gently try your vest on—what kind of adventure are you ready for?
- *Variations:* Spray a bag with water and crumple it up before beginning to get a distressed look. Don't forget to let it dry before crafting your vest!



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- How could your finished vest help you connect with others? What would you choose to carry if the vest was strong enough to hold heavy objects? What could be attached to it?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### CONNECT SOCIALLY AND LEARN MORE

**Facebook & Instagram:** @MuseumofCraftandDesign and @marymattingly

**Twitter** @SF\_MCD

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Post and tag #MCDatHome