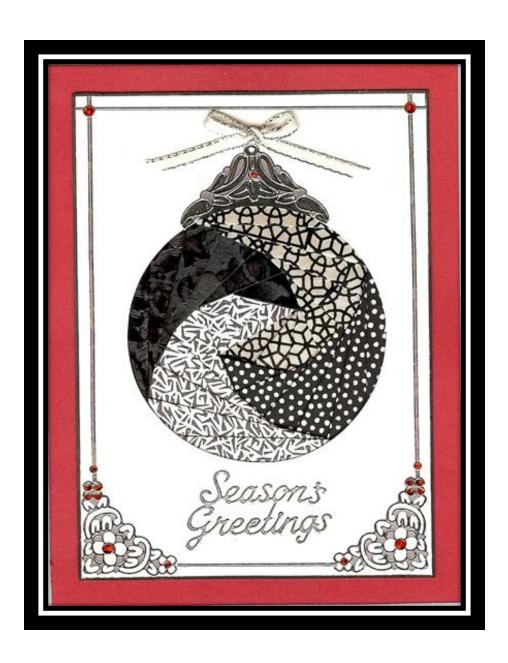# IRIS FOLDING BASICS WITH DEDRA
WWW.CREATIONSBYDEDRA.COM

This easy paper craft originated in Holland, where they began by using the patterned insides of used envelopes to create their beautiful designs. Of course there are so many beautiful papers in the world, we never have to limit ourselves to envelopes. I've been using this craft technique to create greeting cards and framed gifts for many years and have taught hundreds of others to make them too.

One-inch strips of decorative paper (gift wrap and florist foil are my preference), are folded lengthwise and applied to the backside of a cutout card, following a pattern. "Iris" refers to the iris of the eye or a camera, rather than the flower. This technique forms a spiral pattern towards the center, similar to the aperture of a camera lens as it closes.

The following instructions will provide you with the basics of Iris Folding. Visit my website to purchase pre-cut panels in over 150 different shapes. Each package of cutouts includes a numbered pattern and some instructions. On my website you'll also find folding papers and sticker embellishments for sale.

My oldest and dearest best friend, Mary Louks, fell in love with this craft when I first showed it to her back in 2001. She encouraged me to start offering Iris Folding classes, which has lead to many wonderful things in my life. Mary passed away on February 17, 2010 from pancreatic cancer, but she will be in my heart always.

I hope you find these instructions helpful and that you too find great satisfaction in making beautiful hand-crafted projects. Have fun and happy folding!

Dedra True-Scheib
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July 2010

SUPPLIES NEEDED
To complete the basic Iris Fold panel

- ✓ ½ inch-wide scotch tape (any brand of adhesive tape will do)
- ✓ ¾ inch-wide removable scotch tape or masking tape (optional)
- ✓ 2"-wide clear mailing tape (optional)
- ✓ Small pair of sharp scissors
- ✓ Cutout shape panel (these directions are for a 2 ½ inch circle)
- ✓ Iris Folding numbered pattern
- ✓ Folding papers in four colors (or patterns) of lightweight paper.

To complete a greeting card

- ✓ Double-sided tape (to mount project to backing panels; and folded card)
- ✓ Contrasting papers for layering
- ✓ Folded cardstock
- ✓ Decorative scissors and punches
- ✓ Embellishments, including eyelets, stickers, ribbons, metallic floss, etc.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING
A BASIC CIRCLE IRIS FOLD SHAPE

STEP 1

Take a cardstock panel with a 2 ½ inch circle cutout and tape it (on one edge only), over the numbered circle pattern, using the removable or masking tape. (You can make your own removable tape by taking regular tape and putting onto your arm or your clothing first. This picks up lint and/or skin oils, making the tape less sticky and thereby removable.)

We will be working on the backside of the card, so the side of the cutout card facing down will end up being the front of the card. For future projects, if there is a right and wrong side to your cutout card, be sure and tape the right side facing down. Only put tape along one edge of the card. This will allow you to flip the card over as you're working, and check your progress, without un-taping it from the pattern (Figure A).

STARTING POINT

cutout card

removable tape

circle pattern

BACK

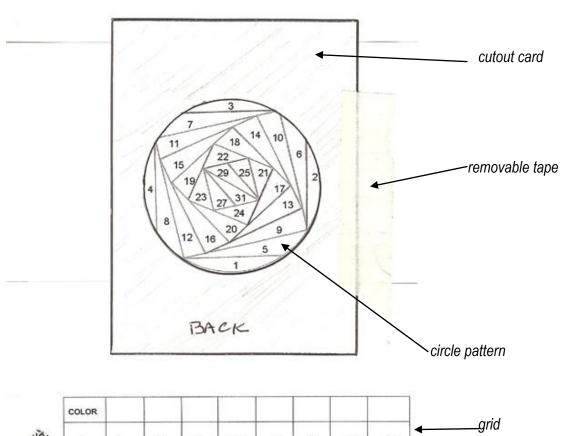| COLOR								
A	1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29
B	2	6	10	14	18	22	-	-
C	3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31
D	4	8	12	16	20	24	-	-

grid

snippets

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FIGURE A

STEP 2

The numbered grid below the pattern is a guide that assists in applying the papers correctly. The number of sides in the underlying geometric shape determines how many papers you will need. This circle pattern allows for 4 different papers (Color A, B, C & D), because the underlying shape of this iris pattern is based on a square. Other patterns that you will see for other shapes include a triangle (3-sides, 3 papers) and a pentagon shape (5-sides, 5 papers).
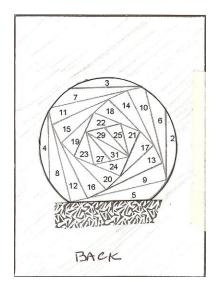
Select the four papers you want to use for this project. Any paper will work as long as it isn't too heavy. Even tissue paper will work, although if it is too thin or light in color other papers may show through it. Now cut your papers roughly into ¾ to 1"-wide strips. The length can be anywhere from 3 to 6 inches. You will need 4 to 8 strips of each paper. Precision cuts are not needed, since the cut edges of the paper do not show. Arrange the four piles of strips in front of you in the order that you want to apply them, keeping in mind which papers you want to show next to one another.

STEP 3

It is highly recommended that beginners tape a snippet of each paper (using the removable tape) next to the letters on the grid. This will be helpful in applying the papers in the correct order and prevent you from getting lost later on (Figure A).

STEP 4

Take a strip of your first paper (Color A) and fold it in half lengthwise. With the folded edge towards the center of the cutout, place the paper over the section marked number 1, exactly on the line. Tape down one end of the strip so the cut edge of the strip overlaps the cutout card by ¼" or so. Then trim the other end, again, so the strip overlaps the card slightly, and tape it down. Flip the card over (do not un-tape it) and ensure that the only thing showing through the cutout is the folded edge of the paper. No cut edges of your folded papers or tape should show through to the front of the card (Figure B).
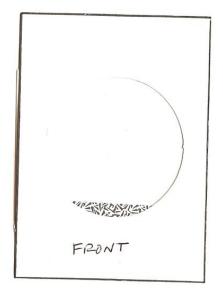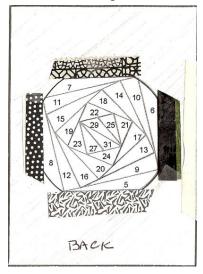

BACK   FRONT

FIGURE B

STEP 5

Next, take a strip from your second paper (Color B) and fold it in half lengthwise. Tape it down in the same manner as the first, completely covering section 2, exactly on the line. Continue with the third and fourth papers (Colors C and D), covering sections 3 and 4 respectively (Figure C). Turn the card over often and check that no cut edges or adhesive tape show through to the front of the card.
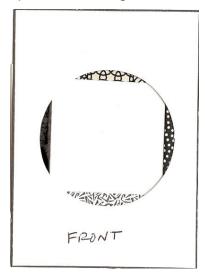

FIGURE C

STEP 6

You have now completed a full rotation and are ready to start over again with Color A, covering section 5. Then tape Color B over section number 6 and so on. Continue adding folded papers in numerical order, according to the grid (i.e. Color A will eventually cover sections 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, etc.). Stop when you reach section number 24 (Figure D). Turn the card over occasionally to check your progress.

If you lose your place, look at the remaining uncovered sections and find the lowest number that is still uncovered. Find that number on the grid and the corresponding snippet in the left hand column will remind you what paper should cover that number. Then just continue on.
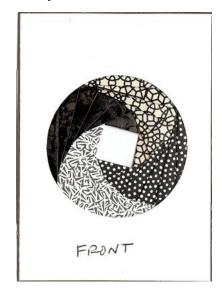

FIGURE D

STEP 7

You will notice that after number 25 there is no number 26. Traditionally, the center of the project is filled in with a piece of shiny holographic paper or a small picture, which you are welcome to do. This center part is known as the "iris" and where the craft got its name. However, my patterns take the spiral all the way to the center, providing a new alternative. The sections, of course, get smaller and smaller, so some sections had to be eliminated at the center. This is why there is no 26, 28, 30 or 32. Be sure and apply the correct papers to the few remaining sections, by carefully following your grid. The final piece does not need to be folded.
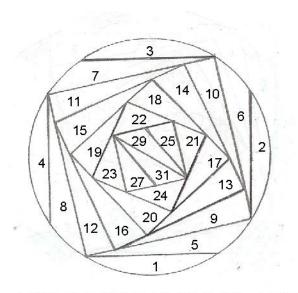
STEP 8

Flip your card over one last time and ensure that all the pieces are correctly placed and that there are no cut edges, gaps or tape showing. If some pieces are out of place it is possible to fix them. This can be done by gently un-taping the sections and putting in the correct papers. You can also pull the section out through the front and insert a replacement. It's a little tricky, but both methods have worked for me.

Once you are satisfied, carefully un-tape your project from the pattern. Now cover the back of the panel with the 2-inch tape (2 strips is usually enough). This will ensure that everything stays in place as you finish your project, plus it helps keep the card flat. If you don't have 2" tape, use multiple strips of the ½" tape to secure the back of the card.

FINISHING

The Iris Folding part is now complete. If you wish to trim the panel down, now is the time to do that. Be careful not to cut into the folded papers, as this will prevent the panel from ultimately lying flat. You can also use your decorative scissors around the edges or use corner punches at this time. Next, measure the Iris Folded panel and add ¼ inch to the length and width. Cut a contrasting colored panel out of decorative paper or cardstock. Mount your Iris Folded panel to the backing panel using the double-sided tape or equivalent. You can add additional layers of different colors using different widths. Instead of adding ¼" to the measurements, add ½ inch or 1/8 inch. The varying width of the panels adds interest to the piece. Mount this to folded cardstock, and add embellishments to your liking.

4-COLOR BASIC CIRCLE PATTERN

Select 4 papers and tape snippets of each to the left of the letters in the grid below. Apply the papers according to the grid. Pay close attention to the numbering as you get closer to the center (Color/Papers "B" and "D" are not used in the final 4 sections.).

COLOR								
A	1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29
B	2	6	10	14	18	22	-	-
C	3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31
D	4	8	12	16	20	24	-	-