

Norton Simon Museum

Family Art Project: Come Sail Away on Handmade Sponge Boats

Magnificent boats, big and small, are illustrated realistically and abstractly in paintings by 18th- to 20th-century artists such as Claude-Joseph Vernet, Claude Monet and Lyonel Feininger in the Museum. Design a sponge boat with paper sails, and watch it float in the bathtub, the pool or even the sea.



Claude-Joseph Vernet (French, 1714–1789), *Bay of Naples*, 1762, Oil on canvas, The Norton Simon Foundation



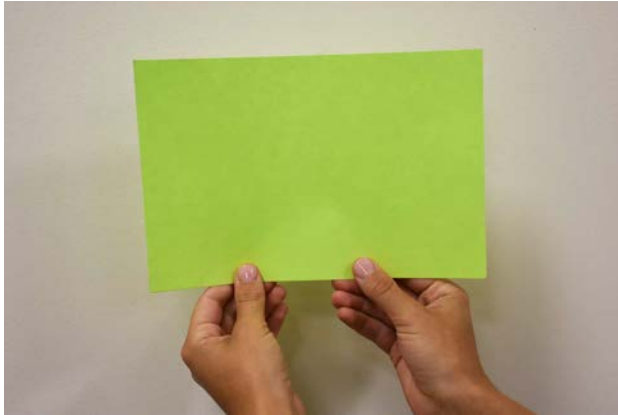
Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926), *Mouth of the Seine at Honfleur*, 1865, Oil on canvas, The Norton Simon Foundation

Materials:



- Sponge
- BBQ skewer (cut to 7")
- Construction paper and decorative papers
- Glue stick
- Elmer's glue
- Scissors

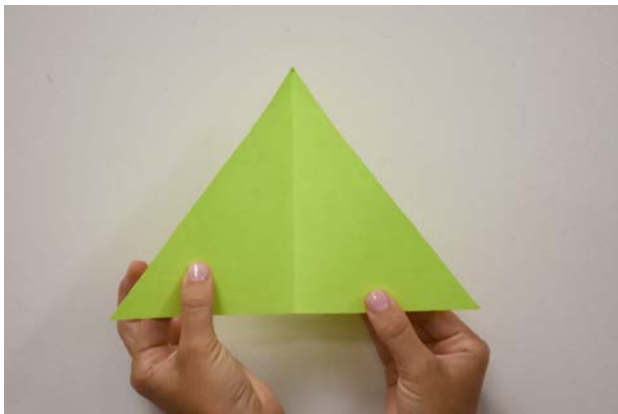
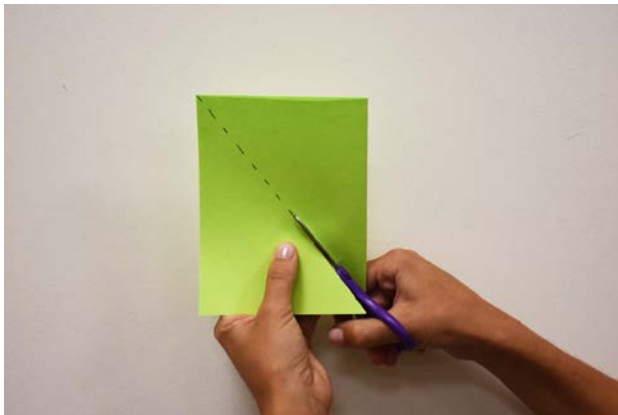
Steps:



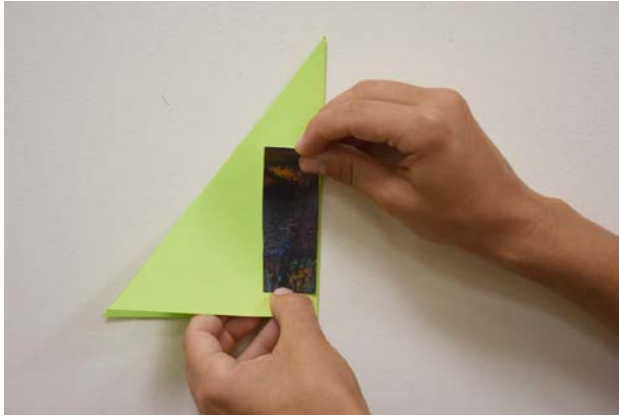
Step 1: First, take a half sheet of construction paper and fold it in half.

Then, cut the folded paper diagonally from corner to corner making sure not to cut off the folded edge.

The double-triangle piece with a fold down the center will be your sail.



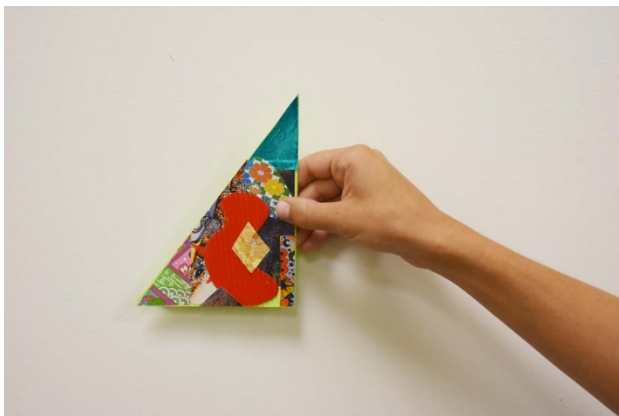
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Step 2: Collage your sail by cutting creative shapes out of decorative papers and layering them on the construction paper using a glue stick.

Different textures and patterns of paper will give your sail pizzazz and shine.

We used a mixture of Japanese origami papers, magazine images, and colored cardboard to evoke the feeling of being outside sailing on a bright and beautiful day.



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Step 3: Once you've decorated the outside of your sail, add Elmer's glue to the inside. Squeeze a generous amount inside the folded crease. Place the bbq skewer in the crease and fold the paper in half to create a triangular sail with a mast extending downwards. Make sure that the pointed end of the skewer extends down and out of the construction paper sail.



Step 4: With the help of a grown up, use the pointed end of the wooden skewer to pierce the sponge and insert your sail into the base of your boat. Take your vessel out for a spin in the bathtub, a bowl, the kitchen sink, or on the high seas!

