How to make a zine

‘Zine-making is an art in its own right, and an old art that has become a platform for makers from all walks of life.’

Illustrator Ed Cheverton

Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew
Zine-making

Learn how to use zine-making and DIY self-publishing to share ideas and make your voice heard!

In this learning resource you will:

- Discover the fascinating history of zine-making.
- Explore ways to tell your own story through zines.
- Learn how to make your own original zine.

Use this learning resource alongside our other resources ‘Why are plants important to you?’ and ‘Plants in everyday life’ to create your own plants- and fungi-themed zine.
What is a zine?

Zines tend to be a combination or ‘bricolage’ of various images, texts and messages. Here is a list of just a few of the things you can do with the zine format:

• publish sketches, drawings, and mini-comics
• gather your favourite recipes
• share something informative
• print your own poetry
• share your thoughts and ideas about something you’re passionate about
• …the list goes on

Basically, what you can include in a zine is only limited by your imagination!
What is a zine?

Before the internet there was the fanzine, created originally by sci-fi enthusiasts of the early 20th century who used the medium as a way to discuss their thoughts and ideas with others.

That same do-it-yourself ethos is what drew punks of the late 20th century to embrace fanzines as a complement to their music, and as a means to challenge mainstream society.

**Zines can be powerful! They can communicate strong ideas.**

Despite the development of the internet, printed zines are still an invaluable form of socially conscious cultural currency. They remain a powerful way for people to share ideas and knowledge and publish creative work on things they care about.

The usefulness of zines as historical documents is now being recognised. Many universities have their own zine collections and there are also numerous independent zine libraries around the world.

It’s easier than ever to learn about zines first hand...
Will your zine be informative?

This zine takes the reader on a journey following the cocoa plant from seed to our supermarkets.

What knowledge would you like to share?
Will it tell a story?

Could you create a narrative about something that interests you? This group created a fictional story about a *Pterygota* seed.
Will your zine respond to an object or an idea?

Perhaps you would prefer to create imagery intuitively and spontaneously in response to an object or idea.
Inspiration

Some interesting zines to inspire your zine-making!

Notice how varied all of the work is. There are maps, drawings, poems, essays, interviews – even online zines that include videos and sound recordings.

- lovecamden.org/about-project-vox
- rookiemag.com/2017/05/loving-lahore
- rookiemag.com/2016/10/i-am-power
- rookiemag.com/2014/08/paper-trail
- horridcovid.hotglue.me
Now, to make your zine...

Use the work you made in response to ‘Plants in everyday life’ and ‘Why are plants important to you?’ as a starting point for your zine.

From there, let your imagination run wild and see what exciting, novel and curious ideas you come up with.
There are lots of ways to make a zine...
This is one of the quickest and easiest ways to make yours.

**You will need**

- A3 sheet of paper
- Scissors
- A ruler
- A cutting knife

1. Fold the paper in half so that the two longer edges line up.
2. Fold it again the other way, so the two shorter edges line up.
3. Fold it one last time, in the same direction.
4. Unfold the paper. In the image below you can see the different pages of your zine.
5. Cut a slit in the paper (as shown above).
6. Fold the paper along that same line, bringing the longer sides together.

...and that's it!
Happy zine-making!

This resource was developed by Kate Ducker for Kew’s Youth Programme as part of the Kew Youth Forum ‘Connecting with Nature’ zine project 2020.