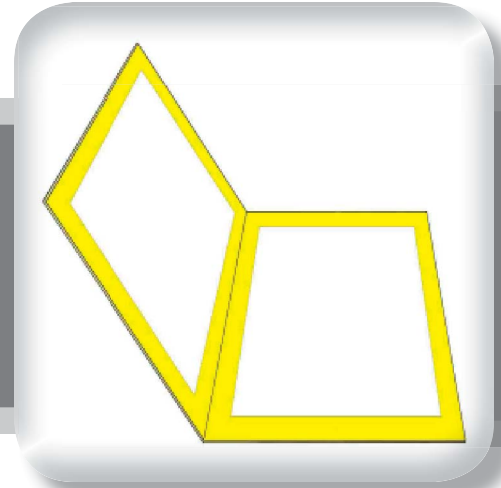# Make a Storage Portfolio

Make a portfolio folder for the storage and preservation of drawing papers and two-dimensional artworks

Supplies: acid-free cardboard or matboard; roll of wide tape; strong, sharp utility knife; and a straight edge or long ruler

Your portfolio can be as big or as small as you want, but should be a little larger than your drawings and paper. You can make a portfolio with either one large sheet of board or two small sheets.
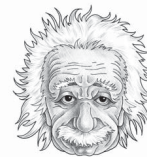
Here are two suggestions for portfolio sizes.

1. **To make a portfolio that is 20 by 16 in (51 by 41 cm):**

    • one sheet at least 32 by 20 in (82 by 51 cm) to be folded in half

    • two sheets at least 20 by 16 in (51 by 41 cm) each

2. **To make a portfolio that is 30 by 20 in (76 by 51 cm):**

    • one sheet at least 40 by 30 in (102 by 76 cm) to be folded in half

    • two sheets at least 30 by 20 in (76 by 51 cm) each

ArtSpeak

Storage portfolio: A hard-sided foldable case in which artists store drawings and sheets of drawing paper to protect them from damage.

Acid-free: An archival quality of a long-lasting paper product that has had the acid removed from the pulp in the paper-making process.
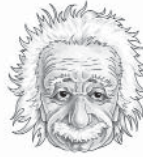
Duct tape (also called *duck tape*): A well-known strong, flexible, sticky tape used for a vast range of professional and creative applications.

Score: To cut slightly but not sever. Cardboard or matboard should be scored less than halfway into its total thickness.

Tips!

- Acid-free matboard can be found in a wide selection of colors at many framing and art supply stores.
- Duct tape is great for this project because it is strong and comes in lots of fun colors.
- Storage portfolios can be stacked on top of one another on a flat surface such as a large shelf.

ArtSpeak

Charcoal: A drawing medium made from a burnt organic material such as wood. As with graphite, charcoal comes in various grades.

Spray Fixative: A transparent aerosol coating that is sprayed onto an artwork to help prevent smudging.

Collage: An artwork created by gluing a specific selection of objects (such as photographs, ribbons, and/or colored papers) to paper, board, or canvas.
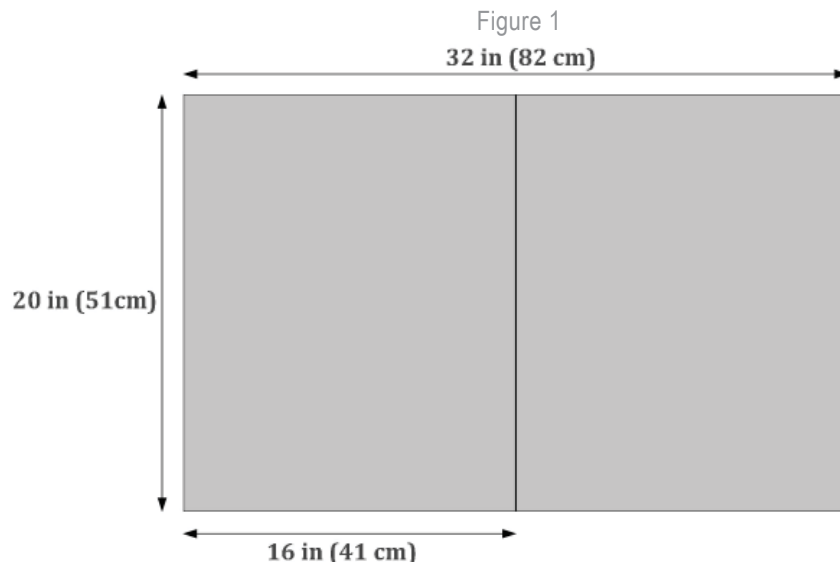
Option 1: Using One Large Sheet of Board

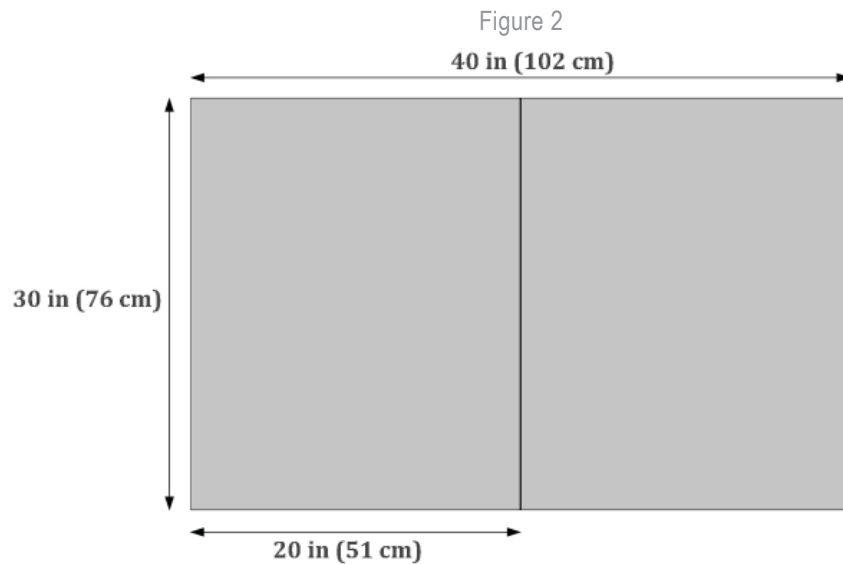1. **Place your large sheet of board, colored side facing up, on a level surface.**

   The side facing up will be the outside of the portfolio.

2. **Measure the longer sides of the board and mark the halfway points (Figures 1 and 2).**

   Figure 1: If your board is 32 by 20 in (82 by 51 cm) the center points are at 16 in (41 cm).

   Figure 2: If your board is 40 by 30 in (102 by 76 cm) the center points are at 20 in (51 cm).

Figure 1

32 in (82 cm)

20 in (51cm)

16 in (41 cm)

Figure 2

40 in (102 cm)
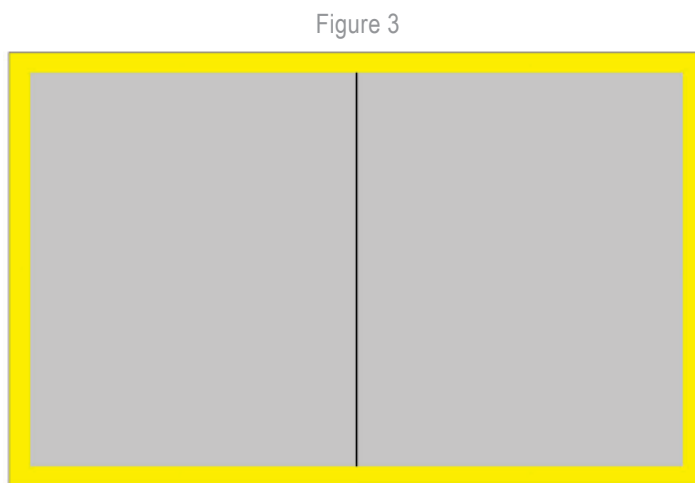
30 in (76 cm)

20 in (51 cm)

Figure 3

Figure 4

3. **Use a straight edge or long ruler to draw a straight line between the points.**

   This line indicates where you will score the board, and will be the bottom of the finished portfolio.

4. **Fold wide tape over the edges of all four sides of the board.**

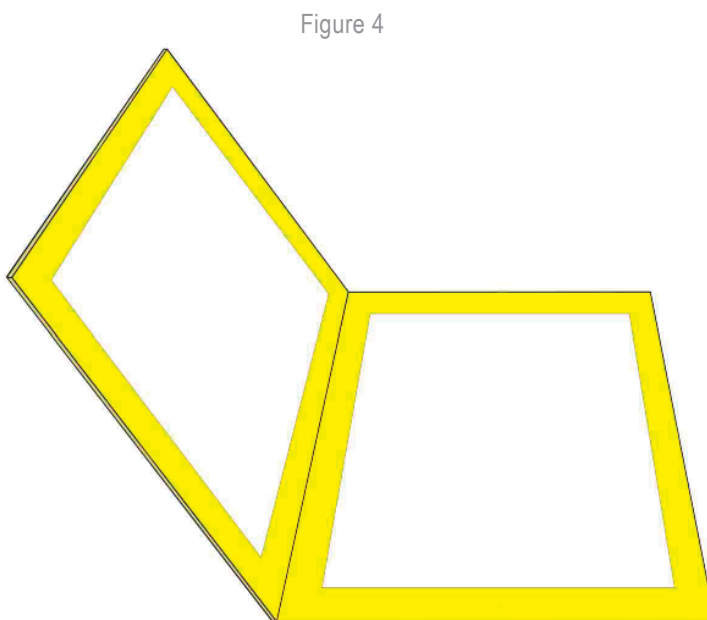   This will add strength to your portfolio (Figure 3).

5. **With your knife and a straight edge, score along the straight line of the colored side of the board.**

   This will require some concentration because you'll need to score through the taped section as well as the board.

   Be careful not to cut the board too deeply or you'll have two pieces instead of one!

   If you accidentally end up with two pieces, simply skip ahead to Option 2 and follow the instructions for working with two pieces.

6. **Turn over the board so you are now looking at the inside (non-colored side) (Figure 4).**

7. **Gently fold the large sheet of board inward along the scored line until the portfolio is closed.**

8. **Open the portfolio and tape over the inside center seam.**

   To make this seam super strong, use two strips of tape.

9. **Close the portfolio and fold two strips of tape along the scored seam at the bottom (Figure 5).**

10. **Decorate one or both sides of your portfolio.**

    Be creative! Consider a collage, design, drawing, or painting. When your artwork is finished, you can add a neat border around it with wide tape.

    Decorating your portfolio is completely optional; you may prefer to use it as is.

Figure 5

Option 2: Using Two Smaller Sheets of Board

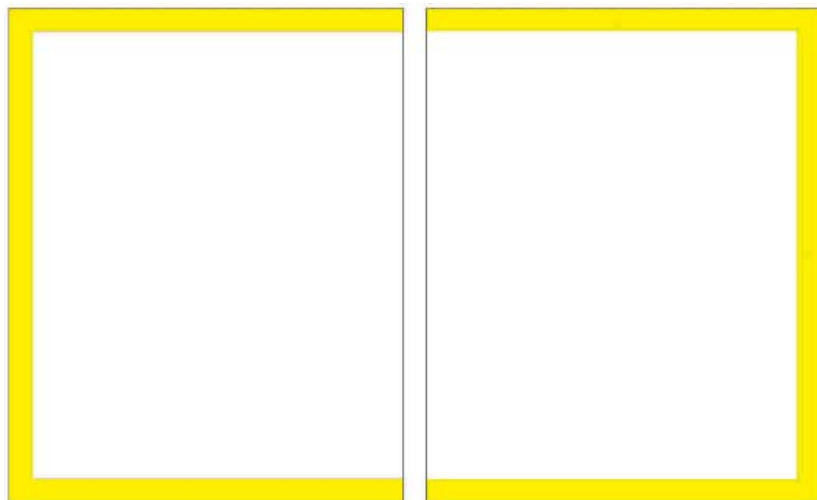1. **Fold wide tape over one long edge and both short edges of each board.**

2. **Place the boards beside one another with the inside (non-colored side) facing upward.**

   The edges that are not taped should be close together. This is the inside of your portfolio (Figure 6).

3. **Push the sides without tape together.**

   Make sure both sides are flat and the edges are tight and level with one another.

Tip!

You may want to use a spray fixative to protect artworks rendered with soft mediums (such as charcoal) before you add them to your portfolio. But no matter what the medium, always place a sheet of inexpensive acid-free paper between each artwork.

Figure 6

4. Tape over the inside center seam (Figure 7).

To make the seam super strong, use two strips of tape.

5. Close the portfolio and fold two strips of tape along the seam at the bottom (Figure 8).

6. Decorate one or both sides of your portfolio.

Be creative! Consider a collage, design, drawing, or painting. When your artwork is finished, you can add a neat border around it with wide tape.

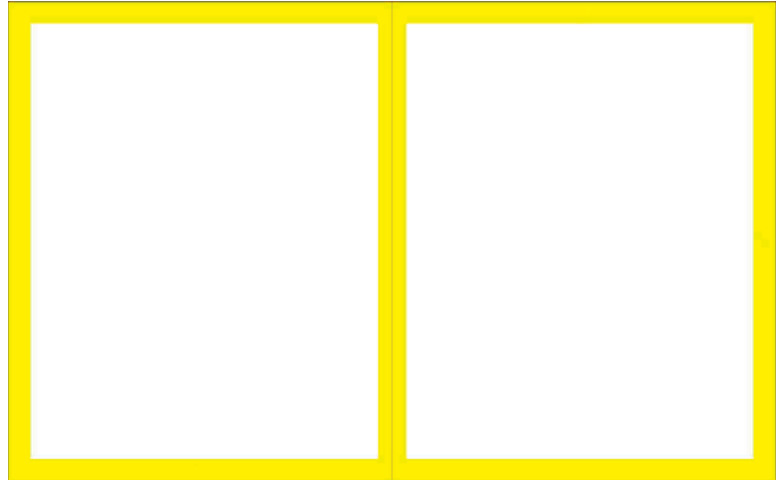Decorating your portfolio is completely optional; you may prefer to use it as is.

Figure 7

Figure 8

Caution!

Use a separate portfolio for artworks of different mediums to prevent cross contamination of media particles. For instance, charcoal drawings and graphite drawings should never be stored together. And remember to always store portfolios flat to lessen the likelihood of particles of medium spreading to other drawings.