Build a Simple Paper Gift Card Holder

A one-piece pocket with four measured score lines and a removable closure

These are original, printable digital plans for adult paper crafts. All dimensions describe the flat digital template and nominal geometry. Paper thickness, printer scaling, cuts, crease placement and glue may change the real fit. Steadleaf Press has not physically printed, cut, scored, glued, inserted a card or tested durability or safety. The reader must examine the real paper and insert. Work on a stable surface and use ordinary scissors and paper-safe adhesive according to product labels. Keep sharps and wet adhesive away from children; this craft is not a toy, protective package or secure wallet.

The job of the holder

A useful gift card holder does two things: it holds a flat card without pretending to protect the card from loss, and it opens without having to tear an expensive gift. This design has one back panel, two narrow side tabs, a rising lower pocket and an unglued upper closure. All four parts remain connected as a single cut-out. The top can be tucked over the front or secured by an optional removable paper band; it is not permanently sealed.

A common payment or gift card is roughly 85.6 mm wide by 54 mm high, although real gift cards, presentation inserts and commercial sleeves vary. Measure the card that you plan to give. Our nominal back panel is 108 mm wide and 75 mm high, and the side tabs occupy 8 mm at each edge. The nominal unobstructed lateral space is about 108 - 8 - 8 = 92 mm before allowance for material thickness and glue. This exceeds an 85.6 mm reference card by only 6.4 mm in the arithmetic; the construction is not an approved tolerance or proof of actual fit. If the card is wider, thicker, laminated unusually or has an attached object, make another larger design instead of forcing it into the reference holder.

The lower pocket covers 45 mm of the back panel and deliberately leaves part of a 54 mm-high card visible. The top flap folds down over the exposed portion; the two flaps overlap by nominally 15 mm when folded. There is no glued strip across the pocket mouth. This is suitable only for a light, flat, ordinary card and a dry, short-term presentation. It is not tamper-proof, waterproof, archival, child-safe, or suitable for posting without a separate envelope.

Materials and a measured print

Use one expendable sheet of foldable cardstock, approximately 160-220 gsm as an exploratory range, not a verified compatibility rating. Prepare a ruler with millimetres, a pencil, ordinary scissors, a blunt scoring tool, clean scrap paper and a small amount of clearly labelled paper-safe adhesive or narrow double-sided tape suitable for your stock. A cutting machine, knife, heat gun, magnetic fastener or metal eyelet is unnecessary. Thick glitter stock and heavily coated board may split when folded or reduce the nominal clearance.

Print the matching A4 or US Letter pattern at Actual Size / 100%, not Fit to Page or Shrink Oversized Pages. Measure the separate 50 mm scale check using a physical ruler. Check that the complete outline and all four crease guides are visible. If the calibration line is wrong, the pattern is not a full-size reference: correct printing or draw the numeric dimensions on clean stock with a real ruler. Adobe Acrobat Help explains that Actual Size is unscaled but content outside a printer's printable region can still be cropped. That is why inspecting every outline matters as much as the calibration reading.

The printable plan has a 124 x 165 mm overall bounding box. Its central rectangle occupies x = 8..116 mm and y = 45..120 mm, taking the lower-left corner of the overall box as (0,0). The back panel therefore measures 108 x 75 mm. Left and right tabs are each 8 mm wide, attached to the side edges of that back panel. The lower front flap occupies x = 8..116, y = 0..45; the upper closing flap occupies x = 8..116, y = 120..165. Solid perimeter edges are for cutting; four dashed lines separate the side tabs, lower flap and upper flap from the back panel. No additional window is cut into the centre.

Follow the original cutting and folding map

The left tab hinge is x = 8 mm along y = 45..120; the right hinge is x = 116 along the same vertical interval. The lower hinge is y = 45 from x = 8..116, and the upper hinge is y = 120 across that width. Score those four hinges gently. Cutting through any of them will disconnect the corresponding flap. The outer outline is not an ordinary rectangle: keep both side tabs attached to the middle rectangle while cutting its notched silhouette.

You can check the mathematics without guessing from a thumbnail. Overall width = 8 + 108 + 8 = 124 mm. Overall height = 45 + 75 + 45 = 165 mm. After the bottom flap swings up it covers y = 45..90 on the back panel. After the top flap swings down it covers y = 75..120. The two front surfaces therefore meet or overlap between y = 75 and y = 90: 15 mm nominal overlap. Thickness will change the visible overlap and whether the top stays closed. The lower pocket is open at y = 90, while the bottom crease and joined side tabs close its other three sides.

Make the holder, one fold at a time

1. Put the selected card aside safely. Record its actual width and height; do not rely on the 85.6 x 54 mm example if yours differs.
2. Print the full-size net and measure the 50 mm bar. Inspect both side-tab corners and the full top and bottom edges for cropping. If the print is wrong, stop using it for a measured cut.
3. Identify the central 108 x 75 mm back, the two 8 mm side tabs, the 45 mm lower flap and the 45 mm upper flap. Mark the inside face unobtrusively in pencil.
4. Before cutting the overall silhouette, lightly score the two vertical tab hinges x8 and x116 from y45 to y120. Do not press through the card.
5. Score the horizontal lower hinge at y45 and the upper hinge at y120 between x8 and x116. Keep the long edges straight, and do not connect score guides with a knife.
6. Cut the solid outer perimeter with ordinary scissors. Turn the paper at the concave shoulders so each tab stays connected to the back panel.
7. Fold the two side tabs inward over the back and reopen them. Fold the bottom flap up and the upper flap down in a dry rehearsal. None of the edges should tear.
8. Fold both side tabs inward again, then bring the lower flap up over them. The lower front flap should cover the bottom 45 mm of the back panel; keep the upper flap free.
9. With no adhesive, check that a flat paper stand-in with the same measured dimensions as the intended card slides between lower flap and back. If it rubs or bows, make a new design with more clearance rather than forcing it.
10. Remove the card and stand-in. Apply a thin amount of label-appropriate adhesive only to the portions of the folded side tabs overlapped by the raised lower front flap: the side zones alongside y45..90. Do not glue across the top

opening, across the centre of the back, or to the upper flap.

11. Press the lower flap onto those two tab zones while keeping a clean scrap-paper guard behind the pocket opening; remove the guard before glue sets. Follow the adhesive's real drying instructions.
12. After drying, gently insert an expendable paper size gauge and check that it can be retrieved without tearing. Only then try your measured gift card. Stop if thickness or adhesive blocks it.
13. Fold the top flap down over the front. Confirm the nominal 15 mm overlap does not trap or damage the card. If you want a removable decorative band, cut it separately and keep its fastening outside the card pocket.
14. Record the print scale reading, paper used, original card size, final apparent opening, any adjustments and any untested uncertainty in the maker record.

Diagnose the common errors

The card will not enter. Check whether the maker folded the side tabs outward or used excessive adhesive. A paper plan may allow about 92 mm of lateral space only in ideal flat geometry; the actual opening can be smaller when tab thickness occupies the pocket, especially near the bottom. Do not wet the pocket in an attempt to stretch it. Choose a wider new net and document the new dimensions.

The front pulls away from the sides. The glue should sit between lower flap and inward side tabs, not only on the back panel. Confirm the two side-tab portions under the lower flap were the surfaces bonded. A dry-fitted shape with no bond may stand briefly and then open; do not confuse that temporary position with a finished closure. If a tab tears, remake it using sound card rather than adding a sharp staple.

The upper flap springs open. There is no locking clasp, and the project does not claim one. Reducing insert thickness or selecting more flexible stock may help the user. A separate loose band can hold the upper flap temporarily without gluing the valuable card. Do not promise that the flap will never open in a bag or in the post.

The print is too small. A 50 mm calibration bar reduced to 48 mm indicates a scale factor 48/50 = 0.96, so the 108 mm back panel would be only 103.68 mm wide before folding. This is arithmetic, not a reported physical printer test. Return to Actual Size or redraw all measurements.

Small variations and boundaries

Decorate the blank before assembly if you want the front flap to carry a short message. Keep the side adhesive zones and score paths free of heavy paper embellishments. On the outer upper flap, consider a handwritten name, a single line border or a soft colour block. For a gift that includes a longer letter, use the companion correspondence project F040 instead; its note dimensions and envelope design are different and should not be silently substituted.

You may enlarge the holder, but change all dependent dimensions deliberately. If you widen the back panel, recalculate the tab overlap and the full-width silhouette; if you alter pocket height, recalculate lower/upper flap overlap and the intended card exposure. Never assume a zoomed PDF preserves the original paper thickness clearance. Retain a separate written cut-and-score table for any redesigned version.

This craft does not enclose cash securely, guard against magnetism, protect personal financial information, or certify retention. Do not copy visible card numbers into a shared photograph or maker record. Keep real payment details private and avoid placing a scannable code on a public model. Use only the physical card's ordinary intended functions

after removing it from the paper holder.

Sources, original rights and disclosures

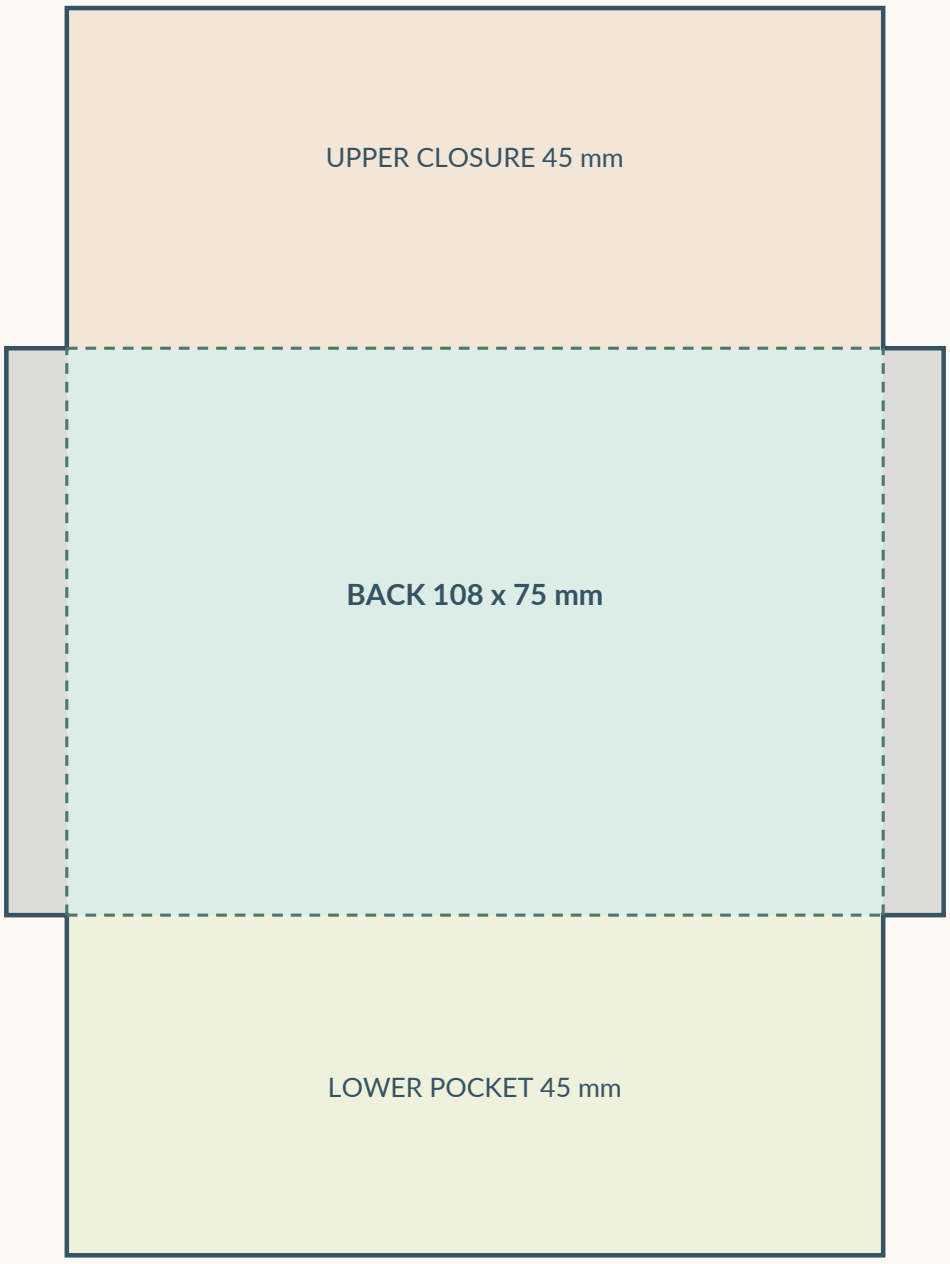
Adobe Acrobat Help, Adjust page size for printing PDFs: https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/desktop/print-documents/set-up-and-print-pdfs/page-size.html . Used only for the distinction between Actual Size and scaled printing, not to certify any particular printer or this craft.

Library of Congress, Care, Handling and Storage of Works on Paper: https://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/paper.html . General context for protecting valuable papers; this craft is not a preservation-grade enclosure.

The text, cut net, measured tab positions, cover illustration and maker worksheets were designed as new Steadleaf Press digital teaching assets. No outside printable template or copyrighted commercial cover image is included. No physical prototype was printed, cut, glued, loaded, posted or fit-tested. The reader must check their own dimensions, material and use.

Printable full-size patterns and original maker records follow. No physical prototypes were made or tested.

FULL-SIZE HOLDER NET



SOLID: cut silhouette GREEN DASH: score, never cut

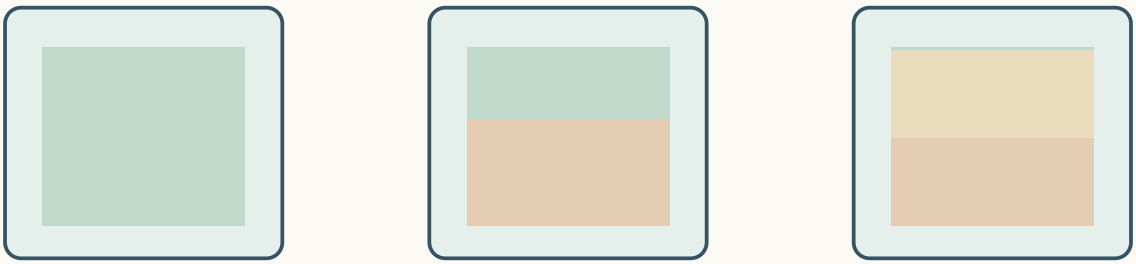
Tab width 8 mm each. Net 124 x 165 mm. Glue ONLY on tabs under lower pocket.

50 mm SCALE CHECK - measure with a ruler

GIFT CARD SIZE GAUGE AND ASSEMBLY MAP

EXAMPLE CARD-SIZE PAPER GAUGE: 85.6 x 54 mm

Measure YOUR card. The gauge does not certify actual fit.



1. SCORE + CUT **2. FOLD + GLUE** **3. CLOSE**

Pocket side glue: apply only on two 8 mm folded tabs, beneath lower 45 mm flap.

Do not glue the pocket opening or upper closure; keep a removable paper guard.

50 mm SCALE CHECK - measure with a ruler

MAKER RECORD / PAGE 1

Measured gift card width x height

A4 / Letter and 50 mm calibration measured

Holder cut net 124 x 165 mm; back 108 x 75

Side tabs x8 / x116; lower y45; upper y120

Dry pocket fit and adhesive placement (reader only)

Actual opening, top closure and any distortion

Recorded change / NOT TESTED observations

Only record observations if you actually make the craft. Publisher physical test: NOT PERFORMED.

Real recipient use, privacy and safe handling

50 mm SCALE CHECK - measure with a ruler



MAKER RECORD / PAGE 2

What changed from the supplied original pattern?

Where did paper resist, rub, crack or wrinkle?

Which fold, score, adhesive or image rule mattered?

Were all 50 mm calibration marks actually measured?

Does the real paper object close or open as intended?

What remains UNTESTED or uncertain?

Next version or alternative dimension to try

Only record observations if you actually make the craft. Publisher physical test: NOT PERFORMED.

Date / initials / safely stored tools and materials

50 mm SCALE CHECK - measure with a ruler

