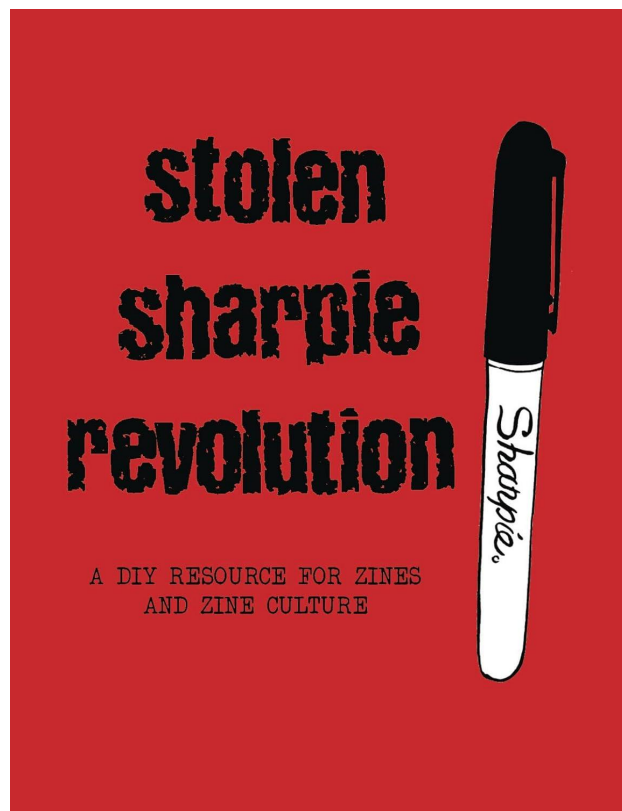


Stolen Sharpie Revolution

a DIY resource for zines and zine culture

Alex Wrekk



2002

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Stolen Sharpie Revolution
a DIY resource for zines and zine culture
Sixth Edition

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SILVER
SPROCKET

intro to the intro...

This is the 6th edition of Stolen Sharpie Revolution, including both Stolen Sharpie Revolution and Stolen Sharpie Revolution 2. The distinction between the two was only made in the 4th edition to show the change in publisher, I hope that wasn't too confusing. 2020 marks the 18th anniversary of this little red book! It is hard to believe that 26,000 copies are in print and with this edition there will be even more!

I have received letters and emails from all over the world telling me about how people have used SSR as a school text, found it in a zine workshop, a library, picked it up in a bookstore, received it as a gift, accidentally stolen it from a friend, or had to buy a new copy because they keep giving theirs away! I've been told how SSR got someone interested in zines, helped them decide to start a zine distro, or even realized that the paper thing that they had been creating had a name, is a thing called a zine, and has an entire community of people that do the same thing.

A lot has changed with zine culture in the last 18 years since the first edition of SSR came out in 2002. It only seems appropriate to update this book to keep it relevant. Past editions of Stolen Sharpie Revolution have included several pages of zine resource listings in the back of the book. Some of those listings (including zine distros) were incorrect, or even non-existent by the time the book got back from the printer. In 2012, to help document the ever changing aspects of zines and zine culture, I created the website www.StolenSharpieRevolution.org. It houses the most mercurial aspects of zine culture: an updated listing of zine events around the world and contacts for zine distros, zine libraries, and online resources. I update the website regularly and maintain a zine event calendar as well continuing to add new links and other fun stuff. This has made my job of working on the reprint IMMEASURABLY easier! Please

check out the webpage and feel free to add feedback or let me know about your zine distro or zine event so it can be added.

Whether this is the first time you have picked up a copy of *Stolen Sharpie Revolution* or you have perused an older version of this book, I hope you find something useful!

in zines we trust
Alex Wreck

What does “STOLEN SHARPIE REVOLUTION” mean anyway?

Have you ever noticed that there always seems to be a Sharpie marker when you need one? You find them at the copy shop, at the door of a show, randomly at the bottom of your bag, on the floor when you need to write down a phone number? Who buys these Sharpies that end up everywhere? Is there some sort of Sharpie Elf that facilitates creative exchange by leaving markers around for people to find?

Somehow, Sharpies exchange hands over and over and I’d like to think that is a good thing. I think that ideas are meant to be like that, shared and passed on so that many people can appreciate them. That is what this book is about: Creative Exchange. This book is not to show you how things must be done when making a zine, but to give you a jumping off point and a few hints so you can out how to do things in your own way.

Stolen Sharpie Revolution is also about DIY (Do It Yourself) ethics and creative reuse. It is about looking at something and saying “I can do that!” rather than waiting for someone to do it for you. It is about taking control back from corporate consumer influences, telling your own story, and creating things on your own terms. It is about learning new skills and integrating them into your everyday life. Whether you are reading them or making them, zines are participatory.

This little book isn’t just about zines; it’s also about being conscious of the world around you. I really enjoy being able to reuse things creatively that others might perceive as junk. Recycling and salvaging goes beyond just Earth Day environmentalism and conscious consuming. It becomes a craft, an art form in itself. The fact that the components are not viewed as commodities makes them even more accessible. There is no need to purchase things that you can easily make yourself and have a little fun while doing it.

This book focuses on zine-related resources as well as creating community. It contains things that have been invaluable to me over the years, things I feel that people who create zines would be interested in. Tips that are new or laminar — wiat uan uc oxiaxcu. i If you have anything you think should be added to this book, let me know and you just might see it in the next edition. Even after 12 years, I still see this

book as a work in progress, echoing the way the zine community continues to grow and change.

Thanks to all the people that have contributed to this edition of SSR.

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STOLEN SHARPIE REVOLUTION

WHAT, WHERE, WHY OF ZINES

THE NEXT STEP: MAKING A ZINE

tools, writing, layout

PAIR USE, COMMUNITY, COPYRIGHT, COPYLEET, & CREATIVE COMMONS

CUT & PASTE LAYOUT & PHOTOCOPIER ART

Zine SIZING & LAYOUT TEMPLATES

WHERE & HOW TO PRINT ZINES

LET'S GET CRAFTY

covers, binding, block printing, paper making, stenciling

ZINE COMMUNITY

TO GET A LETTER, WRITE A LETTER

postal system & mail crafts

MORE COMMUNITY

trading, prisoners, zine promotion

DISTROS

what, ordering from, submitting to, terms, & starting one

ZINE EVENTS

fests, attending, organizing, promoting, readings & tours

OTHER STUFF

July is International Zine Month, zines & the internet zine libraries, & general online zine resources

What is a zine, you ask?

(Pronounced like “magazine,” without the “maga”)

- are physical, printed, self-published creations that can consist of a single sheet of paper or many, fastened together, usually with staples.

- are independently made for the love of creating and rarely make a profit.
- can be created by one person or with a group of people (zines created by one editor and several contributors are often called “comp zines,” or “compilation zines”)
- usually are photocopied but can be offset, letterpressed, mimeographed, or Risograph printed.
- can have a print run from 1 or into the thousands but generally have a run under 1,000.
- contents can be anything you would like: personal stories, political ideologies, music-related writing, gardening tips, jokes, comics, photography, lists of things you like and don’t like, travel stories, fiction, drawings, or anything else you could think to add.
- are made by a diverse spectrum of people throughout the world, from people of all ages and walks of life. People who make zines often build and participate in communities that celebrate the tangible written word. They support each other’s efforts to do so by trading zines with other zine creators or attending zine events.
- are created by people that sometimes call themselves “zinesters” and by some people who hate that term.

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF ZINE? HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE “ZINE”?

How do I find these things you called zines?

Everyone has a story of how they “stumbled” into zines. Maybe you are just finding out about zines now. Maybe you found one in an independent bookshop or record store. Maybe your friend handed you their zine, or you found one in a public place. Wherever your are on your zine journey, welcome. Here’s a few tips on where to find more:

Zine Distros — Distros (“distro” is short for “distributor”) are good places to start looking for zines and to get a bunch of different zines from one place. Zine distros are generally small hobby mail orders, online shops, or, occasionally, collections of zines and other items brought to shows or events to sell. They are generally set up as labors of love to sell the zines that the distro-runners like and want to share. Usually, they will have websites or mail order catalogs with pictures and descriptions of the zines they stock in their distro so that you can read a bit about the zines they carry before purchasing them. Please check out the listings at StolenSharpieRevolution.org for an up-to-date listing of online zine distros.

Read zine reviews — A few of the larger zines like Maximum Rock’n’Roll and Razorcake have zine review sections where you can learn about new zines as well to send your own zine for review. In Canada, Broken Pencil has zine review listings.

Online resources — There are many online resources for zines. StolenSharpieRevolution.org is a pretty good jumping-off point for online zine resources like zine distros, finding a zine event in your area, zine podcasts, how-to guides, a ZineWiki (a wiki just about zines!), a Queer Zine Archive, a Yahoo Group for Zine Librarians, a zine-mobile, info about International Zine Month (July, in case you’re curious), and more! Zines may be objects in the physical world but the internet is a very useful tool for connecting with other zine creators and appreciates.

One good zine community resource is the website We Make Zines (WeMakeZines-liing.com) It is a social network site dedicated to zines, with forums and groups to discuss all sorts of things zine-related! Find people in your area that are into zines, a

local zine library, people to contribute to your comp zine, or put out a call to find people to trade with you.

Which brings me to my favorite way to get zines and how I “stumbled” into zines: by trading my own zines for ones created by other people.

Why Would I Want to Make a Zine?

I had been reading zines for probably a year or so before I realized, “Hey, I can do this too!” We all have stories to tell and no one is going to tell them for us. We can be our own media and share our experiences with the world on our own terms. Zines can be a powerful tool and they are a very versatile medium. With zines, you can incorporate many different skills from writing, art, production and even research. Zines are what you make of them and they also offer a chance to be part of a community that also enjoys sharing their experiences on paper.

Creating your own zine

Let's get started

Here are some of the things that I wish I had known sooner. Stolen Sharpie Revolution is not meant to be a guide of how exactly to make zines — that is something that everyone does differently. You will find out what works for you and create your own style. Here are some helpful hints and suggestions to take into consideration! when starting your own zine project.

SOME GENERAL AND SIMPLE STUFF you MAY NEED TO MAKE A CUT & PASTE ZINE:

- PAPER
- ADHESIVE
- SCISSORS (or X-ACTO KNIFE)

SOMETHING TO WRITE OR DRAW WITH: your own drawings or comics, typewriter, text printed off a computer, rub-on transfer letters, alphabet stamps, or your own handwriting (if it readable) Remember to use a black pen, pencil does not show up very well when photocopied.

A note about adhesives It seems that everyone has their own preference when it comes to glue and adhesives when making zines. Personally, I like glue sticks, but there are lots of other options: double-sided tape, rubber cement, gel glue and more.

Glue sticks are easy to start with, and they now make semi-permanent glue sticks so you can move your layout around to create your own style. Rubber cement is an OK choice. School glue tends to wrinkle when it dries and is not a good choica Be careful about “invisible” tape. When it is photocopied it isn’t invisible.

Writing

Often, when people think about making a zine they ask themselves, “What am I going to write about?” In workshops with first-time zine creators, they are often stumped about what to write or why they would write in the first place. We all have our own stories and I think it is important to document our own history. No one is going to tell our story for us, so why don’t we tell our own? Often years of compulsory

education have left us thinking that there is only one way to write and that what we write will be graded. Or that the only “proper” writing comes from a book that’s published by a company. Zines are different. You can write however you want in your zine. What are the stories that you and your friends tell that always make you laugh? Why not commit them to print? Why not make your own history?

Here are some things to hopefully get you writing:

KEEP A NOTEBOOK

Keep a notebook to write down any thoughts or ideas you may have. You never know when or where you will find inspiration, so why not be ready for it? Having a little notebook with you will train you to record your thoughts and review them later. Paper not your thing? Why not keep a zine file on your phone or computer to write stuff or even keep audio files so you can go back and remember that great idea you had?

THINK ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE

Think about who you want to read your zine as you go IJ-J through what you have written. How do you make your Pj writing interesting to those people? What kinds of things n do you like to read? How can you tell a story with ” enough information, but not too much to overload the reader? What kinds of things will you write about? Will your zine, or each issue of your zine, have a theme? Even if you are creating a comic zine or an art zines, these TTlare important considerations.

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE REVISION PROCESS

Many zines have so much potential but often get left with ideas that are undeveloped or have poor editing. These can be critical elements to a good zine. Here are some ideas that might help with the writing and editing process.

- Consider starting a writing group with people in your local community or even online so that you can share and work on editing together. Writing groups don’t have to consist just of zine writers. Maybe there is already a group near you.
- Try reading your work out loud to yourself or others. It may seem silly, but it can help you hear how the words work together and it could give you a perspective for editing when you hear it out loud.

- If you find it uncomfortable to have other people read your unfinished work, you could try to read your own work from a different perspective by pretending you are a different person. Maybe it would help you see points that need more clarity if you are looking at something from outside of your own perspective.
- A tool that I use in my notebooks is to write only on one side of the page and leave the other side open for notes or revisions.
- Keep in mind that writing for a zine is not the same as writing for school. You don't have to follow traditional writing structures. There are many more options and everything is open when writing a zine.

The only deadlines are self imposed.

Writing and creating zines is like any craft or art. it is something that must be practiced and honed to find your personal style. It is unrealistic to expect your very first zine to be a masterpiece, but I'm not saying it can't happen. More importantly, create something you are proud of. What you are proud of right now may be different that what you will be proud of next week, and that's OK!

Images

One of the fun and interesting things about zines is that you have the opportunity to use more than text to tell stories. You can use images and patterns to add different textures to the words.

- If you like drawing, you can create your own images. Or ask a friend to submit work for your zine. Just make sure it is high contrast or in pen or ink so that it shows up well when photocopied.
- I'm a sucker for cut and paste design and layout and I'm also a pack rat. I find myself saving things that I think have potential I have milk crates full of collected paper treasures that I have convinced myself that I will someday use in a zine.

Here are some ideas of where you can find interesting images to use in creating you zine:

Drawings by your friends, strange food boxes, old yearbooks, vintage ads, children's books, old magazines from thrift/charity shops (Old National Geographies are a treasure!) tabloids, flyers, stickers, travel pamphlets, maps, photographs, fair use images from clipart (or from the expertly crafted clipart zine Craphound), photocopier art (more oh'that later). Check for interesting things at swap meets, thrift stores, garage sales, even your garbage can or recycling bin at a copy shop, could reveal gold! One

of my favorite tricks, which you might notice from the backgrounds of this book, Is to use the inside of security envelopes. Or how about emptying your pockets onto a photocopier and see what kinds of shapes and textures you can come up with? The possibilities are endless!

Be creative: zines can be more than just words on a page. I feel that is the big difference between zines and traditional books. Zines have the possibility of creating more of a feeling and mood with good layout. Imagery adds context to the words.

Zine Layout

Layout is about being conscious of how you use space on your zine pages. It can create a setting or mood. While there are comic zines and art zines that rely mostly on images, if you are mostly using written text why not dress it up. Interesting layout is not an excuse to ignore the writing aspect. Layout it is more like a backdrop that can enhance your work.

Most people can only afford to make zines in black and white, so zine layout must be thought of in this contrast. Pencil doesn't show up very well when photocopied. Messy handwriting can be difficult to read. Busy, crowded, or excessive use of clip art or images can detract from the writing and confuse the reader. These are things that can turn people off from picking up your zine. Here are some other things to keep in mind: _____

- Many copy machines don't print all the way to the edge so it is good idea to leave 1/4- 1/2 inch margin all the way around the page of your flat (the original you're working on and that you'll copy). This might just be the
- Always lay out each page individually. Paste from your original flat only when you are sure of your layout!
- Photos must be messed with a bit to get them to look good when photocopied. Look for the photo or halftone setting on the copier and use the contrast settings, too.
- Don't forget that you can always shrink or enlarge images to make them fit on your page. Also, consider images to make them fit on your page. Also, consider enlarging specific words or phrases to emphasize them.

To get the choppy lines of text glued a background without glue sticky fingers, try typing or printing onto sticker paper (found at any office supply store) and then cut it into strips and stick it in place.

If using images in your zine, try to use ones that pertain to your text. It can add to the overall mood of the writing.

Don't limit yourself to recognizable images. Don't be afraid to use only parts of images or patterns or even other things like fabric. Images can provide visual texture to your zine.

Images can also tell stories (or part of your story) all by themselves. Words can sometimes be powerful alone and not need help. Sometimes excess imagery can detract from what is written. In time, you will find what works best for you.

Don't be afraid of breaking up your writing into blocks or using unconventional line breaks. Sometimes, concepts can be understood better in a non-traditional format. I remember in a creative writing class, we discussed poetry and how the whole page was a canvas. Zines are the same way. You can put words where they suit you and you can make the empty space work for you.

There is no wrong way to make a zine! Explore your own style! Be creative!

Fair use, community, copyright, copyleft, and creative commons

For the most part, even if you are using commercial images for clipart, you are not in danger of being prosecuted for copyright infringement. At worst, you would probably be served a cease-and-desist order (if you use your actual name and not a pseudonym). The small print run, low distribution, and the lack of any profit makes most zones under the radar for most litigation. Mostly, no one will take notice. Still, be aware that you might be using someone else's art without their permission, and there could be repercussions for that. Even if your purpose is to use the images without permission, it's helpful to know some potential defenses.

[Bear in mind that I'm not an attorney and none of this information should be considered legal advice. If you are really interested, contact an attorney. Check out the US website at www.copyright.gov, or your government's similar website].

FAIR USE

If faced with a copyright infringement claim, you may claim that you are using work under fair use. In the USA, there are 4 general factors considered in claims of fair use (paraphrased from: copyright.gov)

1. How you use the material
2. The nature of the copyrighted work (published vs. unpublished; based on facts vs. original creation)
3. The amount of the work you use; and
4. The effect it would have on the value of the original work

For much more detailed, legalese info: <http://fairuse.stanford.edu/overview/fair-use/>

Community

It may be unlikely that an attorney would contact you for using a Jewelry ad that was printed in a magazine 60 years ago. However, if you are going to print something

from another zine, you should definitely ask permission first, if you can track the zine creator down. It's Just good zine etiquette. More than likely, they will be glad to pass their writing or work on and get a little free exposure. Someone else's work is a lot more recognizable than you might think in such a small community and if you use/co-opt without permission, it is bound to get back to them. Remember, this is more about community and sharing than money and prestige.

COPYRIGHT

Most people creating zines don't worry about copyrighting their creations, and, in fact, you don't need to register a copyright to have your work protected. Copyright exists from the moment a work is created. But there is a vast spectrum to consider in having your work attributed to you or allowing for its use by the public. Your work automatically receives some built-in protection simply by being in print, but here are a few more things to consider.

Copyright is a way to protect intellectual work by granting the author complete rights to the use of their work. These rights are not unlimited; your work can be used under "fair use," for purposes ranging from education to zine reviews. You cannot copyright a title or work that is not tangible (zines are tangible). You cannot copyright an idea or things that are common knowledge (if your zine includes these things).

You do not have to have an ISBN or ISSN (International Standard Book Number or International Standard Serial Number) or even register with the copyright office to obtain a copyright. A limited amount of protection is in effect as soon as you create the work. You can register your work with the copyright office and the Library of Congress, but you don't have to. Besides, they'd charge you; money to do that. The only real reason to register for a copyright is if you want to sue someone for infringement.

Using the copyright symbol — that "C" with a circle around it, along with the year and your name (like this: ©) — is a way to show that you don't want your work shown without your permission. It still might happen, but seeing that symbol might give some people pause. If this is important to you, make sure your contact information is included and clear on your zine, so that people who want to use your zine can get a hold of you.

How to make © on a computer

On a PC hold down these three keys: Ctrl+Alt+C

On A Mac hold down these two keys: Option+G

COPYLEFT

On the opposite side of the spectrum is Copyleft, where the creator releases the rights to their work into the public domain. Some people are fine with having their

work copied and distributed freely because they believe that information is meant to be shared. All you would have to do is put in your zine that it is Copyleft and that's that.

CREATIVE COMMONS

Creative Commons is a wide area in the middle of these two options and you are the one that gets to decide which aspects of Copyright you would like for your work.

Basically, there are six variations of Creative Commons licensing:

1. Attribution
2. Attribution Share Alike
3. Attribution No Derivatives
4. Attribution Non Commercial
5. Attribution Non Commercial Share Alike
6. Attribution Non Commerical No Derivatives

It's sort of like the salad bar approach to Copyright, you can pick and choose which aspects you would like from these conditions:

Attribution — allows people to distribute or alter your work as long as they attribute the original to you in the way you request.

Share Alike — allows people to use and distribute a derivative of your work as long as the license is the same as your original

Non-Commercial — allows people to distribute, display, or use your work as long as it is for non-commercial purposes.

Non-Derivative Works — allows people to distribute or display only exact copies of your work with no alteration or derivative of your work.

For more Creative Commons information and downloadable images to affix to printed or digital media, check out the website: www.creativecommons.org

Cut & Paste Style

Copy Machine Fun!

Cut and Paste is an organic method of laying out zine pages that literally incorporates cutting up paper and pasting it to other pieces of paper to create zine layout. In the past this choice could be seen as a limitation due to lack of resources. Now that computers with publishing software have become so common the choice to create layouts with cut and paste becomes an artistic choice, not a limitation. The choice to use cut and paste may seem simple but a lot of thought and skill can go into how it is achieved.

I have to admit, I'm biased. I love cut and paste layouts. This entire book was done by hand and then scanned as images before sending it off to the printer. Cut and paste comes easily to me and I love the organic and sometimes scrappy look. I enjoy the tactile feel of working with tangible, physical objects instead of working on a computer screen. Also, I don't have the skills to get things to look the way that I would like on a computer. So, that's just not going to be included in this book, sorry.

What I really love about cut and paste style layout is the ability to mix images and words with the aid of a photocopier. There are all sorts of tricks to using copy machines and the only frustrating part is that each copy machine is different. If you get a chance, you might want to play around with all of those buttons and see what kind of things you can get the copy machine to do for you.

Cut and past layout is a way to make a zine visually appealing and it can enhance writing.

The trick is being creative and seeing the potential in your words and images

Here are a few examples that you can use on a photocopier:

Enlarge or shrink images or text to fit the space available and create emphasis with words and contrasting images.

[[[

Text/photo — most copiers have the option to scan something as text or a photo, some allow for both on the same page. You should play around with the feature to see what makes your layout, or parts of your layout, look best.

Contrast — makes your images darker or lighter depending on what kind of effect you are going for.

Positive/Negative — Some copiers have this option and you may have to dig through some menus on the digital screen ¶», to find this option. This will give you the cool white text with a black background effect. This can also be used with images. Perhaps

you have a digital image already that you would like to invert, you can easily do this in image editing programs and print it out to use in your zine layout.

Mirror Image — Not all machines have this but it is a fun way of mixing up images by reversing them.

Photocopier Art!

As promised!

- Combine images by running things through a photocopier twice, creating a layered effect.
- Photocopy things with unique textures like your hands, fabric, or the contents of your pocket.
- Move an image around on the copy glass while it is being scanned to create a warped effect that looks sketched or skipped.

— Get interesting grainy textures by enlarging halftone images to their component dots or try for a Moiré pattern.

(Halftone images are made up of dots of various sizes and spacings to create things that our eye perceives as an image. Moiré patterns are the interference that is created when halftone images are scanned.)

Zine Sizes!

Zines come in all shapes and sizes but there are some common sizes you will see and those sizes are dependent on the standard paper size of that region as different regions use different standards. North America has its own standard paper sizes but most of the rest of the world used the sensible “A Series” (There is also “B series”)

I hope that wasn’t too confusing! Here are common zine sizes and what they usually called:

One Page zine — (often a “mini zine”) a zine made by folding and cutting a single sheet of paper. The size of the original sheet of paper doesn’t matter.

It’s time to talk about laying them out for printing on a photocopier.

COPY & “DESTROY!”

Layout Templates

Easy Peasy zine layout to create a master flat

Now that you have written (or drawn) things for your zine. It’s time to talk about laying them out for printing on a photocopier.

1. Decide what size paper you are going to use for your zine.
2. Cut down pieces of paper to the size that each individual page of your zine is going to be. Remember that pages will be in multiples of 4 (4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, etc.)
3. Use those cut pages to create the pages of your and put numbers on them so you know the order.
4. Get sheets of paper in the desired size of your final printed zine and use the template diagrams printed on the next page to number where the pages should go. This will be the template mock-up for your master flat.
5. Before you glue anything down, place your pages your template mock-up to make sure it all adds up and fits. Don't forget your front and back covers!
6. Once you have the pages in their desired order on template, glue or tape your original pages into your template. You are then ready for photocopying!

1/2 SIZE TEMPLATE

1/4 SIZE TEMPLATE

Master flats can start to look tattered after taking them in and out of your bag and putting them on the copier to make reprints. They can also get pretty roughed up. I have spilled coffee all over them, and I've accidentally left a page on the glass of the photocopier (true story). I store my originals in a folder where I can always access them when the master flat gets tattered. I like to make a really clean copy (or scan) of the originals and use that as a master flat when making copies. Sometimes I scan originals and save them as digital files.

Getting this master flat created can "be a bit tricky and can be done a few different ways. The easiest is if you have a photocopier that will allow you to print singled-sided as double-sided. It is often shown like this: 1 sided —> 2 sided. This will require you to place each image on the copy glass and copy each side. You may have some trial and error to figure out which edge needs to be lined up, but it is better to try to figure this out with a master flat than when you are trying to print 20 copies of your zine!

Once you have that clean master flat, you can just place the stack of papers in the document feeder on top of a photocopier and use the two-sided —> 2 sided copy setting to make prints. If you make sure that it is set to "collate," the copier will even put everything in the correct order and save you a lot of time! This can take some trial and error to get it right, so be patient and give yourself plenty of time (and copies) to test it out.

If you forget to select "collate," you'll have to either do your friends into helping you.

HOW CAN I AFFORD TO PRINT MY ZINE?

Trying to figure out how to pay for printing your zone” is an age-old problem, especially because the price of photocopies at the big chain copy shops just seem to go up and up. Some people may be lucky enough to have a copy machine of their own or a friend’s (who doesn’t mind if they borrow it). Maybe you have a job that won’t notice if you make a few copies here or there. (Don’t worry, I won’t tell) Zines have a long history of pilfered copies in one way or another and the “copy scam” is practically a rite of passage.

Outside of those preferred options, you are left to your own devices. The major chain copy shops can be pretty expensive, but you can usually get a high volume discount. High volume is generally considered 1,000 impressions (sides printed) or more. Ask employees about high volume discounts or if they have any specials that could save you money. Don’t forget to mention your copies will be 2-sided, as there can often be a discount for that. If you sign up for the big box office supply stores rewards programs, they often send out coupons. I have even seen some offer up to 50% off.

You might also try talking to smaller, local copy or document shops. They might have unadvertised specials. You could try calling or e-mailing with you specs and do some price shopping first. Like most most things, shopping around will get you the best price

Things to keep in mind when dealing with a copy shop:

- Get a quote before you submit your zine
- There will often be an extra charge if they have to place each page so a good idea would be create a good I master flat to give them, or give them digital files.
- Make sure to specify two-sided originals (and ask specifically about 2-sided discounts).
- Ask about volume discounts.
- Write up your full instructions like this: number of sets (the total quantity of zines you want) how many pages each that they are two sided you would like them collated
- They may offer to fold and staple for you but you can save money if you do it yourself.

Also, make sure that you are happy with the copies when you get them back. If you have given them specific instructions, you should expect specific results.

If you plan on making more than 1,000 copies of your zine it might be more economical to have it printed for you. Here is a list of some zine friendly printers in the US and UK.

US

1984 Printing — 1984printing.com (Oakland, California)

Eberhardt Press — eberhardtpress.org (Portland, Oregon)

P&L — pandlprinting.com (Denver, Colorado)

Radix Media — radixmedia.org (Brooklyn, NY)

Red Sun Press — redsunpress.com (Boston, Massachusetts) Salsedo Press — salsedopressinc.com (Chicago, Illinois)

UK

APG Works (Sheffield, UK) www.apgworks.co.uk

Footprint Workers Co-op (Leeds, UK) footprinters.co.uk

People For Print (Sheffield, UK) peopleforprint.co.uk

Look into local printers in your city or region to support local companies and save on shipping costs. Some local printers may be able to drop off your finished zines to you so you wouldn't have to pay for shipping.

Zine Covers

As annoying as it is, zines, like books, are often judged by their covers. People need to be able to know what zine they have in their hands. So make sure the title and issue number are clearly visible and preferably, on the upper portion of the cover. Consider using the same font for the cover title of each issue for easy recognition. Think about how your zine will appear on a magazine rack with other zines. Would you be able to pick it out? Here are some other ideas to make your zine cover a bit more eye-catching.

Print covers on colored paper, add a little bit of spot color on the cover with a stamp, paint, marker, block print, stencil, screen print, or even glue and glitter! Package the zines in an envelope. Use vellum (translucent /drafting paper) as a cover to contrast with a design image underneath. Use tissue paper, wrapping paper, wall paper, overhead transparencies, or wax paper on/as your cover. Affix an image or photo to the cover by sewing, gluing, or even using scrapbook photo corners. Package the zine in a bag. Cut out a part of the cover to have an image show through from the page beneath.

The ideas are endless. Check thrift stores, creative reuse outlets, discount stores, or college and university campuses at the end of the year for cast off supplies or discarded paper.

Binding Ideas

FASTENINGS — Staples are great. They are a cheap and very functional, traditional binding. You can even get them in different colors or paint your own with nail polish or markers.

The best method of stapling common-sized zines (see the section on Zine Sizes) is with either a long-arm stapler or a pamphlet stapler (also called saddle stitch). These can be found at office supply stores or ordered online, but they aren't cheap. A long-arm or saddle stapler will run you between \$30-\$45. If you pitch in with others to share, it will be well-worth the investment. Otherwise, you are left stapling in the floor and bending with the staples or making tiny zines that will fit in a normal stapler.

Other binding ideas: Safety pins, brads, sewing machine, or a book binding pamphlet stitch (there is a tutorial in the Skillshare section) with yam, dental floss, ribbon, embroidery floss, raffia, fishing line, wire, or even cassette tape tape!

Whatever you do, just don't put a staple in the right hand corner like a stack of school worksheets because that looks like you just aren't trying. Also, don't use rubber bands because they eventually become brittle and the whole zine will fall apart. Sometimes zines end up at the bottom of a bag for a week of subway trips or Greyhound bus travel and you don't want your creation to fall apart. So take durability into consideration

Here's the problem:

you need to make more than 10, but fewer than 100 prints of a simple design on cloth for, let's say patches for your co-op or zine. Your budget is approximately \$0. Are you screwed? Not if you have a few simple things scattered about your domicile.

You need:

1. Spray paint, whatever color you want.
2. Plenty of scrap cloth from cut-offs or ugly clothes from the free box. Try to find durable solid colored cloth.
3. An exacto knife (how I survived before I had one of these, I do not know)
4. Heavy, stiff paper (for fewer than 20 prints) or plastic transparency pages for more
5. A crappy rag for wiping
6. Any kind of tape will do

What you do with it:

1. Trace your design on the transparency paper or just draw it on the paper. This will be your stencil. The more simple the design, the better this whole project will turn out.
2. Carefully cut out the stencil using the exacto knife. Don't make any of your lines too thin or they probably won't show up. Keep in mind that anything that gets cut away will get painted.

3. Take your good cloth scraps and cut them to the proper size. You want them to be large enough to accomidate your design with a 1/4 in. border around it.
4. Now you want to go set up outside cuz we're getting to the dangerous fumes part of the process. Tape down the sides of a piece of cloth on a smooth surface. Now place the stencil on it. Make sure there isn't any part of the stencil turning up from the cloth.
5. Shake up your paint, hold it 6 in. from your work, and spray over it once in a slow, steady, zig-zag.
6. Carefully and quickly remove the stencil. Now gently blot the paint off your stencil with the rag. This prevents smudging the next patch.
7. Untape the patch and put it somewhere dry and well ventilated to dry out.
8. Repeat steps 4-7 until you're out of cloth or you have a headache.
9. Share your new patches with your friends.

What's a mold and deckle?

The mold is the screen that you'll use to pull your sheets of paper. The deckle is an empty frame that sits on top of the mold to give your paper a shape and nice straight lines. You can buy these at an art supply store or you can make your own:

Option A: Get some stretcher bars (available at art stores for cheap) and use a staple gun to attach a screen to the frame. Staple it ail around the frame and keep it taut. (The side with the screen on top is the side you'll use for pulling sheets of paper.) Get some smaller stretcher bars to make the deckle that sits on top. Remember, the deckle is just an empty frame that sits on top.

Option B: For the mold, use a window screen all intact.

Option C: For the mold, use a picture frame, and staple gun a screen to it like option A.

Option D: For the mold, use an embroidery hoop. Stretch a screen between the two rings. For the deckle, use an empty embroidery hoop. Make round paper! Cool!

Now that you have all your supplies ready, let's make paper!

1) MAKE PULP

Rip up some paper into little bits and throw about one cup into the blender. Add about 3 cups of water and blend it to a pulp. (You don't really have to measure, it's just to give you a general idea of paper to water ratio. You'll adjust accordingly depending on your blender, etc.)

2) Fill the tub about halfway with pulp. This means you'll be using the blender a lot to make enough pulp. Stir the pulp around with your hand so that the fibers are evenly distributed and not all settled on the bottom. This is the slurry.

3) Now it is time to put the two-piece frame, the mold and deckle, into the tub. Hold the mold and deckle together and enter it in perpendicular to the bottom of the tub (i.e. it should go in vertically) and then let it slide across the bottom to lie flat on the bottom:



It works easiest if you pull the screen towards you. So in these pictures, imagine that you are standing at the left of the tub. Do this is a smooth motion.

4) Pull the mold and deckle straight up out of the pulpy water. When it is lifted out, there will be a layer of fibers on the screen. Oooh?

5) Remove the deckle. At this point I put another piece of screen on top and press it with a sponge to squeeze out some water. Remove that piece of screen and flip the mold over onto a felt square. Using the sponge, press on the back of the mold. Keep squeezing the water out of the sponge and go all over the back of the mold.



Lift the mold off and the wet fibers should be on the felt square. When it dries it will be paper! Put another felt on top of that and you can put another sheet on top.

P.S. You can iron the paper when it is almost dry.

STUFF YOU CAN ADD TO YOUR PAPER PULP:

- Flowers
- Leaves
- Petals
- Confetti
- Grasses
- Food coloring
- Coffee
- Tea
- Cotton fibers
- Potpourri

- Thread
- Glitter
- Herbs
- Tissue paper
- Tea
- Dryer lint
- Seeds
- Essential oils (to make scented paper)

Use your imagination* You can mix stuff in the slurry, or you can lay it on top of the layer of fibers after you pull the mold out of the tub.

(Reprinted from All This is Mine #10)

Contact Sugene at www.allthisismine.com

When I was 19, I had a goal that I hoped would be fulfilled through zine connections. I wanted to meet enough people through zines that I could travel across the country and always be able to stay with someone I had met through zines. Over two decades later, half a dozen zine tours, hundreds of hours spent behind tables at zine events, and lots of canceled stamps, I'm pretty much there. People I have met through zines have become some of my very best friends and I wouldn't have it any other way.

I'm not saying that everyone should have this goal I'm just saying that meeting people through zines can be very fulfilling. If you wish to get involved, there are many ways to participate in and create zine community. Some can be done from your own home (like writing letters and trading zines) or you could go to zine fests or other zine events. You can also make connections online. Good old-fashioned snail mail is probably the easiest place to start.

Writing to Zinesters

I feel that a large part of creating zines is participation in a community and discussing ideas. Giving and receiving feedback is a critical part of this process. Zines are physical objects — what better way to let someone know that you have read their physical object than to send a physical letter to them?

I know that email is much easier and that the price of postage keeps going up, but I truly think most people would be lying if they said they didn't enjoy receiving a letter, especially one that contains writing about created!

Here are some helpful hints when writing mail:

- Remember to ALWAYS write your return address on the outside AND inside of your letter. Envelopes can get mangled and ripped in the mail This especially goes for when you are writing to distros or when you expect a return letter because envelopes can get thrown away or
- When ordering zines directly from the person that made it, make sure to tell them EXACTLY what zine you would like to order (title and issue number). Maybe people involved in zines work on many different projects.
- Tell them where you found or heard about their zine. Did you read a review of their zine? Did someone recommend it to you? Have you read other issues? People who create zines love to know that stuff!
- If you are sending cash or a money order through the mail to buy zines, hide it well Wrapped in 2 sheets of paper with a nice letter, noting the amount you included. Never write checks unless they specify that it is ok. Many people who create zines often use pseudonyms and wouldn't be able to cash it anyway.
- Sending stamps is always good! Sometimes this can be as good as cash because postage can really add up. It also makes it more likely that someone will write you back! Stamps also make great gift for your new zine pen-pals.
- Remember that to most people, zines are a hobby. Creating zines is something most people do in their spare time. Give them some time to answer. We all have lives outside of zines that can get busy and hectic.
- Also keep in mind that zines don't usually come out on a regular basis. A few zines do have options for subscriptions, but they are few and far between.

- Most of all, send mail! Even if it is just a post card, m[^]be afraid to give feedback.
- To keep a zine fresh in your mind, why not write the letter while you are reading the zine? Let them know what you liked, what you thought about while reading their zine, or let them know if it reminded you of something. Ask questions if you would like clarification.
- If the zine seems older and has an email address, you might want to just send an email or even contact them for a current mailing address.

[[[

Post Boxes and Pen Names

Post office boxes are getting more expensive but consider forming a group with other people to share the cost. Having a P.O. box is a great way for people to maintain contact with you if you tend to move around a lot, or if you have bad blood with old housemates. They also keep your parents from reading your mail

Be nice to your postal workers! It is more likely that they will be helpful and nice to you if you do. I used to spend a lot of time at the post office, sending and receiving mail. It seemed that if I was nice, smiled and arrived at the counter knowing what I needed with any necessary forms already filled out, the postal workers appreciated it. Come to think of it, the people behind me in line appreciated it as well. If I was on top of things, maybe they rarely gave me a hard time about my postal practices.

The Zinesters Guide to U.S. Mail

The shape-based U.S. postal rate scheme is certainly more confusing and cumbersome than the old system... but with little more than a ruler and a scale, you can still Do It Yourself. In this guide, we'll break down the various options zine publishers can use for mailing within the U.S.

All information in this guide was obtained from the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), accessed at pe.usps.gov/text/dmm300/dmm300_landing.htm in September 2008. Throughout the text we have included citations to specific sections of the DMM, which you can refer to for more information (or use if you're challenged by postal clerks).

Because of space constraints, we haven't included the postal rate chart in this guide; however, you can find a postal rate chart (containing First Class U.S. and International rates) on the back page of the latest Zine World or download it at www.undergroundpress.org/zine-resources.

First Class Mail

Rates for First Class Mail are based not only on an envelope's weight but also its size, as detailed below. (Note: As of May 2008, shaped-based pricing, and the rules in this section, also apply to First Class International Mail.)

Letters: Size Requirements

Letters must be between 5 and 11.5 inches long and between 3.5 and 6-1/8 inches high and no more than .25 inches thick. Letters can weigh no more than 3.5 oz. Envelopes must be rectangular.

This means any envelope within this size range can be mailed at Letter Rate (unless it has nonmachinable characteristics: see below). Half-size or digest zines (weighing less than 3.5 oz.) can be mailed in a 6 x 9 envelope at this rate, but a 6.5 x 9.5 envelope would have to be mailed at the more expensive Large Envelope rate.

If the envelope contains a rigid insert, you must also test the flexibility along the shorter side, in the same manner as described above. Flats less than 10 inches long must bend at least 1 inch in this direction, too. For Flats 10 inches or longer, the shorter side must bend at least 2 inches.

A variance of more than 1/4 inch in thickness will make your Flat considered nonuniform. If your zine has a spiral binding or the envelope has any bumps, protrusions, or other irregularities, you should try to wrap the item in paper or bubble wrap to make it uniform. Nonpaper contents (think buttons) must be secured to prevent shifting within the envelope. (DMM 101.2.4)

Other Mailing Options (U.S. Only)

For envelopes weighing above 10 oz., Priority Mail is not your only option. It is more economical to mail them using Media Mail or Parcel Post. The delivery may not be quite as speedy — average delivery is 2–9 days — but it will be cheaper, especially as the package gets heavier. If using one of these options, be sure to write MEDIA MAIL or PARCEL POST in the postage area, either below or to the left of the stamps.

Media Mail

USPS says only these items may be mailed using Media Mail:

- Books of at least 8 printed pages.
- Playscripts and manuscripts
- Cannot contain advertising (display or classified ads).
- Printed educational reference charts for training
- Films
- Printed music
- Test materials
- Sound or video recordings
- Loose-leaf pages containing medical information for doctors, hospitals, or students
- Computer-readable media

As you can see, it's debatable whether zines fall into this category — especially if they contain advertising. Media Mail is subject to postal inspection, and the Post Office has gotten stricter about its use. Let's just say we've rarely heard of a zinester who has had problems using it.

Media Mail cannot be personal correspondence, but it can include an invoice or a “personal message or greeting” (DMM 173.4.4 & 4.5). Any method of postage can be used, and Media Mail postage can be purchased at a USPS retail counter, making it easy to use. Media Mail rates are based on the weight of the package, regardless of destination. For more information (including a rate chart), read the Media Mail section of the DMM at pe.usps.gov/text/dmm300/173.htm.

Nonmachinable Criteria for Letters

If a Letter is deemed nonmachinable, you have to pay a 200 surcharge in addition to the postage rate. Nonmachinable characteristics include:

- If the aspect ratio (length divided by height) is less than 1.3 or more than 2.5. (For example, an envelope that is square or is very long and very short.)
- If it has clasps, strings, or other closure devices. (Tape over clasps, seal them under the envelope’s flap, or tear them off to avoid this problem.)
- If it is enclosed in plastic material.
- If it contains items (such as loose coins or buttons) that cause the thickness to be uneven. (Such items should be taped or wrapped in paper, to prevent them from shifting and to help make the envelope evenly thick.)
- If it is too rigid. (It should be bendable to about 1 inch; see below.)
- If the delivery address is parallel to the shorter side of the envelope.

See DMM 101.1.2 for other characteristics.

Large Envelopes (aka Flats): Size Requirements

Flats are more than 11.5 inches long, or more than 6-1/8 inches high, or more than 1/4 inch thick. Flats cannot be more than 15 inches long, or more than 12 inches high, or more than 3/4 inch thick. In other words, an envelope smaller than 11.5 inches long is still considered a Flat if it is more than 6-1/8 inches high or more than 1/4 inch thick (such as a heavy Letter-size envelope or a 6.5 x 9.5 envelope). Generally, envelopes that are too big for Letter rate by any dimension fall into the Large Envelope category. Flats that are rigid, non-rectangular, not uniformly thick, or exceeding the above maximum dimensions must be mailed at Package rate, which is much more expensive.

Rigidity and Thickness

To test the flexibility of your Flat, USPS offers these guidelines:

1. Place the envelope on a flat surface, with the longer side parallel to the edge, so that it is only resting halfway on the surface.
2. Press down on the envelope at a point 1 inch from the outer edge, in the center of the length. (See illustration.)
3. The piece must bend at least 1 inch vertically without being damaged. 73

Parcel Post

Parcel Post varies by weight and zone. (Zones are determined by the proximity of the delivery zip code to your zip code.) The simple way to use Parcel Post is: Go to postcalc.usps.gov and use the postal calculator to determine your postage, or go to a Post Office.

The complex way is to figure it out for yourself. There are two price categories for Parcel Post: Intra-BMC is for mail sent to a zip code in the same BMC (bulk mail center) or ASF (auxiliary service facility) service area you're in; Inter-BMC is mail sent to a different service area. See DMM 153.1.1 to determine your service area. Go to postcalc.usps.gov/Zonecharts/ and you can get a printable list of zones based on your zip code. Once you have the zones (and your package's weight), use DMM 153.1.9 or 153.1.12 to determine the postage.

Some packages may be subject to a nonmachinable surcharge (\$3.70 for Inter-BMC or \$2.73 for Intra-BMC). Nonmachinable criteria include:

- Packages smaller than 6 inches long, 3 inches high, or 1/4 inch thick.
- Packages more than 34 inches long, 17 inches wide, or 17 inches high.
- Packages weighing less than 6 oz. or more than 35 lb.
- Books or printed materials weighing more than 25 lb.
- If the package is a can, a roll, a tube, or a wooden or metal box.

See DMM 101.3.3 and 101.7.2 for other characteristics. There are no content restrictions on Parcel Post, but packages may be subject to inspection. Read the Parcel Post section of the DMM at pe.usps.com/text/dmm300/153.htm for more information.

Other Tips

Any mail weighing more than 13 oz. and using stamps must be handed to a clerk at a Post Office retail counter. This applies to First Class, Media Mail, or Parcel Post. If you are using metered or PC-printed postage, this rule does not apply.

If the Post Office in your town doesn't have the stamps you need, consider buying your stamps online. At shop.usps.com, you can buy any stamp denomination currently available, and they'll mail them to you (via Priority Mail) for just \$1.

Have a PayPal account? Use it to print postage for any mail class (including Media Mail). Log in, then go to www.paypal.com/us/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_ship-now.

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With all that being said, I have a few more things to add:

The US postal system and the internet

www.usps.com

On the USPS site you can do lots of things like:

- Buy stamps online and have them delivered to you. No need to stand in line to pick up stamps AND you can
- Order shipping supplies for free and have them delivered (especially helpful for Priority boxes and envelopes)! The Flat Rate envelopes are excellent for sending bulk zines. The USPS even offers padded envelopes.
- Buy and print postage. The USPS.com site only allows Priority and Priority Express postage to be printed, but it might make your life easier to buy and print postage from home.
- Schedule a postal pick up so that your postal carrier knows that there will be a package. They will come and get it from your home for free!

PAYPAL AND POSTAGE:

Save time and a little bit of money by printing postage directly from PayPal. In many countries, PayPal has the option to print shipping from PayPal transactions online, but there is also a secret link for you to ship to whatever address you would like and have the postage deducted directly from your PayPal account.

Www.Paypal.com/ShipNow The rates start at the price for a 1-oz. package, so it's not really convenient for sending letters (you'll still want some stamps for that). PayPal 'does offer a small discount on media mail postage, which comes with Delivery Confirmation. However, International shipping from the US is limited to Priority and Priority Express.

Once you print your postage, there is no need to wait in line at the post office to ship domestic packages ever again! (International packages must still be taken to the Post Office or handed to a postal carrier.) Once you print the postage, you can put in a postal request for your carrier to pick it up, drop it off at the post office, or put it in a blue curbside post box.

INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING FROM THE US

When sending things over an ounce outside of the US, you have to fill out a customs form. They are available at most post offices or can be ordered online for free. You will need to fill out your address and the recipient's address, as well as describe the contents of the package. I've found that it is easiest to refer to zines as "pamphlets" to avoid confusion (or having to explain to postal workers what a zine is).

Make sure to list the contents as a gift and try not to put the cost over \$20 as some countries have import taxes.¹ If you are unsure about a particular country, ask the person you are sending the zines to about their country's customs information. For First Class Air Mail, you will still need to go to the US Post Office to ship packages.

International Postage Options from the US

The US postal system no longer offers economy or "surface" mail to international addresses, but they still have First Class International for mail up to 64 ounces. This can get expensive. Flat Rate Priority envelopes work ^ internationally as well, but the price is much higher. Check the prices online at USPS.org and make note of the cost difference between Priority Mail and Priority Mail Express. Express is a lot more expensive.

Mail Crafts

Stationery

Make your own stationery by making a design on paper and photocopying it. This could even include your return address. Block print, screen print, or stamp on to colored paper. You could also just write on the backs of flyers or photocopy mess ups; it could give the recipient a small personal touch about you. I have lots of unique pieces of scrap paper that I picked up at reuse shops, so sometimes I send letters on the backs of architectural designs, old scantron testing sheets, graph paper, or other people's discarded photocopies from the recycling bin.

Envelopes

You can always reuse large envelopes that are sent to you. Or, better yet, raid the recycling bins at the post office and reuse the discarded envelopes of other people.

Make your own envelopes. You can buy envelopes templates at craft stores, but it is easier and cheaper to take apart an existing envelope. Trace the disassembled envelope onto some heavy paper or strong plastic. Once you cut it out, you will have your own envelope template. You can trace this on to other paper — old calendars, flyers, paper bags, stock photography, magazine pages, photocopier mess-ups, children's books, and other junk or thrift store finds. Cut out the pattern you've traced, then fold and glue!

Postcards

Make your own postcards by photocopying, gluing, mod-podging, pasting or drawing onto card stock. Cut up cereal boxes or beer boxes and write your note on the non-graphic back side. Cover the graphic side with stickers and stamps or use collage, block-printing, or screen-printing to create beautiful postcards to send the postal system!

Mail Art

Decorate envelopes & packages with drawings, collages, paintings, photographs, rubber stamps, deco tape, and/or stitching.

Communicate with your pen pals through ...

MORE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IE THE ZINE COMMUNITY

Trading

Most people who create zines are excited about trading. Some are more selective and that's fine as well. If you don't know if someone is open to trading, you should probably ask before sending them your zine.

Be considerate when trading. It would just be bad etiquette to send a 16-page stark poetry zine for a 100-page, handbound, text-heavy zine with a screen-printed cover. The zines may have taken the same time and effort to produce, but postage and printing costs for a 100-page zine are going to be a lot more expensive than a 16-page zine.

You can always write a nice letter asking to trade (more than just, "Here's a buck. Send me a zine.") Or do a combination trade with stamps, cash, zines, or something else you know they would like. It's also pretty easy to find a zine author's email and ask online what they'd consider fair trade for their zine.

If you have zines that you don't want to trade or can't afford to trade, you could always make a specific zine just for trading. This is especially useful at zine events. I've done this by making a zine with a smaller print run specifically for trading.

When mailing a zine, for trade or not, ALWAYS include a note and let the person know why you are sending the zine. Don't automatically expect them to know why you are sending it. Did you read a review? Had you read back issues and you wanted to know if there was something new? Did you just want to share your zine?

Also, when writing for trades, give the person some time to respond. Don't get upset if they haven't gotten back to you in a month. You don't know what is going on in their life. Many zine writers travel, go to school or university, or are otherwise busy. Most people create zines because they love them and see it as a hobby.

ZINES AND PRISONERS

(incarcerated persons)

Many people send free zines to prisoners to support them, and as a statement against the inherent injustice of the classist and racist prison system. Some prisoners trade for zines with stamps, their artwork, or letters. Some people who create zines choose not to deal with prisoners at all.

Some zines creators have been wary of writing to prisoners after incidents with an incarcerated man named Bill Price, a two-time convicted child molester, who became involved in the zine community under false pretenses in the 90s. It is up to the individual to decide how they will deal with this issue if it comes up. The offenses of adult prisoners are public record and can be researched online if you know the state and their prisoner number. If you receive a letter from a prisoner, their number will be on the outside of the envelope.

When sending zines to prisoners, keep in mind that they need to be in plain envelopes without any stickers, pornography, “illegal content,” maps, or many other arbitrary things. You might want to check the specific prison’s guidelines for mail. Keep it simple. I had a letter returned once because it was in a handmade envelope.

PROMOTING YOUR ZINE

Getting your zine reviewed

It was mentioned in the beginning of this book that you can find zines by reading reviews in the back of some indie magazines. Well, you can also send your zines to be reviewed in those publications like *Maximum Rock’n’Roll*, *Razorcake*, and *Broken Pencil*. Pick up a copy or check out their webpages for submission info and remember to include basic information: the price of your zines, how to get ahold of you, and if you accept trades. From time to time, there have been entire zine review zines, but those have mostly stopped printing. (R.L.P. Factsheet 5 > Readers Guide to the Underground Press, and Zine World)

There are also zine review blogs online, but those come and go so quickly that it would be better to check out stolensharpieri.evolution.org to see what’s current.

Facebook and tumblr zine groups, Etsy Team Zine, and the all-zine social network site WeMakeZinesning.com are other places on the internet to promote your zine and find people to trade zines with.

But the internet can only take you so far. Here are some other ideas to help promote your zine:

Leave copies of your zine in public for strangers to find.

- Make small paper flyers for your zine and leave them around town or send out with orders and trades that include contact info and a little about your zine to generate interest. Include the price of your zine and whether you accept trades.
- Ask other zine friends or zine distros if they will trade flyers with you. Then, you can both help promote each other when you send out mail, leave them around town or during your travels.
- When you are ready to level up, you could consider making stickers*, patches**, or pinback buttons or badges. They can be bought at a reasonable price and are a Relatively inexpensive way to advertise and network.

* Office supply stores sell sticker paper. You can make stickers by printing or photocopying your zine logo or name on it. It can also be used to create return address labels for your zine.

** Patches can be screen printed just like t-shirts or on any cloth. They can also be made with a stencil and some spray paint.

DISTROS

Distros are short for distributor or distribution.

Distro can be used as a noun and a verb.

As a noun, distros are small, (usually) hobby-like, businesses run by one person or a group of people that sell a collection of different zines by different people. A distro will purchase a quantity of zines either outright at a wholesale rate or on consignment directly from the zine creator. The distro will then resell them. Distros are great places to find a bunch of different zines by different creators. If a distro picks up your zine, it's a great way to get your own zine out to a larger audience.

Some distros have websites that can be browsed online. Some table at shows or events. Some even have paper catalogs.

As a verb, distro means the physical act of a distro selling and distributing zines. The benefits of having a your zine in a distro is that a distro will be able to get your zine to places that you might not be able to go — in different states or countries, perhaps. Distros generally work on their own promotion which might reach a different audience than your own.

There are many zine distros all over the world that focus on a lot of different subjects and interests. Some have an online presence, some don't. Running a distro is a lot of hard work. It seems that new distros are forming out of zine enthusiasm all the time and others seem to close down just as quickly when they realize all the work involved in something that seems like a fun hobby. This makes it extremely difficult to track down current distros, but I try to maintain a pretty good list at StolenSharpieRevolution.org. In the past printings of this book, there were some distros that quit operations in the time between getting their info and the time the book actually came out! So now, distros are listed at StolenSharpieRevolution.org.

More about zine distros

Probably the easiest way to find distros is to type “zine distro” into an online search or check out StolenSharpieRevolution.org. I try to keep the distros listed there up to date, but I know many are missing. I will occasionally check the links to see which ones are still active and remove ones that are no longer operating. Occasionally, a distro will take a hiatus or extended break but will come back again when they know they have the time and energy to work on it.

There really isn't much competition between distros because 90% of distros don't really sell zines to make a profit. Running a distro is a bit like having a hobby that performs a service for the zine community by gathering a bunch of zines they like into one place to share with others. Also, each distro has its own personality and style, so if one distro doesn't seem to carry the kind of zines you like, you can easily find another one to try.

When Ordering From Distros

- Always include your name, address, and email on the letter you put in the envelope as well as the return address on the outside.
- Always include the name AND issue number of the zine that you are ordering.
- Always remember to check the price and shipping costs with your order.
- If you placed an order or arranged the order online, but are paying through the mail, you should include a detailed list of your order. Try not to send just an envelope with money in it and hope the distro knows what it's for.
- When sending cash in an envelope, hide it by wrapping it in two sheets of paper.
- If you want to write a check, you should ask if the distro accepts checks. Most distros don't.
- If you are ordering from a distro in a country other than your own, make sure you are sending payment in a form (currency) they accept. Some distros do accept funds from outside their country, but asking first is a smart idea.
- List alternate zines of the same price that you would accept if your requested zine is not available. Some distros only have a small amount of stock and once-things are sold, there's no guarantee that they will get more copies of your first choice zine right away.

WHEN SENDING YOUR ZINE FOR DISTRO CONSIDERATION

Once you get to a point where you are ready to send your zine off for distro consideration, there are a few things you should keep in mind. Remember that the person running the zine distro probably does it as a hobby out of love for zines and/or might be a student, have a full time job, a family, and also has their own life. They have to sift through all the zines they get for consideration and read them all. So give them some time to get back to you about your submission. This could take a few months (or more!). Some distros only respond if they decide to carry your zine, so you may not hear back at all. Try not to take it personally if you don't get the response you want as quickly as you want it.

With all that in mind, please do some research and check the distro's website (if they have one) for this kind of information! before sending your zine:

- Is the distro even accepting zines for distro consideration? Some have closed submission policies and prefer to hand-pick their stock.
- Consider the kinds of zines the distro carries. Would your zine be a good fit?
- Look for submission guidelines on their webpage. You wouldn't want to send your music review zine to a distro that only has vegan cook zines.
- What is the distro's policy on how they handle the zines they distro? Some distros sell their stock wholesale to other distros or stores, or they sell zines to prisoners. If you have concerns about any of these things, you might want to bring these up with the person who runs the distro before you submit your zine. ^

SOME TERMS RELATING TO ZINE DISTROS

RETAIL/COVER PRICE

The price that you sell a single issue of your zine and the price for which you would like distros or stores to sell your zine. Keep in mind that zine prices are generally between 50 cents to \$3 or occasionally up \$4 or \$5 if a lot of time, effort, and materials go into it. A high cover price can deter distros and potential buyers from buying your zine.

WHOLESALE RATE

The discounted price you offer to stores and distros when they are buying multiple copies of each issue. You can specify a minimum quantity of zines they would need to buy to receive wholesale pricing, (this could be as simple as 2 copies or 5 copies) Most wholesale pricing is between 50% and 60% of retail So, if the retail price of your zine is \$2 then 60% wholesale would be \$1.20. This is the amount the distro would pay you per zine.

UPFRONT PAYMENT

This is when a distro or store pays you the wholesale price for your zines upfront, before they sell any copies and sometimes even before they receive them.

Consignment

When a distro or store pays you the wholesale price after all or a portion of your zines have sold. Some distros or stores work on regular time frames for payments like quarterly or monthly. This can vary from store to store and distro to distro.

TRADE OR DISTRO CREDIT

Many distros offer the option of trading your zines for things from their distro instead of payment in money. This is a great way to pick up new zines and support the distro. This can be cost-effective and beneficial to both sides of the trade. You could also work out partial trade and partial cash. Some distros even offer you a greater value in trades than if you were to be paid in cash.

INVOICE

Once a distro decides to carry your zine, it is helpful to send them a list of what you are sending with your zines. This invoice should include the distro name, your name and contact info, the name of the zine you are submitting (with issue numbers), the quantity you are sending, wholesale and retail prices for your zine, the date, the total owed and terms of payment.

Terms could be:

- PAID (If they have already paid when you send it)
- Consignment (you will be paid when they sell)
- Net-30 (or Net-60, or Net-90. This just means that the balance of the invoice will be paid to you in full within that number of days)

REMEMBER TO INCLUDE THIS INFO WHEN SENDING. YOUR ZINES FOR DISTRO CONSIDERATION

- Your name
- Your zine title and issue number
- Address with a stamp or email address to contact you
- Wholesale price and retail price
- Whether you accept consignment or trade options

IF YOU WANNA BE A SUPERSTAR SEND THIS AS WELL PREFERABLY PAPERCLIPPED OR STAPLED TO THE ZINE

- A short description of your zine
- A review of your zine by someone else
- Where you found out about their distro
- A nice letter addressed specifically to the person that runs the distro. That is always preferred to a printed form letter. Try to find the name of the person who runs; the distros. People would rather be called by their name than just the name of the distro

SOME OTHER DISTRO STUFF TO CONSIDER WHEN EMAILING

- Emailing to see if a distro accepts zine submissions could be good
- Emailing a distro to ask if they will carry your zine without sending a sample copy or only sending a digital copy or just a link to your website is bad, and potentially annoying.

Websites and digital files will not as submission I replacements for actual paper zines.

WHEN A DISTRO DECIDES TO CARRY YOUR ZINE

Send an invoice with your zines. Try to keep good records of where you send your zines. Everyone develops their own methods and mine has changed over the years. I keep this information in a notebook for easy reference when I have a new issue out:

- Name of distro
- Name of person who runs the distro (and the name of their zine if they have one)
- Address
- Email address

- Website

I also have this info in the notebook:

- Which issues of my zine do they distro
- How many copies sent
- Date sent
- If the zines have been paid for (or if it was trade or consignment)

A nice way of promoting community is to have a good relationship with with the person who runs the distros that carry your zines. Keep them informed when you have made new issues or when your address has changed. Maybe get some flyers for their distro that you can send out with your trades or orders.

IF A DISTRO TURNS DOTO YOUR ZINE REMEMBER THAT THEY ARE NOT REJECTING YOU

Maybe the issue you sent doesn't fit into the scope of their distro. Maybe they don't have the physical space for more zines or the money to buy them right now. Whatever the reason, respect their decision. People who run distros put a lot of time, energy, and resources into them and can only afford to carry zines they really like or that they think they can sell. If a distro turns down your zine, you can always try a different distro. There are lots of distros that carry many different kinds of zines. You can also always send the next issue of your zines for another try.

If you get really frustrated, consider starting your own distro! Keep in mind, though, that there is a lot of work involved. Running a distro is a big commitment and giant responsibility that many people who start them are tware of how much time and ener

THINGS TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER BEFORE YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT STARTING A ZINE DISTRO

- What is your motivation for starting a zine distro?
- What will make your distro distinct and different from other distros?
- How much time do you have per day/week/month to work on it?
- Can you be responsible for other people's money and zines?

Are you willing to invest your own money and time which you might not ever make back?

What kinds of zines will you distribute?

How will you chose which zines to carry?

How will you distribute zines? A website? Tabling at events or shows? What about setting up a little zine stand in a record store or book shop?

How will you pay for zines? Upfront? Consignment?

What sort of payments will you accept? Cash? Check?

Money Order? Trades? Credit cards? PayPal?

Can you be prompt with orders and email inquiries?

Can you keep good records of the zines you carry and how much you owe the people with whom you are consigning?

Do you have time to write good descriptions for zine in your catalog?

If you are thinking of starting a distro as a partnership:

Do you see yourself still wanting to stuff envelopes, contact zine writers, and review zines with that person in a year or more?

How will you handle problems together?

Seriously, do you have the time and energy to check your mail regularly, keep stock and payments up to date, maintain a website, write descriptions, answer seemingly I ridiculous emails, read zines for consideration, pack and mail orders promptly AND still have your own life?

EVEN AFTER ALL OF THAT YOU STILL WANT TO START A ZINE DISTRO? OK, HERE'S WHERE TO START

Decide on a name

Decide on a general philosophy or policy:

- How will you fund it?
- What kinds of zines or other items will you carry?
- Will you accept open submissions?
- How will you handle turning down submissions?
- How will you keep records and what records will you keep?
- Will you accept flats to copy or assembled zines only?
- Will you start an email list for newsletters?

- What kind of social media will you engage in?
- Will you have a print catalog? An online catalog? No catalog and just table at events?

When contacting zines that you would like to carry, it is better to send individual correspondences rather than a form group email. Zinesters can be wary of new zine distros. They may want to know a bit about you and your plans. They may want to know who you are, why you are starting a distro, why you like their zine, the distro payment terms, or other relevant info. They may not accept consignment payment from a new distro. They may want to know if you are planning to sell to stores or other distros. Consider creating a form with contact info and a space to list zines and pricing that they can send in with their zines, should they choose to distro with you.

If you can, keep in touch with the people who make the zines you carry. If you are in touch with them through email, let them know when you are sending money or a package. If you want you can let them know when you have a new issue of your zine if you make one. Check to see if they are going to same zine fest so you don't accidentally bring their zine to sell. Are they in a band? Are they going on a zine tour? Why not promote their other endeavors? One of the benefits of a distro-zinester relationship is that you both can cross-promote each others' stuff!

Keep promoting and updating your distro website regularly so that people know you are still active. You can't just expect people to know that your distro exists. You will have to do a little work to get the word out there. Your promotional work is what the zinester expects from you for the small cut of money your distro takes for their zine.

If you keep on top of all your orders and submissions promptly and deal with every person honestly and considerately, things will run much smoother. You are a human and humans make mistakes. The best way to deal with mistakes is to admit them and deal with them calmly and rationally.

Zine Events

Another way of fostering community is to attend zine ^ events. Sometimes they have names like “Zine Pest” or “Zine Symposium.” These can range from local picnics, potlucks, or zine readings to zine release parties to cut and paste parties to make or assemble zines together. Sometimes, they are weekend-long extravaganzas, with trading, tabling, workshops, panels, late night karaoke parties, dances, and ^ more. Check out stolensharpierrevolution.org for an event O calendar listing some of the larger ones.

A lot of the thüig^ü^hl^ectioi^r^eared towards people that already make zines but you don’t even need I to make a zine to attend and see what zine events are all about!

WHAT DO I DO AT A ZINE JEST?

Someone asked me this and prefaced it with “This might be a stupid question...” And really, it’s not a stupid question at all. It has been several years since I went to my first zine fest, that first zine fest was actually one I helped organize. Even though I was an organizer, I had no idea what to expect. One thing I will say is that it is still ALWAYS a bit awkward and strange to be in a room full of people that I know, but may not actually know. I may or may not have read something they wrote. I may have corresponded with them online or through the mail, or I might not know even one person there. And that’s ok.

I think one of the strangest things about zine events is the fact that zines are typically created in solitude. They are generally an artform you make by yourself, with a few friends or sometimes with a faceless collaborator (through the mail or online). You may have seen pictures of your zine friends on the internet, as a badly photocopied image in their zine, or cartoon drawings of themselves, but you might never have seen them in person. Zine fests are a strange merging of two worlds: one that is solitary and creative with one that is social and dynamic.

That being said, everyone comes to zine events with different expectations and different levels of comfort. Some people are more outgoing than others. Some people come just to be a spectator. Some come and jump right into participation by talking, and trading zines, with strangers.

Things to do at a zine fest

- Check to see if the zine fest has some sort of program, w/ ^ This could tell you about other events they are organizing around the time of the zine fest: workshops they offer, presentations or talks being given, or even — y who is tabling at the event.
- Walk around and look at stuff. You don't have to approach every table and you don't have to buy anything. I actually like to do a few walks around to see what's even there before stopping to look a table. If you are interested in something, feel free to ask questions. However, asking "What's your zine about?" is really general and might get you some blank stares. It would be better to ask about a specific issue of that zine. It's OK to pick up the zines laid out on the tables and look through them to see if the zine is something that interests you. It can also give you something more specific to ask about the zine.
- Bring small bills to buy zine
- Attend workshops, talks, panels, or readings that are offered as part of the zine fest, they are often free. Check out a workshop on how to bind books, see a panel discussion about getting your zine distributed, hear people reading from their zines to an audience!
- Trade zines! Many zinesters are "Up for trades"; some even wear little pinback buttons that express this. Keep a look out for those, as well as whether they list their zines for trade at their table. Keep in mind the ideas before about equity in trading zines.
- Register in advance for your own table space to display your zines!

Tabling

(sometimes called "exhibiting;" in the UK, they refer to tables as "stalls")

Usually zine fests have free admission, so you don't have to worry about registering to come unless you want to reserve a table space to sell and/or trade your zines. Some people register for a table so they can have a place) to sit and somewhere to keep their stuff. Table registration is not required to attend a zine fest; you are welcome to show up and trade zines out of your backpack. I've even seen someone create a sort of vintage "cigarette girl" display with a box of zines in front of them and a strap around their neck to hold it up!

There is usually a small fee to reserve a table space at a zine fest. There are often incremental fees for smaller table spaces for single zines to larger spaces for distro, stores, or people who have a lot to display (like zine libraries). The fee for tabling is

one way that zine fest organizers can offset the costs of putting on the event. Zine fest registrations often have a place to list any preferences you have: if you want to sit by a friend, if you have mobility issues and need an accessible space; or if you have anxiety issues and need to be close to an exit.

Things to bring to a zine event if you are tabling

Paper, tape, Sharpie markers, lots of change, a cash box (or somewhere to store your money), zines, notebooks, snacks, water, and flyers or other little promo things to give away/bring people to your table.

How many zines should I bring?

Good question! That depends on whether you will be trading or not. If you planning on trading your zines, you will want to bring more than you anticipate selling. It also depends on how many issues you have and if you have a new one that will be available at this zine fest. If you have back issues, you might not want to bring as many of those. If you have been to that zine fest before, you might not bring as many either. For new issues, 20 copies is a pretty good number to start with.

When I table at zine events, I like to get there a bit early to set up but always check with the organizers of the event about when it is appropriate for tablers to show up. The last thing you want to do is annoy the weary, sleep-deprived organizers before they are ready for you to arrive.

Some tips on setting up your table:

- Figure out the size of your space so that you can plan for it ahead so you can bring the right amount of stuff.
- Find a nice table cloth or simply a piece of fabric for your table. Some people even make banners to hang or sew onto the front of their table cloth to display their zine title or distro name.
- Have a list of your zine issues with prices and whether you accept trades. If you want to go the extra mile, you could even type up a short descriptions so that people don't have to ask you what your zine is about.
- If you have a new issue for the zine event, you might want to display it as new.
- Some people have free stuff at their table, like a bowl of candy, temporary tattoos, buttons or stickers.

Once my table is set up, I like to introduce myself to my neighbors if we have never met before. Then I like to take a few trips around the room to see what's there, before I go around again to talk and trade. It seems at the beginning of a zine fest everyone is a combination of super excited, awkward, hopeful and exhausted. Try not to worry about being shy, it can take a little time to warm up at an event.

If you are behind a table, try to engage people who stop to browse with a quick "hello." Some people approach tables with a bit of trepidation, hoping that someone

doesn't try to make a hard sale. You are not expected to buy zines from everyone. This should be more about community than commerce. Having a short explanation of your zine is good, having an obnoxious sales pitch will probably irritate your potential sale, not to mention the people who have to sit next to you all day.

Most of all...

Have fun!

Organizing Zine Events

I am a founder and continued organizer for the Portland Zine Symposium; since 2001, I have attended and/or organized almost every one. Over the years, each organizer has brought their unique talents, skills, and enthusiasm to the table to make each year a success. In the same vein, I've found that zine events in different cities reflect the spirit of that city. I think that is a beautiful thing. A sunny February zine fest in Southern California is a very different thing than a chilly March zine fest in Chicago, and that's just weather-wise! What do you want people to know about your city? If you are inviting people from out of town, how can you showcase why you love where you live?

The first thing you want to consider is getting some other people involved. There are zine events run by one person or two people, but spreading the tasks around can make it easier. When you have a dedicated group of people, you should find a way to keep each other informed and in contact. Emails, email groups, and phone numbers are essential!

With the Portland Zine Symposium, we have core organizers, auxiliary organizers and volunteers. It is a buydown that suits each person's level of involvement.

The core organizers attend frequent meetings, are expected to be active in group emails, and make most decisions. Auxiliary organizers may or may not be part of the group email, can attend meetings, run errands, and smaller tasks. Volunteers help at events, run errands, and help staff the info table at the actual event.

The second thing you want to think about is: how big do you want your event? Do you want to organize a zine reading? A small picnic or potluck? Do you want to have a larger event like a single day with room full of tablers or a larger event with a ballroom filled with tablers, workshops and panels? All of these are valid options. Sometimes it is better to start small and grow from there.

Once you have collected eager organizers and figured out what your event will consist of, the next two things to sort out are the location and the date. When you have those two things figured out, the rest should come easier. As for an organizing timeline, I would suggest between 6 months to a year for larger events, or at least 3 months for smaller ones.

Location can be tricky and really depends on how big the event will be and what you have access to. Do you plan on providing tables or do you expect people to bring their own? Is there a community center you could rent? Do you have access to a University campus? The Portland Zine Symposium was held on the Portland State University campus for many years, where we were able to get the space for free by

being associated with a student group. When we had to change venues, it was pretty rough finding a new space in a price range we could afford. Explore all your options.

The date for the event can be very important and may depend on the availability of the location. Some venues can be more expensive at certain times of the year. It may be worth changing the date if it could save money. You might also want to do some research to see if there are zine events in your area. Make sure your event dates don't overlap or see if you can have them a week apart and do some cross promotion. I remember one summer there were 3 zine fests down the west coast one weekend after the other. It would have been cool to attend each one as part of a road trip.

THINGS TO DECIDE EARLY AMONG THE ORGANIZERS

- How frequently will you meet?
- What kind of budget do you have?
- Will you have to raise money? How will you do that? benefit shows, raffles, selling zine fest merchandise are all options.
- Can you get donations from your community?
- Do you want to apply for grants?
- How much will you charge for table space?
- Are you going to try to help find housing for out-of-town tablers or attendees?
- Will you have workshops or zine readings at your event?
- Will you have “extracurricular” activities outside of just tabling?
- How will you get artwork for posters for your event?
- Who will build and/or maintain your website for you?
- How will you collect registrations?
- Who will answer emails?
- What kind of organizational structure will you have?
- Are you going to need some volunteers?

There are two ways to think about zine event promotion and that depends entirely on what kind of event you are going to have. Are you interested in an event specific to your city or region OR are you interested in attracting people from farther away?

Either way, you will need to create a press release to mail out to local media and community calendars. Do some research on how to write a press release and which

local media to send it to (including when their deadlines are). Consider that you may actually have to explain some things: what a zine is (and maybe how to pronounce it!), why zines are important and what they can expect to find

Having a well-organized website with all relevant info and frequently checking your email will clear up a lot of hassle as an organizer. All of your promotion can direct people to a website and an email address for answers. Keeping up on relevant social media is crucial as well.

Promoting Outside Your City

To promote outside your local area, the internet can be your best friend. Consider networking with distros, zinesters, or other zine fests to help with promotion. They can send flyers out for you or mention your event on their webpages or newsletters. They can hang up posters in their local zine-friendly shop. Why not have your podcasting friend interview you? There's always blogs and the usual suspects of social media. WeMakeZinesjiing.com is a great resource for networking of this sort. There is an event section on the site where you can post your event. Don't forget to send your info to StolenSharpieRevolution.org to be added to those zine event listings. _ _ _ _ _

PROMOTING IN YOUR CITY

To promote your event in your own city you will need less lead time than promoting to a larger area. As mentioned before, you will need to create a press release to send out and do the usual social media rounds. Consider purchasing an ad in smaller publications or pitching a story about your event to a local weekly paper. Consider networking with local writers groups, literary events, or like-minded workshops. Don't forget to create a catchy flyer with the date, time, location, and a little bit about your event. If your event is free make sure you let people know that! Post your flyers all over town: coffee shops, book shops, community spaces, music venues, etc.

Leading Up to the event

Promotion for your event should start months beforehand. Here are some other things to consider in the weeks leading up to your event:

Week Before

- Tour the facility with co-organizers so you can get an idea of the space and how you will be able to use it. If you have any questions about the space, make sure

you ask the landlord/owner so there aren't any surprises when you show up the morning of the event.

- Get change if you can. Zines are inexpensive and there are always people who forget to bring change. With the Portland Zine Symposium we usually get a few hundred 4 bills to be able to make change.
- Check email regularly, as emergencies can arise quickly that need your attention: a workshop leader may have a family emergency and be unable to attend; an attendee's plane may be delayed and they want to make sure they don't lose their table space; or there might be last minute cancellations.
- Send out emails to tablers and the general event email list, if you have one. Let the tablers know when they can show up, where they can and can't park, or other details about the facility. If you're hosting workshops, it's a good idea to email everyone a workshop schedule. Ask workshop leaders to help promote the events they are presenting.

Day of Event

First, you need to realize that as a zine event organizer, you are going to get very little sleep. I have found that having houseguests during the zine fest is a great way to get extra volunteers, but I always stay up too late hanging out with them. Still, houseguests are great for small tasks like folding and stapling programs; carrying things; writing directions to the fest on nearby sidewalks in chalk; running small errands; and moving tables and chairs around. Good volunteers (that receive good direction) can make your life much easier.

Get to the space early. Is everything as it was during the walk-through? Are the doors unlocked? Can the workshops rooms be easily found? Do you need to make signs directing people to workshops or restrooms? Are you setting up a check-in area? Are tables assigned? Are the tables labeled with assignments and easy to find? Is there a PA of some sort to make announcements? Do you have a way to communicate among the volunteers and organizers? I've been to zine fests where the organizers have walkie-talkies, which is really great, especially if your event is on different floors or otherwise spread out.

Try to relax and remember this is supposed to be fun! Give your fellow zine event organizers support and encouragement. You all deserve it!

After the event

- Consider creating a survey for attendees to fill out after the event.

- Make sure you thank your sponsors. Even sending a thank you card is nice.
- Have a wrap up meeting with your fellow organizers to reflect on the event.
- Find a way to reward the volunteers who have helped make the event possible. Maybe you can give them free or discounted zine fest merchandise or first dibs on donated food.

The Portland Zine Symposium organizers are all volunteers that work hard for about nine months out of the year to make PZS happen. Organizers get a free regular tables space, a T-shirt, and a reward dinner once the event is over. The reward dinner, though, is always pretty awesome. It's nice to hang out without an agenda.

REMEMBER:

This is supposed to be fun

OTHER RESOURCES AND THINGS TO CONSIDER

ZINE EVENT ORGANIZERS EMAIL GROUP

At the Chicago Zine Fest a few years ago, a hunch of zine event organizers from all over North America got together to talk about zine event organizing. The idea was to brainstorm and share ideas and experiences with each other about everything from finding a venue to fundraising. We continue to have these workshops at other zine fests. It's a great way to get new ideas, but also a great coping mechanism to deal with common organizing frustrations.

Out of that event came this google group that serves a similar purpose:

<https://groupagoogle.com/d/forum/zineeventorganizers>

A NOTE ABOUT WORKING WITH OTHERS

When organizing a zine event with other people, there will be disagreements and that's OK. It is how we handle these disagreements that is important. Always keep in mind the goal of the event. It's good to know what's important to you, but it's also good to know when to be able to back down and put your ego aside for the good of the event. Something I have had to learn over the years is that just because something was done a certain way in the past doesn't mean it has to continue to be done that way. Every new organizer brings a unique perspective to the organizing process. Their input should be honored.

A part of working with other people is learning what you are good at. What do you naturally gravitate towards? Are you good at writing press releases? Can you do web design? Do you enjoy social media? Are you good at promoting things? Use the tools

you have to create a successful event. You can also learn new skills — some redundancy in abilities is a good thing. If the one person with all the knowledge about a specific area quit organizing the event, you might be at a loss if no one else knew how to do their job. These things happen, but diversifying tasks can help everyone.

A few more things that I have found to be helpful:

- Praise and congratulate other organizers for getting the job done.
- Publicly give other organizers credit for a job well done. Don't accept praise that does not belong to you. Occasionally, there are larger personalities in groups that attract more attention. The behind-the-scenes work is just as important and it is good to acknowledge that.
- Communicate when your tasks are done, or when they will be done, so that other organizers are not surprised.
- Ask for help if you need it and, conversely, offer help if you see someone that could use it.
- Know your limits and learn to communicate them. If you have health issues that could keep you from going to all the meetings, let people know. Don't take on too many tasks just because there are tasks to be done.

SAFER SPACES POLICY

I would hope that you would like to have an event that is a comfortable and open place for all to attend. Many zine events have adopted Safer Space Policies to create a space where hateful speech and discriminatory actions are not welcome. Many zine fests have their policies posted on their websites and would be willing to share them with you.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Should conflict arise at your event, how will you handle it? If you are going to have a Safer Space Policy, it would be a good idea to get some conflict resolution training or to have someone on hand that is skilled in mediation.

ZINE READINGS AND ZINE TOURS

Want to host a small event or promote the new zine you just released? Why not have a zine reading? Wanna string a bunch of zine readings in different locations together and call it a zine tour? Sure, go ahead!

ZINE READINGS

Most of the promotion for larger zine events can be applied to smaller zine events. It's crucial to get the event space settled and to get readers to help you with promotion. Also, providing snacks is always encouraged.

Reading your zines out loud in front of strangers

I have done a lot of zine readings and even a few zine tours. Here are some of the things I have learned about reading my zine (and some of the things I wish I had learned sooner):

1) Never dis yourself on stage

The Urban Hermit told me this on my very first zine tour. I don't even remember if I had read my zine out loud to myself, let alone out loud in front of people, before I left on the tour. I was really nervous and one point I apologized for something and put down my writing. Some people can get away with the self-deprecation angle, but for most people, it's a bad idea. Just remember you are telling your stories. Don't apologize for them. They are yours. Own them.

2) Enunciate and project

Work on reading your zine out loud before the reading so you know how your words sound and work together when spoken. Don't mumble or talk to the floor. Speak from the diaphragm.

3) If you think you are reading slowly, read slower.

Reading in front of people has a way of making you want to speed through your words.

4) Know your material You wrote it. You should know where your story is going and how it gets there. Tell your story. If you have breaks in the writing feel free to look up from the page and connect with your audience. Give them time to connect with your words.

5) People like to laugh If you are really nervous about reading in front of strangers you should read an amusing story, even if it's only a part of your reading.

6) Give them a little more than if they just read the zine

Is there a back story? Is there an epilogue? When you read the story in front of an audience you can add new parts and make the story come alive.

7) Enunciate and read slowly!

It's that important.

ZINE TOURS

First, zine tours are not going to make you money, so you should think of them more like an enhanced road trip. It will make you new friends and give you an opportunity

to promote your zine to new audiences, which is what zines and zine culture is all about!

Second, you will need to figure out what your reading will look like. Will you be reading only, or can you offer other things, like a simple “What is a zine?” workshop or another skill you could share. This may depend on how many people will be in the audience and whether they’d be open to a more interactive reading.

Third, how are you going to get from place to place? Do you or someone else on the tour have a vehicle? Can you rent or borrow one? How about turning it into a bike tour? Or take the train or a bus?

All of the previously mentioned things about promotion hold true but planning a zine tour is a bit more involved, as you are dealing with different cities. Planning a zine tour requires research into possible venues. Check out zine libraries, zine friendly shops and bookstores, punk venues, info shops, community centers, art galleries, and see if you know any zinesters in that city that might be able to help you. Better yet, ask them to read at the event with you. Having someone who lives in the city you’re touring can be really great. They can get their friends to come, put up flyers for the event, or even help direct you to other places where you can promote the reading.

A venue might want samples of your zines to look at, so it’s helpful to have some sort of press packet to mail or a digital version online where you can direct people. Don’t forget the usual social media outlets.

You also have to think about basic necessities. How will you pay for gas, transport, or food? Where will you sleep? Sometimes a venue will allow you to charge an entry fee for your reading, but most of the time a donation jar can be passed around and can help cover some of your costs. People can be pretty generous. On zine tours, I’ve mostly slept on the floors of new and old friends with the occasional motel stay. I’ve even had some gracious hosts that have cooked me food-

Remember: this is supposed to be fun. Tours can be stressful and tiring. Being around the same people for extended periods of time can wear on you, so think about whether you will be able to get along with your tourmates before you all set off on your tour. Let each other know about pet peeves or strange habits or behaviors to watch out for. Remember to take care of yourself. Drink a lot of water, bring snacks, and when everyone gets cranky, it’s probably time to eat.

July is International Zine Month

In 2009, I was Joking with friends and said “Wouldn’t it be rad if there was an International Zine Month?” Which led to the questions “Why not?” and “How do we make it official?” This was actually a silly question; since zines are inherently DIY, there was no one who could make it official, but I could Do It Myself. I decided to propose the idea on the We Make Zines forum and people seemed really excited about it. I figured that pairing it with the month of the 24 Hour Zine Thing would be a good idea. Since that takes place in July.

INTERNATIONAL ZINE MONTH!

In the following years, International Zine Month has been registered with Chase’s Calendar of Events (www.jnhprofessional.com/templates/chases) making it even more “official” Now there is a whole month to celebrate zines and independent publishing with people all over the world.

How can you celebrate International Zine Month?

Set up a zine event: a zine reading, zine swap, a cut and paste party, a zine fest, or even a simple zine workshop at your local library or community center.

Write a letter to every zine you read, leave your zine at random places around town like buses, bathrooms or universities. Order zines directly from the creator, make a shirt with iron on letters that says “ask me about zines”, make buttons with phrases like “zines saved my life” or “do you read zines?”. Send out zine fliers with your mail or leave them around your town. Approach shops in your town about carrying zines, donate to zine libraries...

StolenSharpieRevolution.org has a whole section on International Zine Month as well as a list published every year of small things you can do each day in July to share your love of zines and zine culture.

Zine Libraries

By Jenna Freedman

adapted from “Punk as a Zine Library,” Maximumrocknroll #371

People often ask me if zine makers ever express a punk rock suspicion of librarians wanting to shelve zines in library collections, perhaps in the process coopting zines’ message and ethos. Fortunately for people like me who want to preserve and provide access to zines, the answer is no. Over the last ten years I have had three or four people ask me to remove their zine from the collection, for reasons of privacy not principle. In order to promote understanding between zine makers and librarians, I thought it might be nice to share some info on the why, how, what and where of zine libraries with y’all.

Why? (A library’s mission)

Sometimes people get upset when a library-or more likely an archive-wants to know their business before letting someone see its zines. They may restrict what writing implements you can use and whether you can photocopy or photograph the zines. They might even make you wear white gloves while reading zines. (Not usually, but a girl can dream!) Being persnickety does not make a library or archives evil. It just means that they’re focused on preserving zines (for research and as evidence of our lives for people in future centuries). Other libraries may privilege access over preservation, meaning that they don’t care as much if a zine gets 1 lost, stolen or damaged, as long as it’s used. j

Library statements and policies also govern what’s in our collec- i tions, not just who can see/use them. Sometimes it’s obvious i from the library’s name, e.g., Queer Zine Archive Project or POC Zine Project, but not all libraries are themed.

How? (Acquisitions)

Some of the ways we get zines:

- Donation
 - Collector — This is often long after the donor acquired the zines themselves.

- Creator — You give us your zines at zine fests and readings, through the mail or even email.
- Trade: equalizing the relationship between zine maker and zine librarian.
- Purchase — We buy zines at zine fests, bookstores, infoshops, distros, Etsy and wherever else zines are sold.

How? (Cataloging)

Librarians sometimes say that if an item isn't described, or even on the right place on the shelf, it doesn't exist. That's a snooty attitude, but not entirely without justification in the context of a library or archive. Library catalogs and archival finding aids can do as little as listing author and title information or can go into much more detail and include reproductions of zine covers.

Much of the work of describing zines is subjective, though librarians try not to inject judgment or analysis to their descriptors. However, we're stuck with language meaning different things to different people. For example, the LCSH for American Indians/Native Americans/Indigenous people of the US is "Indians of North America" and its closest approximation of the concept of "queer" is "Sexual minorities." Neither of these terms is likely to be embraced by the majority of punks or zine makers, yet sometimes librarians choose to use them because it helps zines to be more visible in library catalog searches. Cataloging is focused on the researcher, rather than the creator.

Most zine libraries have some kind of online interface for their catalog. Some are on the open web as lists, in searchable databases or via services like LibraryThing. Others are part of larger library catalogs and are included in a giant cooperative catalog called WorldCat. Google Books is now harvesting WorldCat records, so lots more zines are appearing in search engine results, which can be a little unnerving to someone who made a zine in the 1990s and in doing a little self-Googleing and finds a description of something they made as a teenager that may or may not reflect their current views.

If you don't like how your zine is described, get in touch with zine librarian; there's a good chance they'll change it. We work hard to be responsive to the zine community.

What? (Do zine librarians want from zine makers)

Most zine librarians would be stoked if you included this information in your zine:

- DATE — this, most of all!
- Name — can be anything, just something to identify you

- Publication location
- Rights and restrictions (can people copy the zine, digitize it, do they need to ask/tell you first, etc.)
- Demographic information — this might sound a little creepy, but it is helpful to know how you identify, re: race, gender, sexuality, etc., so we can describe you/your zine as you want yourself/your zine described
- Preferred gender pronouns

Where? (Resources)

Zine libraries list zines.barnard.edu/zine-libraries

Zine librarians groups

Zines and the Internet

Zine vs. Blogs

Ask a long-time zine participant if blogs have killed zines, and they are likely to groan out loud. There are a couple reasons for this response.

For several years, I was seeing articles declaring that zines are dead and that blogs killed them. A lot of these articles seemed to be written by people who were involved with zines 15–20 years ago who no longer made zines. Sure, zines have changed a lot over 20 years, but just because you walked away from them, doesn't mean that the thriving community of people who always made them went away, too.

Anyone active in the zine community can tell you that zines are still very much alive, despite media reports that they are “making a comeback.” Articles that report about how zines are thriving again doesn't mean that zines ever died. It's a familiar story for people who aren't involved with zines; who have only see a glimpse of the current zine community through a friend or celebrity self-publishing, or when they find out there is a zine fest in their town. It seems like they just want to write something about zines and they use the comeback story as their angle.

In fact, not only are zines alive, but I would say that zines have become an even more valid form of art and media where our mainstream media has become more and more centralized. Examples of zines' legitimacy can be seen all over. Public and academic libraries have started archiving zines. There are serious academic studies involving zines as a focus of study. Zines being used in variety of educational contexts. And the number of zine fests around the world continues to grow.

Another problem with the issue of zines vs. blogs is that they are not the antithesis of each other! Zines and blogs are not mutually exclusive. In fact, you'll probably find that many people who create zines also have blogs — I'm one of them. Blogs and zines are just different ways to express yourself.

So, has the internet changed zines? Sure, but that doesn't mean that zines are dead or that change is bad. The truth is that zines will continue to be published as long as people enjoy making and reading them. People like the tangible physicality of zines: they are portable, accessible, physical art objects, meant to be handled. A zine can't get a cracked screen, and if it's dropped in a mud puddle, it will probably be dirty, but readable.

If anything, I think that the internet and blogs have done a lot to connect people who create zines. In a way, it's helped create better and stronger communities and

networks. I mean, anyone can type up a rant and post it to a blog instantly. If you want to create a zine, it takes time and craft to make it, and a lot of work and energy goes into the process of production and distribution.

Computers, the internet and any technologies are just tools. Tools can be used for creative or destructive purposes. How can you use these tools to augment zines and zine culture?

GENERAL ONLINE RESOURCES

There's lots of good stuff for and about zines on the internet. I'm only going to list a few of them here because these constantly seem to be in flux. For an updated list of resources, please check out the website:

WWW.STOLENSHARPIEREVOLUTION.ORG

HERE ARE A PEW ONLINE RESOURCES THAT HAVE STOOD THE TEST OF TIME:

24 Hour Zine Thing

A project that happens every July where zinesters commit to creating a zine to their skill level in 24 hours.

24hourzines.com

Etsy Team Zine

A group of people that sell zines on the handmade-centric website, Etsy.

www.etsy.com/teams/6488/team-zine

International Zine Library Day

July 21st; a day to celebrate zine libraries

zinelibraryday.wikispaces.com

July is International Zine Month

A whole month to celebrate zines!

stolensharprierevolution.org/international-zine-month

Nobody Cares About You Stupid Zine Podcast

A podcast about zines

nobodycareszine.libsyn.com

QZAP (Queer Zine Archive Project)

Archives and digitizes queer zines and makes them available for free on their site

QZAP.org

Spill The Zines

UK-based zine site, focusing on UK zines

<https://spillthezines.blogspot.co.uk>

Syndicated Zine Reviews

zine review site

syndicatedzinereviews.blogspot.com

We Make Zines

A social media site dedicated to zines.

wemakezinesjiing.com

Zine Library List

Find a zine library near you!

zines.barnard.edu/zine-libraries

Zine Library Resources

zinelibraries.info

Zine Wiki

A wiki specifically about zines and zine culture

zinewiki.com

More resources listed at:

www.stolensharpierrevolution.org/resources/

Sea Green Zine Reviews

www.seagreenzines.com

Outro

That's it for the sixth edition of Stolen Sharpie Revolution! Thanks to Silver Sprocket Bicycle Club for helping to bring this edition to print!

Thanks so much for checking out this little red book I hope you found some useful tidbits. Feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or suggestions. Even after 18 years, Stolen Sharpie Revolution is still a work on process. I hope to help keep it growing and changing along with zine culture for many years to

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lowereastsidelibrarian.info

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undergroundpress.org

Sage Adderley for her lovely piece about nail art and Artist Trading Cards. Check out all of the great things Sage does at Sweet Candy Distro & Press and Sage's ELog Tours, sweetcandydistro.com sagesblogtours.com

Steve Larder for his beautiful illustrations on the front and back covers and being an awesome friend and Copy Scams bandmate. Check out more of his beautiful art and zines at stevelarder.co.uk

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All of the distros, zine libraries, shops that sell zines, organizers of zine events, and all the people that got in touch to help compile information for this book and that help keep the stolensharpierrevolution.org website updated.

And last but not least, Paul for his love and support during the revisions and progression of this book.

Alex Wreck

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The Ted K Archive

Alex Wreck
Stolen Sharpie Revolution
a DIY resource for zines and zine culture
2002

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I know this will come across as strange to try to distill a book about creating beautifully illustrated zines to mostly just the text. However, I wanted to be able to word search the document and quickly flick back and find chapters, so thought some others might also. Plus, this page acts as a signpost advertising where to buy a physical copy whilst acting as recommended reading on zine culture within this website.

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www.thetedkarchive.com