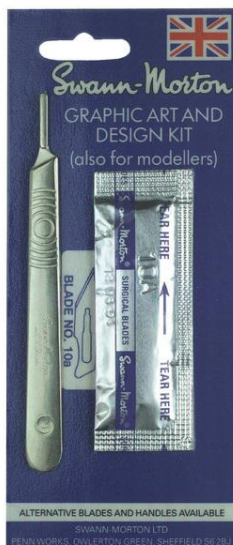


## What Do I Need? Tools of the Trade!

If you are going to seriously make cards there are a few items you will need.

- **Scissors** – You may need several sizes of scissors, probably a large pair for cutting large pieces of card, where you need to cut a straight line. For intricate work, such as cutting around outlines of images, such as for decoupage (I will explain this later). There are even scissors which can cut shaped edges on your cards.
- **Ruler** – this is an essential piece of equipment, not only for measuring, but when cutting card with a craft knife. I would recommend that you get a steel rule as when using a craft knife you can easily nick the plastic and ruin the straight edge.
- **Craft Knife** – Sometimes you may find it easier to cut a straighter edge on a card than with a pair of scissors. Scissors sometimes create a jagged edge when you take a new bite into the card. You can get many varieties of craft knives from DIY stores or craft shops. Most professional artists use Swan Morton knives, however these are more expensive and they need a lot of care in use and they are a little tricky to load and unload the blades.



- **Guillotine or Rotary paper cutter** – This item is one of the more expensive items you will need to purchase. From a Health and Safety point of view we would prefer the Rotary cutter, as the guillotine has the potential for you to cut your fingers off, though having said that modern guillotines have guards that prevent this. One advantage of the Rotary cutter is that some allow you to change the cutter blade for different patterns of cut, such as wavy and zig-zag. One product we would recommend is the 'Purple Cow' rotary cutter.



- **Glues and other adhesives** – Obviously we will need at some time to be able to attach things to the blank cards. Normal office type glues tend to be water based and may affect the item you are gluing onto the card. Crafters have come up with many ways of gluing, for use in card craft:
  - **Double sided Tape** – This comes in various widths up to 12mm (1/2 inch).
  - **Sticky Dots or Tape** – these are either dots of adhesive or continuous lines, that when you press them onto the card they stick to the card and release from the waxy backing tape. Is available as permanent or repositionable types.
  - **Foam pads** – Mostly used for Decoupage to space out the layers. Available in various thicknesses, sizes and shapes.
  - **Silicon Glue** – Again, mostly used for Decoupage. A little messy and has a pungent odour.
  - **Spray Glues (Photo mounting spray)** – As the description says normally used for mounting photos, but can equally be used to mount items onto card. Is available as permanent or repositionable types.
- **Stamping Rocker Block** – a lot of stamps these days come without a backing block. Rather than a flat block of plastic it is better to have a convex block, for better stamping accuracy. (more about Stamping in the next article).
- **The Pokey Tool** – I know this sounds a strange name for a tool but it is an extremely useful tool. If you have watched QVC or now Create and Craft you will have heard Dawn Bibby refer to this tool a lot. The tool has a point at one end and a small scoop shaped end on the other. It can be used to pick up Peel Offs by lifting most of the Peel Off from its backing and using the tool to temporarily to stick onto the end of the tool to transfer it to the card, rather than using your fingers and getting all stuck up. You will find it is easier to position using this method.
- **Cutting Mat** – If you are going to be cutting card using a craft knife, the Self-healing cutting mat is essential. They are available in sizes from A4 to A0.

There is on the market a glass cutting mat. These mats are reputed to give a sharper cleaner cut on card and will not scratch, so are long lasting.



- **Tweezers** – These are useful for picking up small items when laying out the card design. Would be used for non-sticky items, rather than the pokey tool.
- **Heat Gun** – This is used to melt embossing powders which give a 3D effect to your cards.



- **Bone Folder** – Use this tool to produce clean professional folds on your cards. Template boards with grooves at appropriate folding positions are available.
- **Punches** – There are numerous punches available, which are used for creating small embellishments, producing fancy edge designs and producing shaped corners. There are an infinite variety of shapes, which depend on the manufacturer producing the die, which is built into the punch. We will look at other methods of cutting shapes in a later article.

Well that covers the basic tools you will need to make some cards. We have not mentioned obvious things like pencil and rubber.

The next article will be about how to embellish your cards and the methods used to achieve this.