

Making Counters

Overview

The idea is to have counters that can be used directly after having been cut and with a minimum of clean-up trimming. Counters themselves are sized to 6.52 inch squares, with a 0.008 inch gap between them. The gap is a compromise between the minimum to be visible and the maximum to not leave flashing on the counter after it is cut. It seems to work well when I make counters.

The counter sheet is intended to be folded along the dotted line. The dotted line is thin enough that, should the countersheet be cut along it, there should not be any appreciable offset imposed. The thinner solid lines are for initial cut guides before the cut goes through the countersheet. They are offset enough to not contact the counters.

The countersheets, that I make, do not exceed 8.3 inches by 11 inches, and will have a 0.25 inch margin. This allows either letter-size or A4 paper to be used without the concern of blank printer edges.

Materials & tools used

The tools are: a thin edged ruler, butter knife, small razor (X-acto) knife, and a rotary cutter. A cutting mat is a good idea too. Materials are: rubber cement (either Carter's or Elmer's), and manila folders or similarly thick card.

Procedure

Make a good quality print of the, without scaling.

Trim the paper outside of the color & guides. It is wise to leave a little white around the outside.

Coat the back of the print with rubber cement. Allow to dry. (You can go to the next step before drying is completed.)

Coat an area of the manila material (card) a little larger than the countersheet print. Allow this to dry also.

Place the print on the glue area of the card. It helps to hold the diagonally opposite corners while doing this. The items will stick when they come into contact.

Trim off the white around the countersheet's background & guides. This isn't vital, but it does help to have some extra aligned edges.

Using the ruler and butter knife, score along the dashed line. Then fold the countersheet. Check the alignment of the guides & background color.

Coat the back of the card with glue. Let that dry, then fold together. Everything should line up at this point.

Using the razor knife and ruler, cut along the guide lines vertically & horizontally. Do not cut all the way through the card, this is intended to be deep, thin scoring.

Cut the pieces apart with the rotary cutter. If done carefully, but firmly the cuts made by the razor knife. The counter sheet will move a little to conform to the cutting blade & scoring, let it do that, but be careful to stay on track.