

# Crossbar Flags

## People's Climate HOW TO MAKE ART KIT [HERE](#)

These painted, stenciled or screenprinted fabric flags are designed to have horizontal sticks at top and bottom, and also attach to a vertical pole. They are very visible, and easy to carry



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Here's how to make one--or many:

1) GET AND CUT FABRIC:

Choose a lightweight muslin, cotton, polyester or other lightweight non-stretchy white fabric. White sheets are also good, and damaged ones can sometimes be had for free from industrial laundry companies. Cut--or tear after an initial cut--to size. I usually make these flags about 24 x 40 inches, allowing 6 inches to wrap around the top/bottom sticks. You can adjust the flag size to make best use the of size of fabric you have. One

reason I choose a light fabric is so the light will shine through if the sun is behind the flag.

## 2) STAPLE/TAPE DOWN:

I create a painting table with a sheet of not-too-rough plywood placed on top of a table or sawhorses, and then staple the flag fabric to the plywood in four corners, pulling it tightly so there are no wrinkles. You can also do this with masking or duct tape.

3) DESIGN/LAYOUT: Draw your design -- first on paper, then on the flag fabric. TIPS: Less is more; keeping to a few shorter words and simple bold images makes it stronger and easier to read. A light/dark contrast makes it readable. One option is to paint a light color over the whole flag, priming it, let it dry, then draw your design and paint with much darker colors.

Remember, the more complex your image, the more time it will take. Using a straight edge, mark the top/bottom edges of your words. If you need help spacing, count the number of letters in each line and dividing in  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  guide for where they go on the flag.

4) PAINT: I paint flags and banners with latex (water clean up) house paint. You can also use artists acrylic paints. Don't use tempera paint--it smears easily and runs if it gets wet. I put the paint into a plastic container and thin with water a bit to make it flow--easier to paint with, but not so much it bleeds or looks thin. Let the flag dry, then pull it off the plywood. NOTE: you can also choose to screen print or spray-paint stencil the flags, maybe adding a handpainted element too.

## 5) ATTACH TO STICKS

I use wood lathe, narrow wood strips (1 1/2 x 1/3 inch) like was once used to back plaster walls and is now used for fence trellises. [Here is Home Depot's](#)--some Home Depot stores carry it other you have to order it and can have sent to local store. You can buy it either for fence lattice and garden trellis or for plaster walls. A clear (no big knots) 2x4 can be ripped on a tablesaw. But, you can use whatever you can get. Cut the stick an inch shorter than the fabric, so it's not visible or sharp. Use a staple gun to staple the edge of the fabric to the outside edge of the stick. Roll the stick over twice and securely staple the fabric to the stick. Use 1/4 inch staples--or just shorter than the wood thickness, to avoid sharp edges. Do this at the top and bottom. Then get your vertical flag pole; I usually use 8 foot tall, 1x2 inch "furring strips" making sure they don't have big knots that might break while carrying. I get [3/4 to 1 inch "truss head" \(washer head\) screws](#), or wood or sheet metal screws, and use a cordless drill with a phillips bit to screw the middle of the top and bottom of the flag sticks securely into the vertical flagpole. I either assemble them onsite to make transport easier or else bundle them up 4 -6 per bundle for transport and carrying to site.

6) CARRY! Are they in the best place and facing the right direction? Do you want them to move as a line or groups of flags, or with some choreography? They can be a powerful visual positioned right behind a hand-held banner people hold below their heads.