

Papel Picados

(Mexican punched or cut paper)

Papel Picados are punched (picado) or cut (cortado) pieces of tissue-paper (papel) that are hung on a string and used as banners. Mexican Americans make and use these banners to celebrate special occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, and holidays. The banners are decorated with detailed cut-out designs and symbols. Papel Picados probably have been around for a long time, but evidence to prove this is lacking because Papel Picados fall apart so quickly if left hanging outside. We do know that in the 1500s, Spanish explorers found that the native Aztecs in Mexico made paper out of fig and mulberry-bark pulp (bark mush) called *amatl* and then cut it with a knife to make paper cut-out designs.

You will need:

- Tissue Paper
- Yarn
- Tape
- Scissors or paper punches

Directions:

1. Take the folded tissue paper and a pair of scissors or paper punches.
2. Cut holes and designs from the folded paper using scissors or paper punches. (Too many big cuts will make the paper fall apart.)
3. Open the tissue paper and it will be full of designs.
4. Take one end of the tissue paper and fold it over a piece of string to create a banner. Tape the folded tissue paper. You can tape up to four pieces of tissue paper on the string to make a banner. Now, you're ready to celebrate!