

Uncoated kraft paper and newspaper are practical choices for wrapping flower stems because they fold easily and can generally go into compost after use. If the cut ends need moisture, wrap them with a little unbleached cotton cloth or a plain paper towel, then secure that damp layer inside an outer paper wrap.

Match the wrap to your journey

For a short walk home, a dry paper sleeve may be all you need. It helps protect your hands from damp stems and gives the bunch a neat shape. If the flowers will be away from water for a longer time, first place a damp paper towel or cloth around their cut ends. Keep it moist, not dripping, and put the flowers in water as soon as you can.

Wet paper loses strength, so a paper wrap cannot keep water from leaking. If you are taking flowers on a bus or placing them on a car seat, set the wrapped stem ends in a reusable container to catch any moisture.

- **Uncoated kraft paper:** A sturdy option for the outside of a wrap, and easy to fold around a bunch.
- **Newspaper:** Works as a simple sleeve, but thin sheets are more likely to tear once wet.
- **Plain paper towel:** Soaks up water for a short journey, though it needs an outer layer to keep it supported.
- **Unbleached cotton cloth:** Holds moisture and can be washed and used again before composting.
- **Plain corrugated cardboard:** Provides support for stems inside a box, but does not bend as easily as paper.

Use only a few simple materials

Choose paper with no shiny finish, foil, glitter or plastic lining. Some sheets that look like ordinary paper have a moisture resistant coating, which is not suitable for a compost pile. If you cannot identify a coating, keep that paper out of the compost.

For a small bunch picked from the garden, fold a square of kraft paper around the stems and tie it with untreated natural fiber twine. It is best to skip tape. If you need to use some, remove it before composting the paper. Take off rubber bands and any other ties that cannot be composted, too.

Plan for reuse or composting

If the wrap is clean and in good condition, reuse it before composting it. Wash a cotton cloth and return it to a drawer, or keep a dry paper sleeve to wrap another bunch.

Once paper is ready for compost, tear it into small pieces. Mix those pieces with other materials instead of leaving them together in a thick wad. Compost collection services do not all accept the same items, so check local instructions before putting paper, cloth or twine in a collection bin. Cotton and thick twine may take a long time to break down in a home compost pile.

Common questions about stem wraps

Is flower wrapping paper compostable?

Plain paper without a coating is generally suitable for compost. First remove tape, plastic and decorative pieces. If you use a collection service, check its rules as well.

Will a damp paper towel keep stems fresh on a long trip?

A damp towel can help keep the cut ends moist for a short journey, but it may dry out or tear. For longer travel, a reusable container of water provides a more dependable supply.

Is twine suitable for holding a paper wrap?

Untreated natural fiber twine can hold a paper sleeve together. Keep it for another use if it is still in good shape, or check whether your compost system accepts it.

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