



Duct Tape Fashion

Duct tape is not just for fixing things; it is for creating, designing, and showing off your style.

Duct tape was invented by Vesta Stoudt, a woman who identified a problem and developed an innovative, practical solution. The tape was easy to apply and remove, and was soon adapted to repair military equipment, including vehicles and weapons, quickly. This tape, colored in army-standard matte olive drab, was nicknamed “duck tape” by the soldiers. Various theories have been put forward for the nickname, including the descendant relation to cotton duck fabric, the waterproof characteristics of a duck bird, “water off a duck’s back,” and even the name of the 1942 amphibious military vehicle DUKW, pronounced “duck.” Today, duct tape comes in countless colors and patterns and can be turned into fashion, accessories, and bold designs that are totally your own.

For this patch, you will explore how duct tape works, experiment with creative fashion ideas, and design something wearable using your imagination and problem-solving skills.

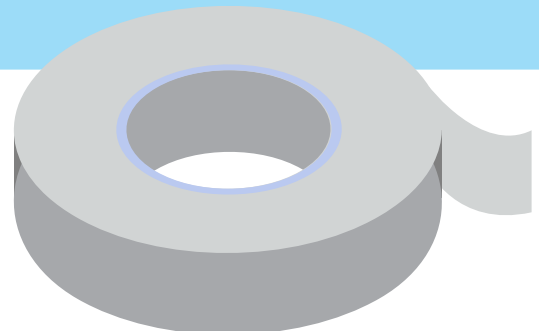


Meet the Inventor

Vesta Stoudt was an inventor, factory worker, and problem-solver during World War II. While working at an ordnance plant, she noticed that ammunition boxes were sealed with paper tape and then dipped in wax to waterproof them. However, the tabs that opened the boxes often broke when they got wet, making it difficult for soldiers to open them and wasting valuable time in dangerous situations.

Vesta developed the idea for a strong, waterproof tape that could be torn by hand and used quickly in the field. When her idea was ignored, she wrote directly to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Her persistence worked, and her invention was approved for military use and eventually became what we now know as duct tape.

(Source: Johnson & Johnson, “Vesta Stoudt: The Woman Who Invented Duct Tape”)



Step 1

DISCOVER



Before you start designing, take time to DISCOVER duct tape.

Grab a roll of duct tape and ask yourself:

- What does duct tape feel like?
- Is it flexible or stiff?
- Is it waterproof?
- Does it stick well to different surfaces?
- How strong is it?
- Why would this make a good material for a piece of jewelry, a dress, or a wallet?

Head online, with the help of an adult, to learn more about duct tape. Try searching for videos and websites that show you different ways to use duct tape for fashion, jewelry, crafts, etc.

List some characteristics or ways to use duct tape:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step 2

CONNECT

Now it's time to CONNECT duct tape and fashion. Let's get creative and look at things you wear or carry every day.

Choose at least one way to connect duct tape to your own life:

- Fix or decorate something you already use (a notebook, pencil case, shoe, or bag).
- Add color or patterns to an everyday item.
- Design a duct tape accessory that shows your personality.

Reflect on your decision:

- Why did you choose this item?
- How does your design reflect your style?
- What challenges did you run into, and how did you solve them?

Did you know?

Every year, duct tape is used in a completely different way through the Stuck at Prom Scholarship Program. High school students design and wear outfits made entirely from duct tape to their prom, and creative designs can earn college scholarship money.

This shows how an invention made initially for the military has become a tool for fashion, creativity, and opportunity, and proves that your ideas can take you further than you ever expect.

Step 3

TAKE ACTION

Get ready to TAKE ACTION and create a duct tape fashion item or accessory.

Choose at least one of the following projects to create a wearable duct tape item to complete this step.

Option 1: Duct Tape Necklace

Create a bold necklace using duct tape beads.

Materials:

- Duct tape (any color or pattern)
- Scissors
- Plastic or paper straws
- Fishing wire or string

Directions:

1. Choose one or more duct tape designs.
2. Cut a strip of duct tape about 6 inches long.
3. Lay the tape sticky-side up and place a straw along the edge.
4. Roll the straw tightly inside the tape.
5. Cut the wrapped straw into bead-sized pieces (about 1/4 inch).
6. String the beads onto fishing wire or string.
7. Tie the ends together or add a clasp.

Option 2: Magnetic Duct Tape Clutch

Design a small clutch bag using duct tape.

Materials:

- Duct tape
- Scissors
- Cardboard or thick paper
- Magnetic snap or magnetic strip

Directions:

1. Cut cardboard into a rectangle for your clutch base.
2. Cover both sides completely with duct tape.
3. Fold the cardboard to form a pouch.
4. Seal the sides with duct tape.
5. Attach a magnetic closure to keep it shut.
6. Decorate with patterns or layers of tape.

Option 3: Duct Tape Hair Box

Make a fun hair accessory to wear or share.

Materials:

- Duct tape
- Scissors
- Hair tie or barrette

Directions:

1. Cut two equal strips of duct tape, a few inches long.
2. Place the sticky sides together to create a piece of duct tape fabric. For a larger bow, overlap additional pieces of duct tape to make a larger piece of fabric.
3. Fold the fabric back and forth lengthwise like an accordion.
4. Pinch the fabric in the middle.
5. Wrap a small strip of duct tape around the center.
6. Attach the bow to a hair tie or barrette.

Option 4: Create Your Own Duct Tape Fashion Item

Materials:

- Duct tape
- Scissors
- Other items based on your design

Directions:

1. Get creative and make your own design.

Wear your creation proudly and remember: creativity, persistence, and confidence can turn simple materials into something amazing.

All done?

CONGRATULATIONS! Once you have completed all three steps, you have earned your Duct Tape Fashion patch.



After completing the activities from each step, visit or call a Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania retail shop at 800-248-3355 to purchase your patch or order them on the [fun patch order form](#).* A patch may be worn on the back of a vest, sash, or tunic.

*The patch shown may be substituted with a similar patch, based on availability.

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