Make art with the Art Gallery of New South Wales
Abstract collage
Do you love to draw, paint and make things?

Artists love to create. They make drawings, prints, paintings, sculptures and other things for us to look at. Some artists love to experiment with shapes, colours and textures to create abstract patterns.

Look at these abstract artworks from the Art Gallery of New South Wales, become an artist and create your own colourful abstraction.

above: Ralph Balson
Construction in green
1942, oil on paperboard,
Art Gallery of New South Wales, purchased
with funds provided by an anonymous purchase
fund for contemporary Australian art 1970
© Ralph Balson Estate.
right: Ralph Balson
Abstraction 1950,
oil on hardboard,
Art Gallery of New South Wales,
purchased 1965 © Ralph Balson Estate.
Photos: © AGNSW

We acknowledge the Gadigal of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the Country on which the Art Gallery of New South Wales stands.
Abstract collage

Abstract artworks don’t usually depict the world around us. Instead, the artist experiments with shapes and colours to express a mood or to show the different effects colours have when placed together, or simply for the joy of creating patterns.

Make your own abstract collage influenced by these artworks.

Remember, you are the artist so you can decide on the colours, the shapes and what your artwork will look like.

You will need:
Scissors
Glue
Coloured paper shapes
Tissue paper
Stickers
Corrugated card shapes
Your imagination!

below and cover (detail):
Frank Weitzel Abstract design 1 c1932, colour linocut on ivory tissue,
Art Gallery of New South Wales, purchased with funds provided by
the Australian Prints, Drawings and Watercolours Benefactors Fund 2015.
Photo: © AGNSW
1. Take some of the shapes and start laying them out in front of you. Decide if you want to cut them up and what colours look good together.

2. Start cutting and adding more shapes to your arrangement. Move them around until you like how it looks.

3. You could lay tissue paper over your shapes to change the appearance of some of the colours and add a sense of depth.

4. You can also experiment with ripping the paper instead of cutting it. Or you can cut through shapes and spread them out or overlap a dark colour with a light colour.

5. Add some more cut shapes and pieces of corrugated card to create more texture in your artwork.

6. Finish off your design by adding smaller shapes and stickers, then glue everything down when you are happy with your final arrangement. The possibilities are endless!