

FREE GUIDE | VIRTUAL SONDER

# How to Make ACEOs

Turn a Forgotten Painting to Nine Collectible Cards

*Exact measurements. No waste. A complete how-to.*

**2.5 x 3.5"**

the only rule

**9 cards**

from one sheet

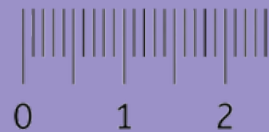
**any medium**

example: 9x12 paper



**ACEO**

Art  
Card  
Edition or  
Original



WHAT IS AN ACEO?

## The Only Rule Is the Size

ACEO stands for Art Card Editions and Originals.



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How to

# Create your Own ACEO Collections

The beauty of ACEOs is that you probably already have everything you need. No special supplies required.

**Measurements  
Matter**

That is the same dimensions as a standard trading card or baseball card.  
That's it. That's the whole rule.

***Every single ACEO must be exactly 2.5 x 3.5 inches.***

Everything else is up to you. Watercolor, ink, acrylic, collage, digital prints, mixed media, pencil.

Any surface that can be cut to size. Any subject. Any style.



*trading card size*

**Exact ACEO Size**

**2.5 x 3.5 inches**

Same as a standard trading card

<b>Accessible for collectors</b>	Buyers who can't afford a large original can own a piece of your actual work. Not a print. A real original.
<b>Perfect for upcycling</b>	Unfinished paintings, sketchbook pages, and practice sheets all become raw material instead of waste.
<b>Easy to ship and store</b>	Standard trading card sleeves protect them perfectly. They mail flat in a regular envelope with a piece of cardboard.
<b>Great for series</b>	One original painting naturally becomes a thematically connected set. Collectors love completing sets.



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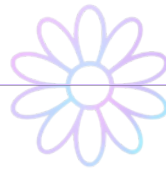
WHAT YOU NEED

# Materials and Tools

These are just suggestions, I encourage you to be resourceful and don't overspend. Have fun!

- Your artwork** Any painting, drawing, or mixed media piece on paper or card stock. Heavier paper (90 lb+) holds up better for originals.
- Pencil and ruler** For drawing your cutting grid directly on the back of the piece. A light pencil line is all you need.
- Paper cutter or scissors** A rotary paper cutter gives the cleanest edges. Scissors work fine. A craft knife and metal ruler also works well.
- Card sleeves (optional)** Standard penny sleeves or trading card sleeves protect finished cards during storage and shipping.
- Cardboard backing** A piece of cardboard cut to 2.5 x 3.5" inside the sleeve keeps cards rigid for mailing.

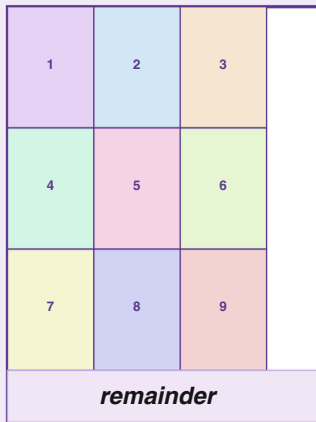




THE MEASUREMENTS

# How to Get the Most Cards From Your Sheet

Each card is 2.5 inches wide and 3.5 inches tall. To figure out how many cards fit on your paper, divide the width by 2.5 and the height by 3.5. Round down. Multiply. That's your count.



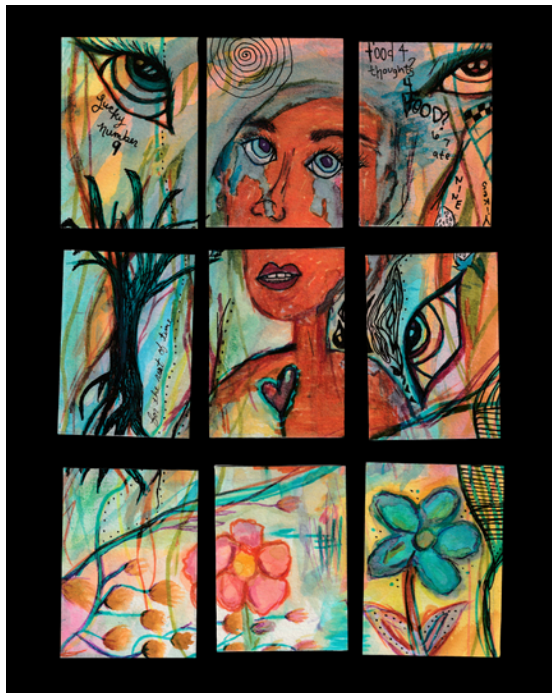
**9 x 12 inch sheet**  
 = 9 ACEOs (2.5 x 3.5")  
 + small remainder strip

### Other sheet sizes

- 5 x 7"      2 cards (2 cols x 1 row)
- 8.5 x 11"      9 cards (3 cols x 3 rows)
- 9 x 12"      9 cards (3 cols x 3 rows)
- 11 x 14"      12 cards (4 cols x 3 rows)
- 12 x 18"      20 cards (4 cols x 5 rows)

### The Formula

Example:  $9" / 2.5 = 3$  columns |  $12" / 3.5 = 3$  rows (with 0.5" remainder)  
 3 columns x 3 rows = 9 cards



ACEO\_Series\_Food\_for\_Thoughts





STEP BY STEP

# Cutting Your Cards

## 1 Choose your piece

Pick a painting or drawing you want to cut. It can be finished or unfinished. Look at it as a grid rather than a whole. Where do the most interesting elements land?



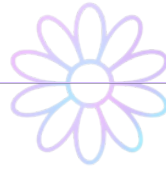
## 2 Draw the grid lightly in pencil

On the front of the piece, use a ruler to mark every 2.5 inches across and every 3.5 inches down. These light pencil lines let you preview exactly what each card will look like before you commit to cutting.



Continued

## Cutting Your Cards



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### Make peace with the cuts

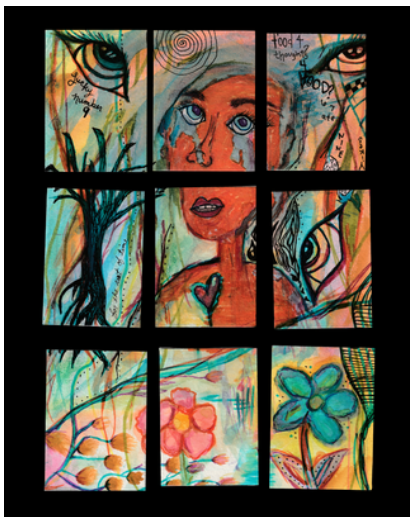
Spend a minute with the grid on the piece. Accept that some cuts will split elements. That's part of the format.



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### Cut along the grid lines

Use a paper cutter or scissors to cut cleanly along each line. Work systematically and cut all the vertical lines first, then the horizontal ones.



ACEO\_Series\_Food\_for\_Thoughts

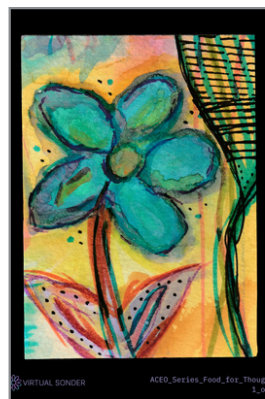
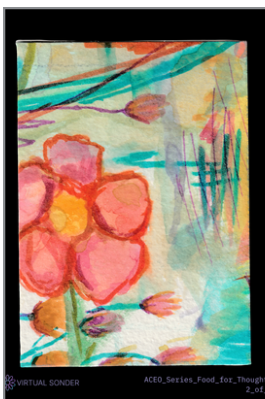
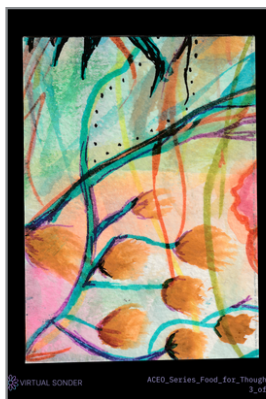
**Each card is a fragment of the larger work, and that's what makes them interesting.**

## Make them yours



### 5 Number the backs

Lightly pencil the card number and series name on the back of each card. If you're selling as a set, number them 1/9, 2/9, etc.



### 6 Sign each card

Sign the front lower corner or the back. Both are accepted in the ACEO community. Your choice.

### 7 Sleeve them (Optional)

Slip each card into a penny sleeve with a small piece of cardboard behind it for rigidity. Done.

## That's the whole system.

I painted what felt right and let the shapes come in around the edges. It started as intuition and became something more specific as I worked on it.

The painting holds some of that. Color, shapes, things I couldn't say directly but could put down on paper.

**ACEOs are something small and unique that we can easily ship.**

If you want to create or own a piece of original art without spending a lot, this is a good place to start or to create a unique collection that supports independent artists online.





## Listing Tips for Etsy

### Title format

ACEO Original [subject] 2.5x3.5 Mini Art Card  
Include the word ACEO, the subject or series name, and the size. Keep it descriptive, not poetic.

### Tag it up

#ACEO, originalart, mini art, art card, trading card art, small original painting, affordable art, collectible art, 2.5x3.5, handmade card, art trade

### Pricing

Individual cards: \$8 to \$25 depending on complexity.  
Full sets of 9: \$45 to \$90 for a cohesive series.  
Digital prints of ACEOs: \$3 to \$8 for printable files.

### Photos

Shoot on a neutral background. Natural light is best.

**Pro tip:**

The grid photo of all 9 cards laid out on a dark background is your best marketing image. **Use it to list on Etsy or eBay and anywhere you share your work.**

**One forgotten painting.  
A pencil grid. A paper cutter.  
Nine finished Mini-Masterpieces.**

Now you have nine originals ready to ship anywhere in a regular envelope.

**Stay connected! Let's support each others art <3**

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