

MICHELLE WARD designs

How to Make Your Glue Box Lantern

A glowing paper lantern from Michelle Ward Designs

Materials

- Two 8.5" × 11" sheets of cardstock. 65# is the lightest I'd go; heavier makes a sturdier lantern.
- Optional, for the window inserts: one letter-size sheet of vellum. You need five 3.5" squares, one per window. All five come out of a single sheet if you cut them by hand. Vellum tears and crumples easily, so hand-cutting is what I'd do anyway.
- If you want opaque sides for a gift box, use cardstock for the window inserts instead of vellum — but keep it to 65# or lighter. Heavier stock takes up more room inside the lantern, and that extra bulk can push the corners out of square.
- Your cutting machine — Silhouette, Cricut, or similar
- Glue tape for the Side Tabs and the base
- Optional: a bone folder or scoring tool for crisp creases
- A battery-operated LED tealight or a short string of fairy lights, if you're using it as a lantern

Finished size: approximately 3.75" cube.

What's in Your Download

- The lantern template, as an SVG and a DXF: the same template, just two file types, so use whichever your software opens.
- A PNG of the template. A cutting machine can cut the outer shape and the cutwork from it, but not the fold lines — in a PNG those dashes are drawn on rather than cut out, so the piece comes off the mat with no folds marked. Use the SVG or DXF for the whole thing.
- Read Me — how to open your files, plus where to find me
- Personal Use License Agreement — this design is licensed for your personal use

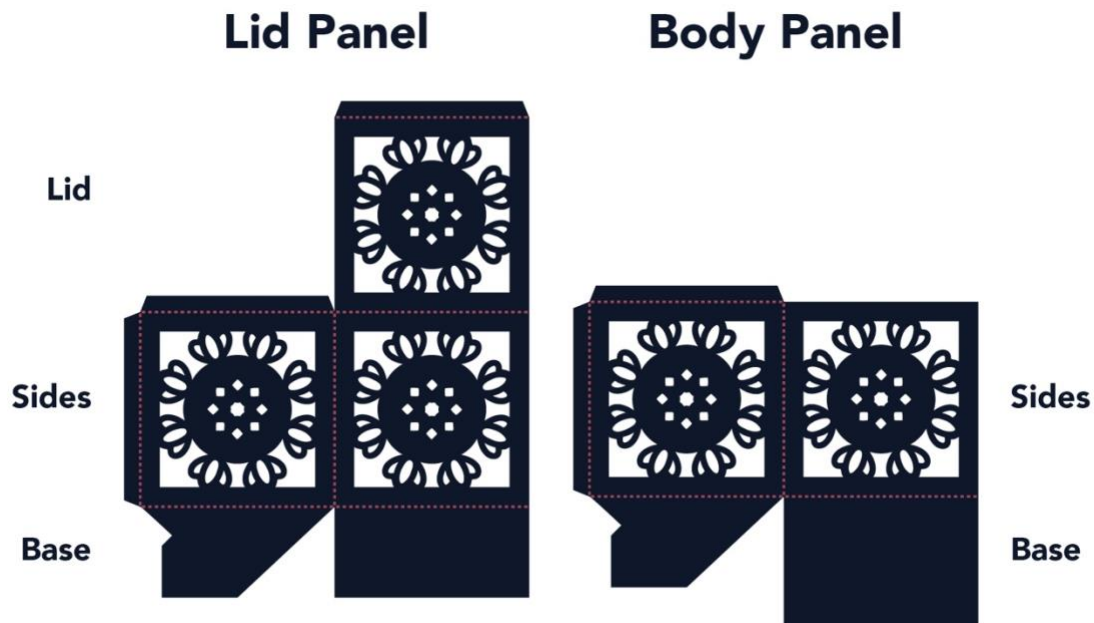
Which File Do I Use?

If your software opens SVGs, use the SVG. If it doesn't — like the free version of Silhouette Studio — use the DXF instead. They're the same template.

Fold lines. The fold lines are cut as dashes, right into the shape, so every crease is already marked when the piece comes off the mat. There's nothing to score — just fold along the dashes.

Know Your Pieces

Your lantern cuts as two flat pieces:



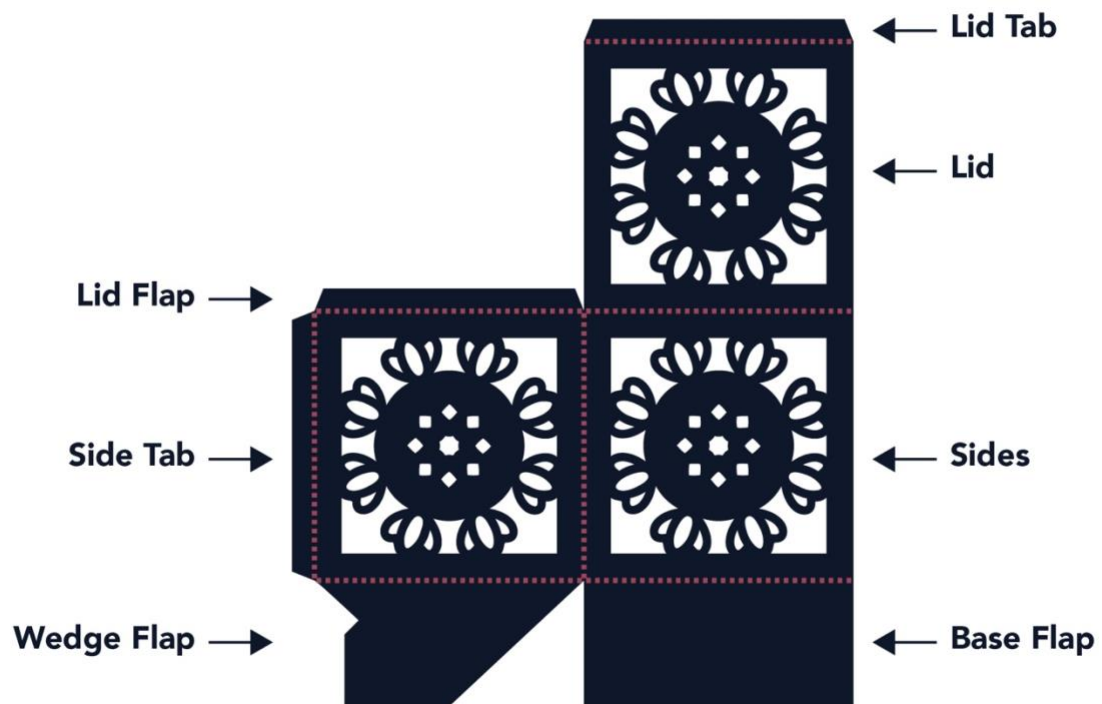
- Lid Panel — two sides, plus the lid on top. It's part of the body too, but the lid is what sets it apart.
- Body Panel — the other two sides.

Here's what holds it together:

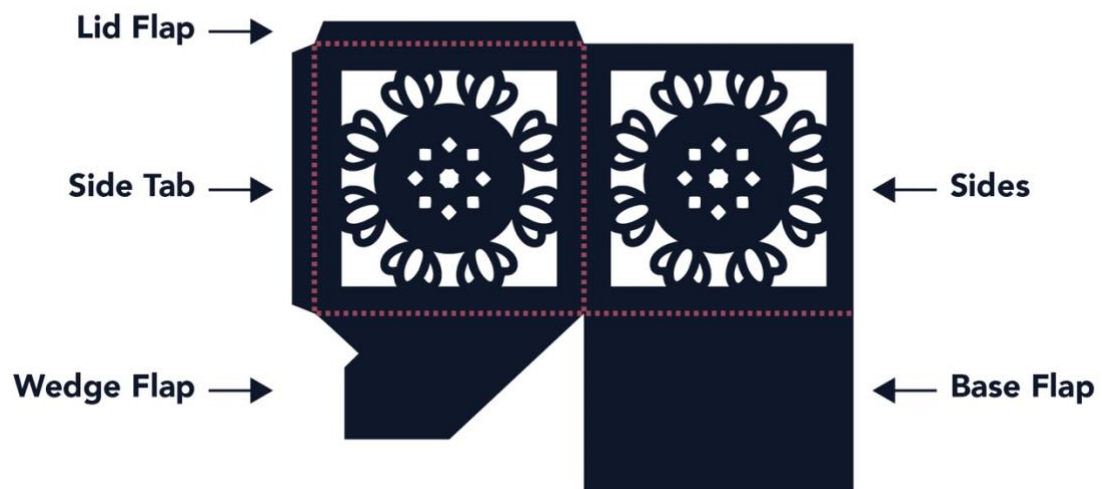
- Side Tabs (×2) — one narrow glue tab on each panel, running down one outer edge. Each one glues to the inside of the other panel's free edge, and that's what turns two flat pieces into a cube.
- Crash Lock — the base. Two Base Flaps, which fold in first, and two Wedge Flaps, which glue down over them.
- Fold Closure — the lid. There's one Lid Flap on top of each panel, and once the panels are joined they sit across from each other on either side of the lid. The Lid Flaps fold in first, the lid folds down over them, and the Lid Tab tucks in behind the far side. No lock — just a fold.

Here's where every one of those parts sits on the flat panels:

Lid Panel



Body Panel



Section 1: Folding

1. **Pick the inside before you fold anything.** Either face can be the inside — the cutwork reads the same from both sides — so if your cardstock has a nicer face, make that the outside. Once you've chosen, everything on both panels folds the same way: the Side Tabs, the Lid Flaps, the Base Flaps, the Wedge Flaps, the lid, and the Lid Tab all fold toward the inside face.
2. **Crease every fold line.** Run over each one firmly so it holds a sharp edge, folding every one of them toward the inside. Then lay each panel back down with its tabs and flaps hinged up toward you. The face you're looking at is the inside — that's where the window inserts and the glue go, and it's how you'll tell the two faces apart from here on.
3. **Support the paper as you fold.** The pattern is cut away from the panels, so there's much less paper holding a fold line together than there would be on a solid sheet. Everywhere you fold — between two sides, and where a tab or flap folds away from its panel — lay a finger along the fold line so the paper bends along the line instead of tearing beside it.

Section 2: Adding Vellum or Cardstock (Optional)

If you like the open look, skip this section and go straight to Section 3. If you want your lantern to have a frosted-glass look, use vellum. If you want to use it as a gift box with opaque sides, use cardstock. Either way, this section is for you — and on this lantern it happens while the panels are still flat, which is a lot easier than reaching inside a box.

You need five 3.5" squares — one per window.

4. **Lay both panels down inside-up.** That's the face Section 1 left you looking at, with the tabs and flaps hinged toward you. The inserts go on this face and only this face. Stick one to the outside and it's coming off again, so it's worth a second look before the tape touches anything.
5. **Tape the inside face of the first side.** Run tape around the edge of the design — and across the design itself if you like. Keep it inside the side, off the fold lines and off the tabs and flaps.
6. **Lay a window insert onto the tape, lined up with the bottom edge of the side.** Line up the bottom rather than centering it, so the top of the insert stays clear of the lid. Smooth it down from the middle outward and press it onto the

tape with no bubbles or lifted corners. If a corner won't sit, lift it back off before the tape grabs and reset it — vellum creases permanently once it folds.

7. **Do the other three sides the same way.** Tape, lay the insert down against the bottom edge, smooth it flat. One side at a time.
8. **Do the lid last.** Tape it the same way, but center the insert on the lid so it sits clear of both fold lines — the one where the lid meets the side below it, and the one where the Lid Tab folds down. Vellum across either fold will fight you later.

If you'd rather use thin removable glue dots, you can — they hold well and they come off cleanly. Two things make them behave: burnish each dot with a bone folder before you peel it off the sheet, or it balls up instead of transferring, and cut them to size while they're still on the backing sheet, never after you've removed one. The trade-off is that dots hold at points rather than along an edge, so expect the window insert to lift a little between them.

Section 3: Gluing the Sides

9. **Run adhesive down one Side Tab.** Slide it under the free edge of the other panel — the outer edge with no tab — so the tab sits against that panel's inside face, with the bottom edges of the two panels lined up and both Lid Flaps at the top. A tape runner grabs the moment it touches, so get the edges lined up before the tab lands; liquid glue gives you a few seconds to nudge it. Press and hold. You now have a flat run of four sides with a lid on one of them.
10. **Bring the two ends round to meet.** Run adhesive down the second Side Tab and press it to the inside of the last free edge, bottom edges lined up the same way. Look down into the box as you press: it should be square, with each side standing straight, every Base Flap and Wedge Flap hanging off the bottom of its own side, and the two Lid Flaps across from each other on either side of the lid. If it's leaning, ease it square now, while the second tab is still fresh.

Section 4: Closing the Bottom

The base is a Crash Lock: the two straight Base Flaps fold in first, and the two Wedge Flaps stick down over them.

11. **Turn the lantern upside down and fold the two Base Flaps in first.** They sit opposite each other and fold in across the bottom.

12. **Run adhesive over the inside face of each Wedge Flap.** Fold them in over the Base Flaps and press them down. They sit opposite each other too, and between the four of them the base is closed.
13. **Stand the lantern on its base.** Check that it's sitting square and level, then reach inside and press the base flat from within. Sometimes it takes a whole hand in the middle of the box to get it there.

Section 5: Closing the Lid

14. **Fold the two Lid Flaps in across the top.** Then fold the lid down over them and tuck the Lid Tab in behind the far side — the side across from the lid's hinge. It's a fold, not a lock: the tab holds the lid shut on its own, and it lifts straight back out whenever you want to get inside.
15. **To open it, do the same in reverse.** Lift the Lid Tab out and swing the lid up.

That's it. Drop in an LED tealight or a string of fairy lights and you've got a lantern. Leave it empty and you've got a gift box.

Safety Note

Use battery-operated LED tealights or fairy lights only. Never put a real candle inside a paper lantern.

Find more designs in the [Michelle Ward Designs Etsy shop](#) or at michellewarddesigns.com. For project tutorials, join me for Crafting with Chaos on the [Michelle Ward Designs YouTube channel](#). Happy crafting!