

MICHELLE WARD designs

Gravestone Assembly Instructions – 4"x2"

A 3D paper gravestone from the Electric Screams collection by Michelle Ward Designs



What you are making.

Materials

Tools and Adhesive

- Paper glue, a tape runner, or a hot glue gun
- A weeding tool and tweezers, for the vinyl lettering
- A silicone mat, if you are using hot glue
- Transfer tape, if you are applying the lettering as one piece

Hot glue works and sets fast, which is why I use it for builds like this. Two things come with it: glue strings, which look like cobwebs and are arguably seasonal, and a real risk of gluing your project to the table. Work on a silicone mat.

Paper

Use **80 lb cover** cardstock or heavier — about 216 gsm — for the structure. Don't skip the word "cover" — 80 lb cover and 80 lb text are two different papers, and both exist. 80 lb text is closer to thick writing paper, and a piece built from it will lean.

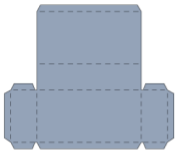
Letter size is fine for this build. Nothing in the gravestone needs a 12" mat.

Cut the lettering from vinyl, not paper — small letters weed cleaner and stick flatter in vinyl. **Use regular vinyl rather than glitter or textured vinyl.** Textured vinyl needs a stronger-tack transfer tape to lift off its backing, and stronger tape on cardstock is a good way to tear the face off your gravestone. I learned that one on camera.

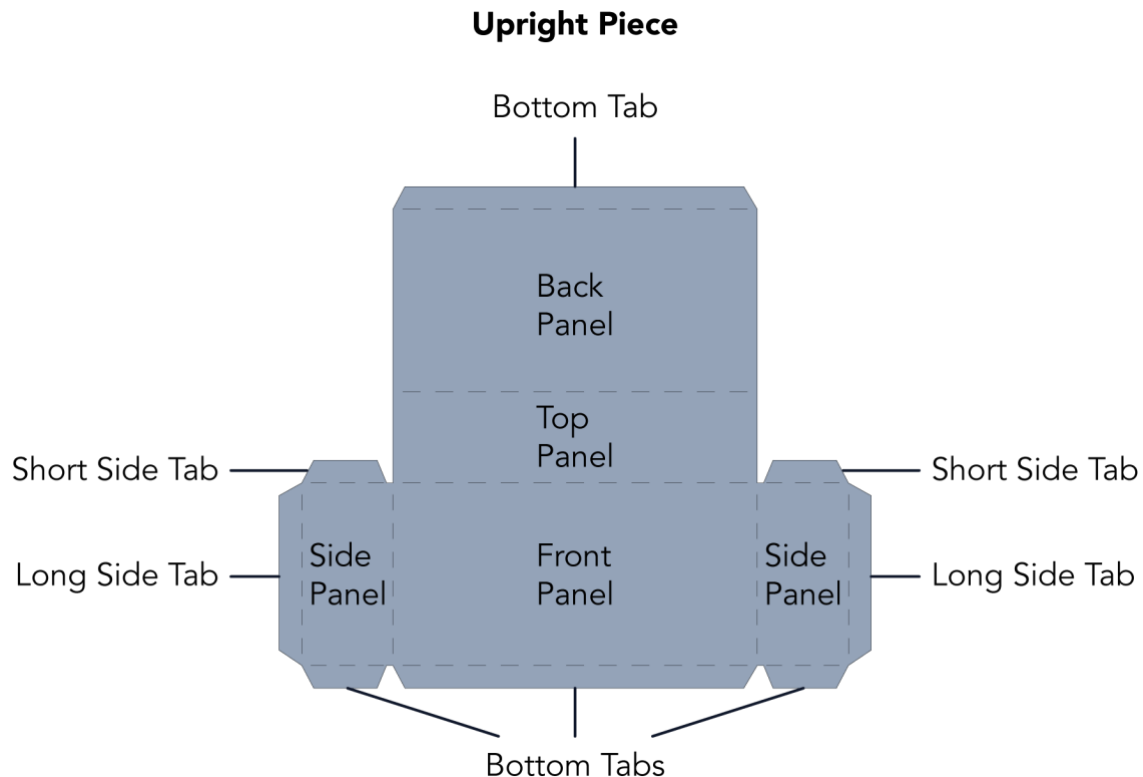
Cut the ghosts from white cardstock. If your cardstock is textured on one side only, pick which face you want showing before you glue anything down. On pieces this small it's easy to end up with one ghost turned the wrong way, and it shows once all three are on the stone.

Parts

Gravestone Parts List - 4"x2"

Part	Name	Number to cut
	Upright Piece (finished size 4"x2")	1
	Base	1
	Name Lettering	1
	Large Ghost	1 Ghost/2 Eyes
	Medium Ghost	1 Ghost/2 Eyes
	Small Ghost	1 Ghost/2 Eyes

Prepare the Upright Piece



1. Fold the panels along the fold lines first, then fold the tabs.
2. **Fold the four Bottom Tabs outward, away from the piece.** They go down through the slot in the Base later, and folding them the wrong way is the first mistake waiting to happen here.

Decorate Before You Close It

Do the lettering now, while the Upright Piece is still open and flat. Once the box is glued shut you have to collapse it to press vinyl down, and a collapsed box does not go back to square. This is the single thing that will save you the most grief in this build.

3. Weed the name and apply it to the front of the Upright Piece. This one is wide and short, so the name sits on two lines with room to spare on either side.

Assemble the Ghosts

4. Glue two eyes to each ghost, matching eye size to ghost size — the big eyes go on the big ghost.

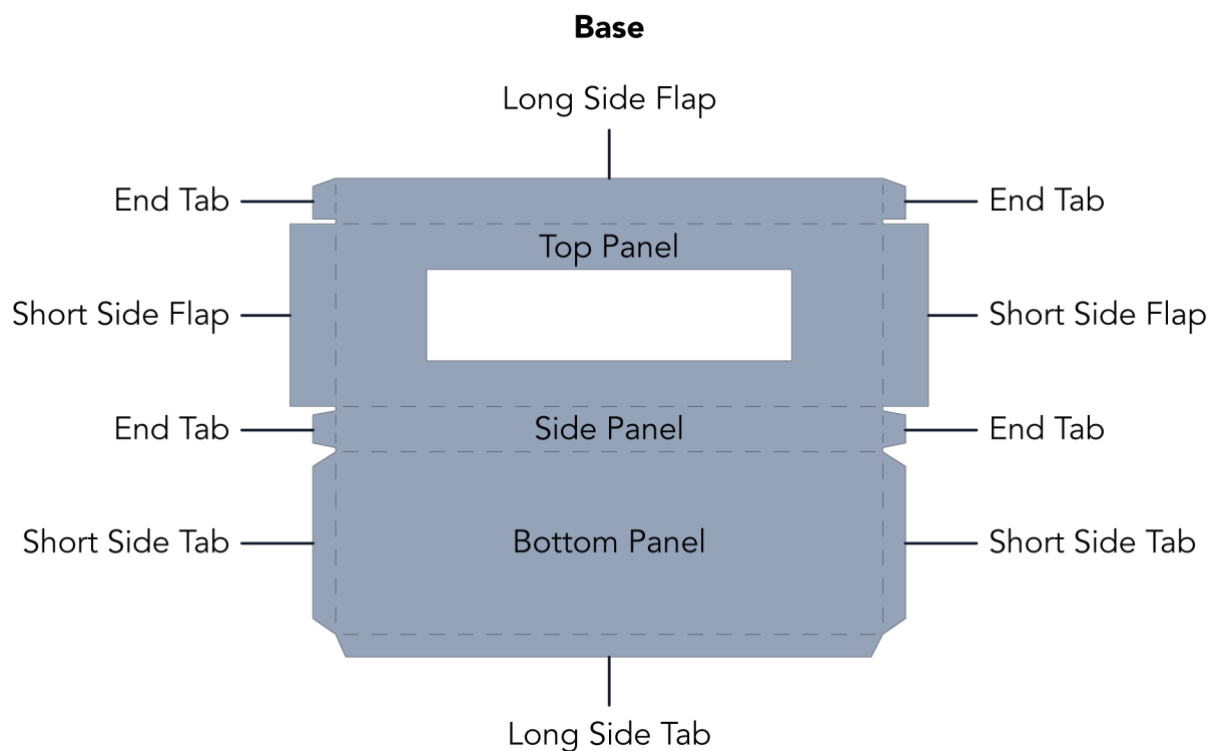
5. Put the glue on the back of the eye, wipe most of it off again, then place it on the ghost. Eyes are small, so they don't need much, and excess glue spreads out from under them. Even clear glue dries shiny where it spreads.

Glue the Upright Piece Together

6. Fold the Top Panel over and glue it to the Short Side Tabs, keeping the corners square as you go.
7. Fold the Back Panel over and glue it to the Long Side Tabs. You should now have the four Bottom Tabs left, standing out around the opening.

Keep glue out of the fold lines. Glue that seeps into a crease sets hard and the fold stops folding.

Attach the Upright Piece to the Base



8. Fold the Base along all its fold lines, then open it back out flat. Leave it open for this — gluing tabs to the inside of a Base you've already closed is a fight you'll lose.
9. Push the Bottom Tabs of the Upright Piece down through the slot in the Base Top Panel.

10. **Turn the Base over.** The four Bottom Tabs are now standing up through the slot, with the Upright Piece hanging below. Fold the tabs outward, away from the slot, and glue them down to the Base Top Panel. Keep the Upright Piece square while the glue grabs — if it sets crooked, you won't see it until it's too late.

Close the Base

11. Fold the Side Panel and the Long Side Flap down from the Base Top Panel.
12. Fold the Bottom Panel up and glue its Long Side Tab to the inside of the Long Side Flap. Put a finger inside the Base and press the joint from behind, so the Long Side Flap sits square against the Long Side Tab and lines up with the End Tabs at each end. The Base is now closed along both long sides.
13. At one end, fold the Short Side Tab and the two End Tabs in. Fold the Short Side Flap over them and glue it down. Repeat at the other end.

Mount the Ghosts

14. Glue the Large Ghost behind the Upright Piece so it looks like it's rising up out of the stone.
15. Glue the Medium and Small Ghosts to the front corners of the stone, one on each side.

Make It Yours

Lettering and detail

- Choose a different name. The pun is the point, so pick one that earns the ghosts.
- For a carved look, press the letters lightly into the cardstock with an embossing stylus before you apply them.

Aging and texture

- Sponge gray, black, or moss-green ink or chalk around the edges for weathering.
- Blend a darker shade into the cracks and folds for shadow.

Dimension

- Layer small bats, vines, or flowers along the base.
- Add faux moss, glitter, or microbeads for aged stone and cemetery growth.

Light and Display

- Set an LED tealight or a mini lantern behind the gravestone for a low glow from underneath.
- Stand a group of gravestones on black posterboard with cotton balls pulled apart into a thin drift around them. It reads as fog and it hides the edge of the board.
- Mix several gravestones with different names to build a Misfit Graveyard, or stand them alongside the Frankenstein Castle pieces.

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!