

Sporigami: Folding Tape-Free Spore Envelopes



New fronds in autumn: *Polystichum setiferum* 'Congestum Cristatum'
photos and article by Louise Parsons

Tape and spore do not mix! Ever! If you tape up spore it will be a very big headache for the recipient. By the time they have gotten any tape off, a sickening amount of precious spore will have stuck to it like fury. I am indebted to Judith Jones of [Fancy Fronds Nursery](#) and grower/gardener Nancy Swell for helping me to learn to easily fold tape-free storage envelopes for spore. Pour yourself a cuppa, put on your fave music, relax, unwind, and fold a batch of these to store and share your best spore. This method also comes in handy if you are collecting small seed and forget to bring bags or envelopes along.

Glassine is the ideal paper to use and is available in rolls or sheets from art supply houses. Glassine is sometimes called "interleaving" since it was traditionally used to protect fine art illustrations (such as etchings) in books. It is used as a separator between art prints stored in a flat file or drawer. In some areas, you can buy postage stamp sheets in large glassine envelopes. These can be cut into pieces and folded into small sporigamis, but resist the temptation to use tape or glue, please. If you can't find glassine, parchment-type baking paper works nicely. It is least expensive when purchased from a food service supply house. Butcher's paper or freezer paper will also work, but it is heavier and more difficult to fold. The best paper is very fine-textured and smooth --yet sturdy.

Here are the basic directions:



Fold the desired size paper in half. With the first fold at the bottom, hold the top leaves together and fold down twice on itself as though you were folding a double cuff. In the above picture three folds have been made. The double fold at the top assures no leakage and no need for tape!



Turn the paper over. With the double-fold at the top, fold down each side as shown above.



Tuck the ends (or sides if you prefer to think of them that way) in behind the double folds as shown above. You can open one end for putting spore in as shown below:



The white area is the inside. No tape is needed --ever! If you are offering spore to a large seed exchange such as that of the North American Rock Garden Society it is necessary to make up individual shares of your spore in small sporigamis to facilitate handling. In this case make sure that your individual sporigamis are small enough to fit into a standard seed exchange envelope that will be used to enclose each one offered and numbered by the exchange. Be sure to LABEL spore immediately as you clean and package it! The phone will ring, the dog will bark, the baby will cry --and you will forget what you were packaging! Specialty spore exchanges most often prefer to bank and portion out the spore as needed. Follow their instructions as to packaging.

Suggestions and comments are always welcome!
Happy spore-collecting and sharing! --Louise