

# Making

# BRICOLAGE



## What is Bricolage?

In sociology, bricolage refers to the creative use of everyday items to construct new meanings. Youth subcultures often repurpose ordinary objects to express rebellion, identity, or membership in a group. For example, punk subcultures use safety pins as fashion statements, and mods repurposed scooters to showcase their style.

## Step 1: Research Subcultural Styles

Choose a youth subculture that interests you (e.g., punks, mods, goths, emos, or ravers). Research the key elements of their style, music, values, and symbols.

What do they wear?

What do they stand for?

What items do they repurpose or use in unexpected ways?

Take notes on the meanings behind their fashion and accessories.

## Step 2: Brainstorm Your Own Subcultural Bricolage

Think about how you can creatively reuse or repurpose ordinary items to express:

A sense of rebellion.

A message about your identity or values.

Connections to your chosen subculture.

Consider items you have at home or can find easily, such as:

Safety pins, old clothes, badges, belts, or scarves.

Objects like tape, string, chains, or stickers.

## Step 3: Design Your Bricolage

Sketch or write down your ideas.

Think about how your creation reflects:

The style of the chosen subculture.

Your personal twist or interpretation.

Keep it simple! Bricolage is about making meaning, not perfection.

## Step 4: Create Your Piece

Gather the materials you've decided to use.

Assemble your bricolage, paying attention to how each item contributes to its overall meaning.

## Step 5: Reflect and Present

Write a short explanation (150–200 words) about your bricolage. Include:

Why you chose your subculture.

What your bricolage represents and how it connects to the subculture.

Any challenges you faced during the process.

Be prepared to present your bricolage to the class, explaining your inspiration and choices.





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## Cheat Sheet:

Youth subcultures have creatively used bricolage to repurpose everyday objects and give them new, symbolic meanings. Here are some real-life examples:

Subculture	Items	Meaning
Punk	Safety pins, torn clothing, leather jackets	Punks used safety pins as jewelry, deliberately ripped and distressed their clothing, reworking old or cheap garments into provocative statements against mainstream fashion
Mods	Scooters	Extra mirrors, lights and paintwork were a symbol of status
Skinheads	Work boots (DMs), braces, shaved heads	Skinheads took practical items like steel-toed boots (Dr. Martens) and suspenders, typically associated with the working class, and incorporated them into their subcultural uniform.
Ravers	Glow Sticks and Neon Accessories	Ravers used glow sticks, bracelets, and neon clothing to create a vibrant, surreal aesthetic
Hip-Hop	Graffiti Art, Sneakers and Tracksuits	Spray paint, intended for industrial use, was repurposed to create street art and express cultural identity and territorial pride.
Goth	Victorian and Gothic Fashion, religious symbols	Goths repurposed elements of Victorian mourning attire, such as corsets, lace, and dark velvet
Emo	DIY Accessories	Items like bracelets, chokers, and badges were handmade or reworked from existing jewelry to reflect individuality and a personal connection to the subculture

