

How to...

FREE
information

Paint on fabric

Introduction

Fabric painting is a very popular art form and can be used to create projects such as greetings cards, pictures, clothing and soft furnishing. This leaflet will help you get started.

Equipment needed

Fabric paints - Can be used directly from the bottle. Opaque colours are suitable for painting on dark or light fabrics, transparent colours should only be used on light fabrics. Colours are intermixable within ranges. Try the shimmer colours for particularly spectacular effects or volume which expands with heat.

Fabric marker pens - can be applied directly on to fabric, giving an effect quite different to paint, which is thicker and more intense.

Brush - fabric paint can be applied using brushes, rollers or rubber stamps.

Fabric or fabric item

Iron

Palette

Method

There are several techniques for painting on fabric. Here are a few of the more popular ones:

3D painting on fabric

Select your paint colour, lay a sheet of card between the fabric layers to prevent seeping through and apply paint directly from the tube using it like a pen. Allow to dry for twelve hours then iron on the reverse of the fabric for five minutes on a cotton setting. The fabric will be washable to 40°C after fixing and the paint is acid free.



Printing on fabric with light

Soleil kits give you the opportunity to print on fabric using light, they are simple to use with spectacular results. Apply the colours to damp fabric using the foam brushes in the kit. Lay shapes on top of the fabric such as leaves, acetate shapes, peel offs, coins, netting etc. Expose the painted fabric to light and the shapes will be permanently printed onto the fabric. Iron fix before washing. The stronger the light source and the warmer the environment, the more intense the image.



Additional techniques

- Lightener can be mixed with the paint colour to obtain lighter shades without weakening the colour.
- Adding Thickener will make the colour easier to use for stencilling or screen printing.
- Colourless Masking can be applied to the fabric to cover an area that you wish to retain its natural colour, the Masking comes out on the first wash.
- Fabric Glue can be used to apply your painted fabrics to other surfaces such as card (for découpage).
- Expandable paint is used to create patterns in relief, apply to the fabric and then paint over the top when dry, or mix with the colours for pastel shades. When dry, iron on the reverse or use a hairdryer and see it expand.
- Gold and Silver Glitter Finishes act like a glitter varnish on fabric, apply with a broad brush using smooth, broad strokes.

Fixing and washing

When dry (after about one hour), iron on the reverse using a hot iron on a cotton setting for five minutes or place in a pre heated oven (150°C) for five minutes. Once fixed, the fabrics can be dry cleaned, hand or machine washed (up to 40°C).

Silk Painting

Equipment needed

Plain or pre outlined silk item

Frame

Pins

Palette

Brush

Silk paints and pens

Silk paints can be used directly from the bottle, you will be surprised how little you need. Dispense a little paint onto a palette using the dropper in the cap. You can lighten the colours using Diluent. If using silk pens, place the tip onto the silk and see it spread into the fabric.

Gutta outliner

If you are drawing your own design you will need Gutta outliner. This is available in tubes with nozzles and is used like a pen. Outliners come in various colours and all will leave a raised pattern on the silk except the colourless Gutta which will wash out and leave a white line. Gutta creates a barrier, preventing the silk paint from spreading. Each part of the Gutta'd pattern must form a complete shape to stop the silk paint from leaking out. Allow Gutta to dry for about thirty minutes before painting.

Method

Preparing silk

1. Select a piece of silk or ready made item, either plain or pre outlined.
2. Raise the silk above the work surface, stretching it taut on a frame and securing with silk assa pins or drawing pins. If you are just starting out then an embroidery hoop will suffice.
3. Lay your pattern or design underneath the silk. Silk is quite translucent so you will be able to see the design through the silk.

Getting started

When paint comes into contact with silk it races away, flowing through the fabric until it comes up against the outliner. Start with a small amount of colour as very little is needed. Try applying two colours in the same area and watch them merge into each other.



Salt technique

Whilst the paint is wet you can add sea salt, this will give starburst effects as the colours dry. Brush the salt off when dry and use again if you wish. It can be effective to add salt to some sections of the design and not others.

Fixing and washing

When dry, iron on the reverse using a hot iron (cotton setting) for 3 - 4 minutes to make the silk resistant to washing and dry cleaning.



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Hints & tips

- Iron out any creases in the silk before starting to paint or the paint will pool in the grooves.
- When blending colours, keep two pots of water handy, one to clean the brushes and the other to use for blending the colours together.
- A thick brush will give more even results when blending colours.
- If painting a large area always mix too much colour as it is very difficult to repeat exactly the same tone at a later stage.
- Always leave brushes in a glass to dry with the bristles facing upwards and dry them to a point.

Project ideas

Greetings cards

Pictures

Wall hangings

Lampshades

Cushions

Sarongs

Scarves

Brooches

Jewellery and belts

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