

# How to...

FREE  
information

## Stencil

### Introduction

Stencilling is a painting technique in which cut out shapes are used to create images which are often repeated. The word stencil means the outline of an image. Using a stencil it is easy to produce a range of creative projects from hand crafted cards and gift wrap to cushion covers and items for the home.

### Equipment needed

#### Stencil

There are various stencils available to suit all sizes of projects. Acetate stencils are flexible and can be bent around objects. They are clear so you can see easily for positioning and they are tough wearing. Small brass stencils can be used for card making and papercraft projects, embossing and cake icing.

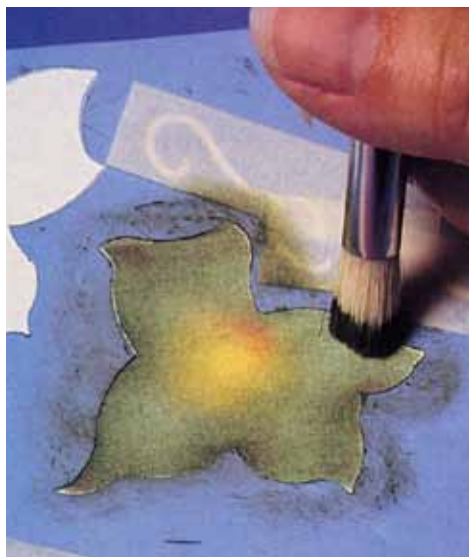
Stencils cut from card are great for children to use and for simple designs which do not require a lot of repeats. Triple layer stencils are for the more advanced and enable intricate patterns to be produced.

#### Paints

Acrylic paints are most commonly used as they are quick drying and available in many colours. The type and size of the project you are doing will determine your choice.

#### Brushes

A stencil brush is generally used but a stencil sponge gives a mottled effect, which works well with a liquid paint. If using a sponge, blot off any excess paint first with a paper towel.



#### Adhesive

HobbyCraft repositionable adhesive spray, stencil tape or stencil adhesive is used to secure your stencil in position while working.

#### Additional supplies

Palette – for mixing colours.

Brush cleaner (oil based paints only)

Acrylic sealer (water based paint only)

Oil based sealer (oil based paints only)

Clear acetate – if cutting your own stencil

Cutting Knife

Spare blades

## Method

Ensure that the surface to be stencilled is clean, dry and painted with a non-glossy paint. It is always a good idea to practice first on paper for colour guidelines and design placement. Position the stencil on the surface either by a light spraying of adhesive spray on the back, masking tape or a stencil adhesive and press all the sections down. Using a circular motion, pick up the paint on the brush. Holding the brush upright and using the same circular motion, lightly paint over the cutouts. Start with a light touch and build up the colour gradually by repeating over the area and pressing harder. To overlay another colour on top repeat the process using a new brush, blending the edges where the colours meet.

If using solid paint in pots blot off the excess paint onto a paper towel until the brush is 'dry' and seems out of paint. Continue painting using the same method as above.

Liquid paint can also be used but care must be taken so the paint does not seep under the stencil. Again blot off excess paint before continuing.

## Stencilling on material

Stencilling on material is great fun and there are a variety of paints available for use. First wash and dry material to remove sizing but do not use a fabric softener. The procedure is exactly the same as painting on other surfaces but only use a light adhesive so as not to leave sticky marks on the fabric. Once dry, usually 48 hours, the paint can be covered with spare cloth and heat set with a hot iron or according to the manufacturers instructions.

Fabric absorbs paint differently to paper and walls or furniture. It is advisable to test on a small piece of fabric first to see how the colours will appear.



## Stencil blanks

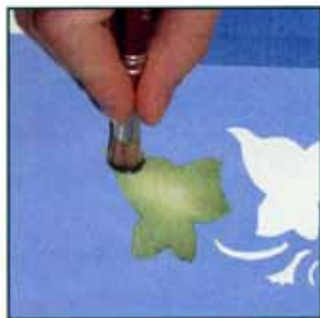
In order to have a unique design it is possible to cut your own stencils. Clear acetate or stencil card is available for this. Either draw your design on a sheet of paper or get a copy of the design you want to use. Lay the acetate over the design and using a water soluble pen, trace the pattern. Using a craft knife, carefully cut out the design, turning the acetate slowly to give a smooth line. When the design is cut, make sure there are connecting borders between each area then 'push out' the image to reveal your finished stencil. It is a good idea to cut on a piece of mountboard, a cutting mat or a piece of wood to prevent marking. Any pen marks on the acetate can be washed off later. If using card, the design must be drawn onto the card with pencil which can then be rubbed off.

## Cleaning up

If using oil based paints, use white spirit to clean brushes and stencil. For water based paints, use warm soapy water. Do not leave brushes soaking past the bristle. Dust the back of the stencil with talcum powder to reduce stickiness and store flat.

## Project ideas

- Gift cards
- Gift wrapping paper
- Notebook cover
- Cushion covers
- Wall decoration
- Shoulder bags
- Decorating a frame
- Decorating a mirror
- Scrapbook cover
- Tablecloth
- Napkins



## Hints & Tips

- Start on the edges of the stencil and work into the centre rather than from the centre outwards. This helps prevent paint getting under the edges of the stencil.
- Don't overload your brush with paint.
- To use more than one colour in a stencil, use tape to mask off areas of the stencil you don't want in a particular colour.
- Always use a clean dry brush for each new colour.
- Always practice first on a piece of scrap paper or card.
- If doing a repeat design wash the stencil regularly in warm water to keep the edges free of paint.
- Always store your stencil flat, placed between two pieces of card for protection.
- When stencilling clothing or furnishings, protect the fabric underneath the area you are working on to guard against bleeding.

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