

POLY TILE PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS :

Although this kit is suitable for young children adult supervision is advised particularly when using the mark making tools and inks. It is advisable to protect your working area and clothing when printing.



Step 1 - MAKE MARKS & EXPERIMENT

The polystyrene blocks can be drawn into with a wide variety of everyday tools including: Mark making tool with three cutting heads (provided), pen, pencil, keys, bottle lids, beading boards, stencils, plastic knives & forks, pastry cutters etc. See what you can find around your home.

Anything which will push down the polystyrene surface will make a mark. Areas of polystyrene left untouched will print in your chosen ink colour. Any areas which are pushed down will not print when the block is inked up and will show up as the paper colour below.

You can plan a specific design for the polystyrene tile or just have a play. It is a good idea to make a practice block trying out lots of different materials. Simple shapes, drawings & patterns work best as they are not designed to hold fine detail.



Step 2 - DESIGN YOUR BLOCK

Draw your design onto the block. Remember your designs will print as a mirror image of what you draw.

Push down gently so it makes an indentation into the surface, you will hear a crunching sound. Don't push too hard or go over a single area too many times particularly with the wheel cutter tool as this can break them.

For shallow shapes and marks you can go over them again in pencil or biro to make sure they're indented below the surface.

Tiles filled with different types of marks and interest all over can make more interesting prints than small line drawings.

NB: You can also easily cut the blocks into different shapes using a craft knife or sharp scissors.



Step 3 - ROLL OUT INK

When you have finished your design clear away any loose bits of polystyrene.

NB: Protect your clothes and working area before using ink as it may stain fabrics.

Roll out a small amount of ink (around 3-4 cm to begin with - you can add more as needed) onto a non porous clean, hard surface e.g. plastic board, toughened glass etc. Because it's water based it can dry out quite quickly so it's best to add a bit at a time to avoid wastage.

Use the roller to spread it into a small square shape a little bigger than the width of the roller. Roll back and forth spreading it evenly so it covers the whole roller.

NB: If the ink is very sticky use the inked roller to roll out a second square next to it to get a smooth even layer of ink. If the ink is too gloopy you'll get a blotchy print.



Step 4 - INK UP BLOCK

Ensuring your roller is well covered in ink transfer it to the polytile. Roll in both directions until you have a generous layer or ink (not too much!) covering the whole surface. If the block has too much ink on it can fill in the lines you have made.

When finished place your roller upside down on its stand to keep the roller from touching your working surface.

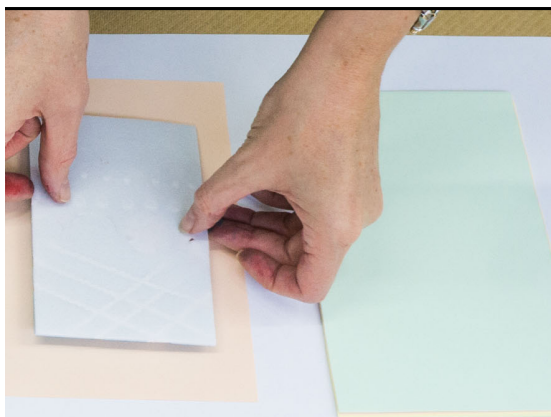
The ink in the kit is water based which dries out quite quickly. Therefore you may need to use more ink during your printing session. Don't leave the roller for long periods with dried ink on as this can damage the surface and make it more difficult to clean.

Make sure your hands are clean before moving onto the next stage and picking up your printing paper.

DID YOU KNOW:

Polystyrene tile printing is a quick and versatile printing medium which is great for teaching the basics of relief printmaking and colour mixing and can be combined with many other printmaking techniques.

The roller, inks, paper & marking tool can also be used for many other types of craft projects as well as to create monoprints and block prints from different materials. Ideas, inspiration and tutorials coming soon to the love to print website.

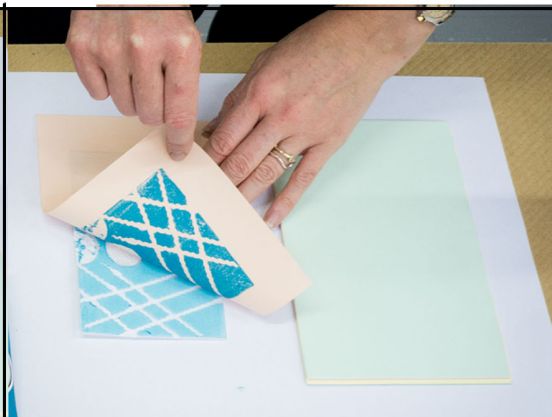


Step 5 - PRINT

Move your block to a clean part of your working area ready for printing.

You can print onto lots of different surfaces but in general thin papers work best for printing by hand e.g. sugar paper, cartridge paper, printer paper etc.

Place your polystyrene block face down in the middle of your paper. Making sure it's stuck to the paper you can gently flip it over so that the paper side is facing upwards. Using the heel of your hand, back of a spoon or a clean roller now burnish (rub) the back of the paper in circular movements until you have rubbed the whole of the block several times.



Step 6 - REVEAL

To check progress you can keep a finger on one corner of the paper and gently lift the opposite corner to see how the print is transferring. If it looks patchy, re-place paper and continue to burnish. If it is still not printing it may have dried out and need re-inking.

Check the print. Some areas may need to be pushed down of extra details added to the block.

Re-ink and print several copies so you can experiment with overprinting in a second colour later. You can also try printing several times onto larger sheets of paper to produce a repeat pattern, turning the block with each print to get different combinations. You can also print onto rolls of paper to make wrapping paper.

NB: Because the process is quick you can easily produce a two colour print without waiting for the ink to dry. As long as it's not too wet you can overprint on top after just a few minutes.



Step 7 - INK & RE-PRINT

If using the same block again, wipe with a damp cloth or wetwipe so you can print from it again. You can rinse in water but will need to blot it dry before re-inking.

Wash & dry your roller in clean water if changing ink colours. Remember to roll out your second colour onto a clean area of your inking plate if you don't want the colours to blend.

NB: You can make a second block with a new design or add new marks to your first block. Now when you print a second colour these new marks will show up as your first colour.

Follow steps 2-5 again to make a new block or add more detail to your first block.

To overprint simply place your inked blocked face down on top of your first print, again, flip the paper if you can and rub the back to create a two layer print. You can transfer the ink by rubbing the back of the block but it often won't transfer quite as well.



Step 8 - DRY

You can print onto the cards provided in the same way or wait until your prints dry on paper then cut out and stick onto the cards.

Hang up or lay prints out of the way to dry. Water based ink dries quite quickly - it should be touch dry within around 30 minutes but will take longer to fully dry out depending on how thickly the ink is applied. If the paper wrinkles from too much ink it can be flattened by placing between heavy books overnight. (remember to use scrap paper to protect the books).

Step 9: CLEAN UP

The rollers and tiles should be washed with water and a small amount of washing up liquid if necessary. Tiles can be disposed of after printing or kept to print from again.

HAPPY PRINTING!