
Stamped Leather Bracelet with Alix Bluh

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(upbeat music) - I've always really loved personalized jewelry, and I'm gonna show you how to take a simple piece of leather, stamp in an inspirational quote, or a loved one's name, and anything really meaningful to you. And I'm also gonna show you how to use a stud closure. I'm gonna show you how to use different paints to give it a patina, so that you're gonna have your own beautiful inspirational quote to wear every day.

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- First I'm going to talk about the leather. This is going to be your primary foundation of this piece. I want to make sure that you're picking out a piece of leather that has enough thickness, usually at least a millimeter to two millimeters. And then the width that you want, and that can range. You can start with just wide enough to fit your letter stamp, or really, you can go wider. You can go as wide as you want. These leather strips you can get at fabric stores that have leather remnants, but you can also get them online, there's a lot of leather retailers. Like Tandy is a really well-known one. You can get strips, or you can actually get a scrap piece of leather, and I'm going to show you how to cut that down to size. You're also going to need the steel block for stamping. You're going to need a leather punch, this is really important, and you're going to need a screwdriver and a plier, and that's just to attach the button stud. The button studs that I got were from Tandy Leather that's online, they come in different finishes. This is a size small. I would get the size small instead of the large. To stamp your quote, you're going to need steel block letters, and these come in different sizes. I actually bought these on eBay. As you can tell, this is a non-complete set, but most of them are vintage, or you can also get new ones from leather goods stores, or from jewelry suppliers. I'm going to use a jewelry hammer, but any kind of hammer will work. You're going to make sure that you have a really very sharp, brand new Exacto knife for cutting your leather. And a straight edge with a metal edge. And this is just for if you have a scrap that you want to cut down. Another handy thing is for inspiration is any kind of book of quotes. If you're lacking ideas, you can go rummaging through your own library. And then, for the patina, we're going to go with a craft paint, and you just need some water, a paper towel, and a paint brush, and we're ready to go.

Chapter 3 - Make Bracelet

Make leather band

- I'm gonna show you how to take your pre-cut strip here and get it exactly to the size that you want for your wrist. What I do is I wrap it around my wrist, and I figure out exactly how I want it to fit, and I give myself about half an inch on either side, and I hold it with my finger, and I literally just keep my nail on the place where I'm gonna cut it, and then I simply cut it with my very sharp X-acto knife. At this point, it's better to be a little bit longer than too short. The next thing I'm gonna do is show you how to cut a piece of scrap that you have gotten from your fabric store. I'm gonna score a couple times to make sure it gets through. And yes, that's the advantage of a very sharp X-acto knife, and then decide on a width. And don't worry about it being really perfect. There we go. And just to make sure I'm gonna take that piece of leather and I'm gonna wrap it around, and there's

more than enough room to add our button stud and our hole. So if you don't want to actually cut your own leather, the best thing to do is to go to a leather store or a fabric store or go online and get a piece of already cut leather, and then the next thing we're gonna do before you actually punch the quote onto your leather is put the hole for the button stud. This is called a leather punch or a fabric punch and you can get these at fabric stores, or at leather good stores too. I'm gonna pick the second to the smallest punch hole, the first thing is to just go in, I would say about a quarter of an inch into the leather cuff and just make a hole, and here this is where we feed in the screw back, the button stud in, and then we're gonna screw it on. Once you've started it you might want to get your pliers, and I'm using pliers that have a grippy tooth, and I'm gonna hold the button part while I screw in the back. Otherwise these things can be pretty hard to do just with your bare fingers, I've actually realized that I can't do it that way, so I've learned to employ these two tools. And there you have it. And once you've actually finished the button end, I like to trim the corners, give it a really nice finish. The nice thing about leather is that with this tool we can just almost sculpt it and soften the edge, it is really easy, just make sure your X-acto knife is really super sharp. Now we're ready to add the hole at the end for the button closure. And what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna go right to my largest hole on the punch. I'm gonna make sure that I have enough space on the end of the leather so that I'm not gonna be too far over with my hole. And sometimes I like to go back in, and re-punch it, and make sure that there's really enough room for that button head. What I like to do is create a keyhole shape using my X-acto knife, I put a little incision straight down, this allows the head of the button stud to come up through the hole with an opening that comes through a little bit easier but then it closes back up. Okay, and now we're ready to punch our inspirational quote.

Stamp message

- At this point we're gonna get ready to start punching in our quote so it's really important to first of all write out what you want to say on a piece of paper maybe first, and make sure it lines up, that you're not gonna have too many words for the piece of leather that you've picked out. Another thing I suggest is taking a piece of your scrap and just having a sample of what the stamp will look like and get an idea of the spacing of each letter. It's actually better to hit it twice than it is to take it off and then try to reposition it. So that is a great way to get it the depth that you're gonna want, and it's really a good idea to try to play around and get a feel for it on a piece of scrap before you start your project. My inspiration quote today is gonna be "Be in the moment." And I'm gonna start my quote using one size font stamp and then I'm gonna end it with the word "moment" in a larger size font, and that's one really fun creative way to get a different look and different texture. So I'm gonna start by lining up, and I'm gonna just eyeball it, make sure it's sort of centered. And I'm gonna hit it once, and then twice just to make sure I've gotten the right thickness. Looks great. Now I'm gonna get the "E" and I'm gonna line it up just visually, I'm gonna make sure I don't go too far away from the "B" but I'm also making sure that I see a little bit of a space on the side so that I'm not gonna be on top of it either. There's the "Be in the" and that's the first set of stamps in the smaller font. Now I'm ready to go to my larger font. "in the moment"... Gonna wanna make sure you line up your stamp because this one's a little larger, making sure it's still on the leather, and you wanna hit it twice, just like the other ones. The great thing about the larger font steel stamps is that they really go deep. You might wanna make sure that you line up your steel stamps. I like putting mine back in the box but some people like to keep them in a row on the table while they're working and have them so they have the word kinda already spelt out. The more you do this, the easier and the more intuitive it gets. There you have it: "Be in the moment."

Add patina

- By using a craft paint, you can achieve a really great patina. Here's a few different samples of ones that I've done in the past, and also you can keep it natural and just over time it starts to have a really great finish on its own. So I'm gonna show you how to do this using a paintbrush, the paint, and blotting them out. So I'm gonna put these on the side, and we're gonna focus on getting the tip of our paintbrush a little bit wet. I'm just gonna pick up a little bit of paint, and I'm gonna go into the letter, and I'm just gonna fill in, almost like blot it in to where the groove of the stamping is. Just do a really light tapping, and now what I do is I go back in and I wipe away the excess paint and you're left with seeing just the leather. You can even go back in with a little bit of water if you feel like you have too much paint. Really simple. I'm sure over time also, some of this paint will come off and your body's natural oils will soften the leather and give the leather a beautiful patina. You kinda wanna move fast, because the paint does start to dry up. There, it came out beautiful, and now it's ready to wear. You can start making multiples, put different quotes, your favorite quotes and use different patinas. You can stack them, give them to your friends. They make the best presents. They're so fun. I love them.