
Multicolor Printing with Christine Schmidt

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(light music) - I'm gonna show you how to carve your own jumbo custom rubber stamps and print multiple stamps at once with multiple colors all at the same time. We're gonna use this nifty little trick to print on paper and fabric. We're gonna make a bunch of t-shirts today. Stay tuned, cause this is a real game-changer. (light music)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- You want to gather up some stuff to print on. Here I have some onesies and some cotton t-shirts. We have some cardstock, this is a wooden block, I just got it from the lumber yard, just 25 cents, not breaking the bank, we've got Velcro. These are the templates I'm providing for this project, but you could also use your own designs and then I also have an alphabet template. This is carvable rubber, you could use Speedy Carve brand from Speedball or this gray carvable rubber from my website yellowowlworkshop.com. This is just tracing paper, a cutting mat, X-Acto knife with fresh blade, pencil, linoleum carving tool, stamp carving tool, some scissors, and some stamp ink. Now you want to get hybrid ink, this is the kind that I sell. It's pigmented so you can see it's really richly colored. These are brighter than dye-based inks, which will only work on paper and these are great because the drying time is longer so your working time is longer and you can heat set them to be permanent on fabric.

Chapter 3 - Making the Stamp

Trace design

- Print out the provided template. I'm gonna select the rocket today. It's just a rocket kind of day and I'm gonna start by placing the tracing paper over the template, and using my pencil, I'm just gonna trace the outline. You can also use your own designs. Big chunky shapes really work well for this. It's always really important to draw out your design first because you carve the stamp in reverse. Tracing paper is really working great cause I can see through it here, but if you're carving your own design you could just draw directly on a sheet of paper, and skip the tracing paper entirely. I guess rockets have windows. They do, right? Alright, that looks pretty good. I'm gonna turn it over so the graphite is face down onto my rubber block and we're gonna transfer this. I'm just gonna use the side of my thumbnail to burnish the back of the paper cause rubbing is gonna transfer the graphite from the tracing paper to the rubber block. Kind of peek and make sure it's transferring, looks good. Remember if you were using your own design this would just be a sheet of paper and not a piece of tracing paper. So you'll see I'm also keeping the paper in place with my other hand. So, if you've never carved a stamp before, here are a few tips. You always want to hold your knife at an angle and carve away from your body, don't get stabbed. Inside this little handle here there are several blades and each of the blades has a gauge that will make a different line quality. Now I've selected my smallest V gauge, it's really good for detail.

Carve stamp

- So I'm just going to push away. We carve the stamp out first and then we cut out the shapes later

with an X-ACTO knife. But carving them out, carving the outlines first kind of gives a little pathway for the X-ACTO to follow. Sometimes with rounded shapes it's easier to move the rubber itself and keep your hand stationary. If you're really new to this you can just practice on one side of the rubber and turn it over. They're about 3/8ths of an inch thick so carving on one side will not effect the other side. Never carve towards your body, I do it all the time. (laughing) Carving this is like carving butter, it's so soft and perhaps you've done woodblock printing or linoleum printing, you really have to try this rubber. It's really similar to an eraser, actually they work as erasers and as you can see they take the graphite really well but it is just so soft and such a pleasure, I don't know, it's kind of addictive. So I'm just rotating the block to make my spaceship windows. I always really wanted to go to space camp but my mom never sent me so. I'll show you Mom. So you'll see I'm just really going across the top of the surface, I'm not stabbing into it. This gives a nice clean line. Other gouges have different shapes like U's or larger of these and those give you a different type of line. The larger the gouge the more area it will clear out so if you had a large area you would want to use a dig blade. And I think I'm just gonna take out the windows here. You don't have to. Because I'm carving these away they will appear white, they won't receive any of the ink. Stamp carving is really a deductive process rather than say a drawing which is an additive process. When you add lines for a drawing you carve the lines away to make a stamp. Okay. Now that we've finished carving those windows we're ready to cut out the stamp. I'm gonna use my X-ACTO knife, the super sharp blade. And I'm just, I've laid the rubber on this cutting mat. If you don't have a cutting mat you could also just use chipboard from say the back of a sketch pad. So you want to hold your knife at a 90 degree angle. Coming from the side here. And first I'm gonna cut out the entire shape. You'll see where I carved, it's kind of created a little gutter for the knife to go through. Do this slowly 'cause you don't want to cut off a chunk of your stamp. You know what I'm actually gonna cut this off because these two little guys are separate anyway. Make sure your other hand is nowhere near this X-ACTO blade because I've done that before and the results were not pretty. If you don't have an X-ACTO blade you could also use a box cutter with a really clean blade. Okay now we're ready. These little guys. I'm cutting off the wings and the little feet here because we're actually gonna print them in different colors. Right now we're ready to assemble the stamp.

Add velcro

- So this is where the magic begins. Basically, we are going to attach Velcro to this wood block, and to the back of the rubber, so we can print multiple colors, in multiple stamps at once. You can reuse this block a bunch of times. I've peeled off the fluffy part from the Velcro, and it's got self-adhesive glue on the back, and just line it up, press it down, and now this block is complete. I need to attach Velcro to the back here. So turn all your little pieces over, it's like a little puzzle, if you get lost, just refer back to your template, will show you how it aligns. Let's see here, I'm gonna do, I'm gonna do two strips. So I've just lined it up, trim it off, peel, stick. The sticky adhesive on the back of the Velcro really only holds for a day to the rubber, so if you wanna make it more permanent, just use superglue, in addition to the sticky back. As you can see, I'm just eyeing it. Doesn't have to be perfect. (Velcro ripping) But you don't want big gaps in between where your Velcro is, because it won't ink or print evenly, and that is just a giant bummer. So I trim that off here, but you know what? Hmmm, I've gone over the edge, here. So I'm just gonna give it a little trim. Doesn't have to be pretty. No-one's gonna see it. The turbo boosters get tiny bits. Beep. Those are space noises. Okay. Now, the big reveal. Nail the pieces back. Again, if you get confused, you can just refer to the template you traced. Rocket feet. This block is essentially, now, a printing plate. It's a reusable

mount, so you can cut out a whole bunch of different stamps, and print them with the same mount.

Chapter 4 - Printing

Lettering

- Included with the template download is this alphabet you can use to make text stamps. You can make these any size you want just by changing your printer settings. You can make 'em really big or you can make 'em pretty small. I wouldn't do anything less than about 3/4 inch. That takes a little more practice, so I would work up to that small scale. Using the same thing we did earlier, I've traced my daughter's name and a number. I transferred it to the rubber block and I carved the block. Now I'm going to print that. Before I print on my final surface, I wanna proof the stamp. You can see these little red bits are printing. And a lot of times they don't bug me. I like the kind of hand-carved look those lines provide, but I'm just gonna clean this up a touch. Just carve this back. Proof it again. Hmm. Didn't really print that evenly. So what I'm going to do is not attach this to the block, but I'm gonna turn the block over to the flat side and use it to apply even pressure. Ugh, I told you this technique was versatile. I wanted to create some cool birthday decorations, so I cut out these little paper clothes and I have stamped on them. And I'd like to apply my daughter's name and her soon-to-be age. I'm gonna use the same technique I just showed you for proofing. Ink, ink, ink. I'm gonna lay that down gingerly. Turn the block over. Okay. I think I'm gonna make the two's yellow. This is a smaller stamp, so I'm just gonna turn it over onto the ink pad. I'm gonna rotate it to make sure that's evenly inked. This stamp is really small, so I'm actually gonna use the back, or the top of the inkp pad to apply pressure. I'm scrappy, folks. All right. On to the onesie. I think I'm just gonna do a number here. Again, if I wanted to change the colors, I would just use a baby wipe to wipe off all the excess ink. It's also a good idea to clean your stamps after you finish stamping. And you wanna store your stamps away from sunlight and you also wanna keep them flat. Okay, there we go. I've got a little clothesline here. Now I have my party decorations all set half a year in advance. I'm on it. You could also carve individual letters and place them on the board, maybe you want to make team t-shirts and the team name stays the same, and you just change the number out. This technique is so versatile I think people who are new to custom carving stamps are gonna love it, as well as seasoned print makers. So you gotta try it.

Stamping

- The way you ink your stamp will really depend on your design. I'm gonna show you how to ink this one. So, I've got five parts here. We'll take out the middle part. So, these four little guys can stay put. Now, onto the ink. You wanna take the lid off. Make sure your stamp is on a flat surface, and press. You wanna hold firmly, and press firmly, and you wanna work pretty quickly, because this ink will dry. I'm gonna do, let's see, blue wings, how's that? You'll see how bright that pigmented color is. Red feet. Then, I'm just gonna slide this guy back in. Making sure my hands are not touching, squeeze. Get in there, okay, there we go. So, you don't really have to press it down. I can tell that it's stuck to the block. We are now ready to print. Lay your t-shirt down, flush. If it's really wrinkly, you wanna iron it. Turn the block over. You want to press really firmly, and evenly. I'm actually rocking it back-and-forth, just a touch, making sure you're not moving the block, and look at that! This ink dries pretty quickly, but you do wanna heat-set it if you're gonna wash this item. So, with that, you would either use, for one, I would do an iron, an iron on the high-cotton setting. We've used cotton, because you can really only heat-set natural fibers, like cotton or linen. Anything that's synthetic, won't stand the heat, and it won't really hold the ink. So, if I'm doing a bunch of t-shirts, I would

actually throw them in the dryer, on high-heat, for about an hour, just to be safe. We've got these other motifs for you to download, and I'm gonna show you how to ink those now. Take the rocket off, my reusable mount. I told you, it was game-changing (laughs). I'm very excited about this, happy to share. Let's see, I'm gonna do a red kitty cat. This little kitty cat has a crown, but it's really small. So, it's easier to put something small back on the mount, than something large, because I can just turn it over, like so. Coronation. This is a onsie. I just buy them in 5-packs, they're not expensive. Rocking back-and-forth, and there she is. Now let's do the rainbow. The rainbow here has three pieces. You're out kitty. We're actually gonna print it this way. So, I want to line it up, and I know that the yellow goes in the center. So, I'm gonna ink that one first. Again, working quickly, so your ink doesn't dry. You can see I'm kind of rotating my pad. So, it's evenly inked. Slide it over, boom. I'm a purist with my rainbows, but you don't have to be. You can use any colors that you want. These colors are bright. What baby doesn't need a rainbow onesie? Rocking it back-and-forth here. You can stamp your own colorful wardrobe in just an afternoon. If you want to change ink colors, you do want to clean the stamps. I use baby wipes, but I have a kid so those are pretty handy. If you don't, you can just use a moist paper towel maybe with some dish water. That'll do the trick. I'm gonna move these out of the way, and we're gonna show you how to do it on paper. It's basically the same technique. Let's see, we're gonna do a little ship. I'm gonna take my rainbow off. So, this pigment ink will work on paper and fabric. You could also use dye-based inks. If I'm working with really little kids, I like to use dye-based inks because these inks are permanent on clothes. Little ones are gonna ruin the wardrobes in an afternoon. And they're just a little bit safer. But both are water-based. Like I said, the pigment has a brighter color. So, I prefer it, and the working time is longer, but for paper, any ink is game. So, this stamp has four pieces. I'm gonna take out the two sails, so I can print the flag, and the base. Let's do blue. I'm going to ink the sails separately 'cause I want them to each be a different color, and then I'm gonna quickly throw them back on the mount for printing. Careful, careful. Gingerly, so you're not getting your finger in the ink. This print looks really crisp and clean, but what happens if your stamp doesn't print crisp and cleanly? I'll show you what to do. This technique is so versatile, because you can easily troubleshoot. Because the stamps come apart, I've just taken the one portion that I want to re-print. This has a nice water-colory kind of feel, but I think I really want it to be bolder. So, I'm gonna re-ink the red, and ever-so-carefully, align it with the previous stamp, and press. I'm gonna kinda peel it back a little bit to make sure I'm getting the areas that were not as well-inked. There we go. So, I could do this for the others, but I think I actually like the way this looks. Know when to hold 'em.