
DIY Stamp Pad with Christine Schmidt

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

- Making your own stamp pad is actually really easy. It's something I do in my own work all the time and it gives you a lot of flexibility as far as the size of the stamp you can use and the ink color you use for stamping.

Chapter 2 - Making the Stamp Pad

Materials you will need

- So to make your own stamp pad you just need some textile screen printing ink. You can also use any liquid acrylic ink and just add a little bit of fabric medium if you're stamping on cloth. We wouldn't need that if you were stamping on paper. This is just some really inexpensive felt. I prefer white so I know the color that I'm working with. This is just any old paper plate. The surface you're using really depends on the size of your stamp. I like to give myself a big, wide breadth. And then here's some scissors if you need to cut the felt. And a stamp, and then something to print on, whether it be fabric or paper. And you're good to go.

Create the pad

- To make your own stamp pad, you would just open up your acrylic ink. Your textile screen printing ink. Pour it on your flat surface. Now I want to cut my felt. You just need your felt to be bigger than the stamp you're making. Place your felt over the ink, you grab your stamp. So, you can see as I'm pressing firmly down on the felt, paint is oozing through. So, it looks like I've used enough ink here. If you haven't used enough ink you can just pour the ink on top. You just really want the felt to absorb the ink, to give you a nice flat surface, to get on your stamp. So, just moving here to my fabric, and I'm gonna' press firmly. The nice thing about using the textile screen printing ink, is I can mix any color I want, and I'm not stuck with the stamp pad color that the manufacturer is giving me. Some manufacturers actually make a hybrid pigment based stamp pad that also works for fabric, but it gives you more of a water color-y look. This gives you really big, bold, opaque color which I love because you can use it on dark fabric or dark paper, and I think the results are just fantastic. Sometimes when I'm using a small stamp, I actually just use the lid of the textile ink jar to make my stamp pad. I just take it off and lay it on the felt, trace that with a permanent marker, and then just cut that out. Place it right here. And, then I just place it right on top of the jar when I'm finished and it stays moist and ready to print. I really like to use stamps that don't have a lot of intricate detail for this. Because the ink is a little bit gooey, you're not gonna' get the fine definition that you would get from a water based stamp pad on say, paper. And, because we're using fabric and the fabric itself has texture, that texture will also show through. Which I think is really cool and gives it sort of a washed, vintage linen effect. I like to use speed ball brand of fabric screen printing ink. I really like that the viscosity. The color holds up really well. It's easy to heat set. If you're using another brand that you have at home, that's totally cool, but if it's a little bit thicker, you want to add just a pinch of salt. This is actually a trick that I stole from the kitchen. If you just add salt to a sauce, it kinda releases the moisture. Well the same thing here. You would just add a pinch of salt, wait about 15 seconds, and then place your felt on there and you'd be good to go. So, really making your own stamp pad is just that easy. One thing to consider, if you're actually printing on fabric is we just

need to quickly heat set that. You don't need to do that for paper, but definitely for fabric if you're going to wash it.

Chapter 3 - Heat Setting

Heat setting on fabric

- Once you've stamped your fabric and it's completely dry and you want to be able to put it in the washing machine, you need to heat set it. So when you're doing this process, you really need to use a natural fiber like cotton or linen because you need to heat set at a very high temp on your iron. And synthetic fabrics will totally melt. I'm gonna take my scrap fabric and just lay it over my completely, dry to the touch print. Set my iron to the cotton setting cuz I'm using canvas. I actually want a hot, dry iron. I don't want any excessive moisture or steam. Then I'm just gonna go over the print. Slowly ironing. I want to make sure I've ironed the entire face of the print. So you only need to heat set the portions of the fabric you've actually applied ink to. If you're doing big series, of say t-shirts, you could just throw all of them into a hot dryer for about 20 minutes and that achieves the same effect. You just want to keep the ink from running in the wash. Now my print is heat set and ready to go in the wash if need be. Making your own stamp pad at home is just as easy as that. You can make any size of stamp pad or any color of stamp pad you like for your home printing projects.