Paper Stencils

When designing a print with more than one color, a separate stencil or screen needs to be prepared for each color. This will require critical registration of each color to be printed.

1. The first thing to do is to create your drawing, coloring in each area to be colored using markers, colored pencil, or paint. Carefully trace each color of the design on a separate piece of tracing paper. If you have three colors, when the three pieces of tracing paper are laid over each other, the colors should fit together just as they were in the original drawing.

2. Cut a piece of freezer paper for each color to the size of the screen you are using.

3. It is very important to trace the design in the CENTER of the freezer paper, shiny side up. You will be tempted to put it where it fits in the whole picture. DON’T DO IT!

4. Cut out the design on the shiny side from each stencil.

5. Print your stencils according to the design; i.e. background first, overlapping colors follow.
6. Exact registration of each color is very important. Make sure that you print each color on every paper in the same place. For each additional printing the colors should line up correctly. (See chapter 6 on printing.)

7. Printing t-shirts is a little more complicated. Registration must be done prior to printing so that the colors will line up correctly. Use masking tape to make a registration corner for each color screen on each shirt before starting to print.

8. The colors will be printed one at a time, allowing each color to dry between printings.

**Drawing Fluid/Screen Filler**

Follow step 1 above for drawing and designing your print. Instead of using different pieces of freezer paper, you must use a different screen for every color of your print. Make sure that your image is in the CENTER of the screen.

The printing process and registration are the same once your screens are prepared. (See chapter 6 on printing)

**One-screen Multiple Colors**

An easy way to create an interesting effect and use several colors at once is called a “rainbow run.” It is especially effective for varied colored backgrounds.

1. Choose your colors carefully. Opposite colors on the color wheel, such as red and green, blue and orange, yellow and purple, will blend together to make brown. Too many colors will create a muddy color. Blue, yellow, and green are a good combination.
2. Place a pool of each color at the top of your screen.
3. Pull the squeegee firmly down toward yourself, scoop the excess ink up with the squeegee and carefully move it to its original position at the top of the screen.

4. Continue printing, but be aware that each pull of the squeegee will blend the colors more. You can add colors to create the desired effect.

5. A marbled effect can be achieved by squirting several colors randomly on the screen. Again choose your colors carefully so they do not become muddy.

6. Pull the squeegee across the screen. Each pull of the squeegee will create a different design. This is where we sign the print using the designation E/V (See chapter 8.)
**REDUCTION PRINTS**

Reduction prints may be made in several colors using one screen and screen filler.

1. Draw the picture you want to print using different colored markers, pencils, or paints. This will be used as a reference.

2. Start by printing the background color for your picture. See chapter 4 (Preparing the Screen for Printing.) (see image top left)

3. When the ink is washed off and the screen is dry, use a brush and screen filler to paint out the areas of the first color that you want to remain in the print. (see image bottom left)

4. Print the second color and repeat the process until all colors in the design are printed. (see images to the right)

**HAND-CUT FILM**

There are two types of hand-cut film for screen printing. One is a water-based film that must be used with lacquer or oil-based inks. This precludes using it in the classroom.

Lacquer based film is excellent for prints that require a great deal of detail and long runs. Hundreds, even thousands of prints may be pulled from a lacquer-based film stencil. However, this method requires using lacquer thinner which is a volatile substance and is not permitted in schools and not recommended for use by beginners.

There are other publications available that deal with more permanent stencils for more advanced printers.