



USING VINYL STENCILS TO MAKE HAND PAINTED SIGNS

Step 1: SAND

Smooth the edges, corners and surface you will be painting. Always sand *with the grain*, not against.

Step 2: PAINT

Choose your background color and paint your surface. When dry, lightly sand to make sure you have a very smooth surface. Wipe off sanding dust to insure that your stencil will stick to your board.

Step 3: REMOVE PAPER BACKING FROM STENCIL

The stencil is made of three layers; the blue stencil film, white paper backing and clear transfer adhesive. Your first step is to remove the white paper backing, just as you would a sticker. The best way to do this is lay your stencil down with the white (grid) paper backing facing up. Pull the paper back flat against the stencil slowly making sure to leave none of the blue stencil on the white paper.

Step 4: PLACE STENCIL ON BOARD

(Your stencil still has two layers left; the blue stencil film and the clear transfer adhesive.) Place the stencil (with remaining two layers intact) on your board and smooth flat with your hands only. Do NOT scrape the stencil with a credit card or any other hard, flat object – this can cause your background paint to pull up and even splinter your wood in some cases. You do not need to worry about air bubbles and/or wrinkles at this point. Your stencil can be carefully picked up and moved if needed.

Step 5: REMOVE CLEAR TRANSFER ADHESIVE

The top layer of your stencil is used to “transfer” the stencil film to your board. Now that your stencil is on the board, you are ready to remove it. Use the same method you used above; pull the clear transfer adhesive back flat against the blue stencil film and slowly peel. The stencil film may tear and/or stretch at this point and that’s fine. Take care not to leave any of the blue stencil film on the clear transfer adhesive

Step 6: PAINT STENCIL

At this point your stencil has only one layer left – the blue stencil film. Smooth with your hands (only) taking care to get rid of any air bubbles around the edges of the painting area. (Bubbles and wrinkles not adjacent to a painting area do not need to be removed.) You are now ready to paint the actual design. Using a small sponge (cosmetic sponges work best) dip your sponge into the paint and dab off the excess on a paper plate or other surface. Begin applying paint to your stencil by dabbing in light coats. Do NOT “wipe” the paint on with the sponge. This will push the paint under the stencil film and cause the paint to bleed. Continue to dab on your paint in light coats until the desired opacity. When you are done painting, remove the stencil film immediately. DO NOT wait until your paint is dry.

Allow your paint to dry and you’re done! At this point you can sand lightly to soften the edges and/or distress your sign.