

Creating Textile Prints

This playbook describes the sequential steps involved in creating custom textile prints and designs. It addresses techniques like block printing and screen printing, providing a structured approach to produce unique patterns on fabric.

Step 1: **Design Creation**

Develop a design or pattern suited for the textile print. This could involve sketching by hand or using graphic design software. The complexity and size of the design should complement the chosen printing technique.

Step 2: **Material Selection**

Choose the appropriate fabric for printing. Consider the type of ink or dye and the printing method to be used. Fabrics with a tighter weave typically work better for detailed prints.

Step 3: **Prepare Tools**

Gather all necessary tools and materials. For block printing, this includes carving tools, blocks (linoleum, wood, or rubber), ink or paint, and a brayer. For screen printing, prepare the screen, squeegee, and emulsion or stencil.

Step 4: **Transfer Design**

For block printing, transfer the design onto the block by either drawing directly or using transfer paper. For screen printing, either

apply emulsion and expose the screen to light to create a stencil or hand-cut a stencil.

Step 5: Carve or Cut

Carve the design into the block for block printing, making sure to leave the areas to be printed raised. For screen printing, ensure the stencil is accurately cut and adheres properly to the screen.

Step 6: Ink Application

Apply ink or paint to the block or screen. For block printing, roll the ink evenly across the design on the block. For screen printing, place the screen onto the fabric and evenly spread the ink across with the squeegee.

Step 7: Printing

Press the inked block onto the fabric with even pressure, or for screen printing, firmly press down with the squeegee to transfer the ink through the stencil onto the fabric. Make sure to maintain consistent pressure for an even print.

Step 8: Repeating Pattern

If creating a repeating pattern, carefully align the block or screen for each new print. Use registration marks to guide placement and ensure a consistent and continuous pattern across the fabric.

Step 9: Drying and Curing

Allow the printed fabric to dry completely. Some inks or dyes may require heat setting or curing to be permanent and wash-resistant. Follow the specific instructions for the materials used.

Step 10: **Cleanup**

Clean the blocks, screens, and tools immediately after use to prevent the ink from drying and clogging the designs. Proper maintenance will extend the life of the printing tools.

General Notes

Ink Testing

Before starting the main project, it is recommended to test the ink or dye on a scrap piece of the chosen fabric. This helps to determine the correct color, opacity, and desired effect.

Workspace

Prepare the workspace in advance and cover surfaces to prevent any unwanted ink transfer or stains. Printing can be messy, and proper preparation will make cleaning up easier.