

Decoupage - The Basics

Using our Tissue Decoupage Paper

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By Dea Shelton

Supplies - the basics

Decoupage Project

Glue - Elmer's or Modge Podge

Paint brushes

Decoupage Paper

Varnish - water based, like Delta

Bowl of water



Step 1 - Prepare your surface

Glass - wash glass with warm soap and water, dry well.

Metal & Tin - wipe with damp rag. Some metals require a sealer to prevent rust, metal sealers can be purchase at most local craft stores. Many of the stores carry pre-primed metal that won't rust.

Wood- sand with fine grit sand paper, apply wood sealer or all-purpose sealer, let dry, sand again.

Terra-cotta - terra cotta from your craft store is usually already sealed. Most terra cotta from home stores need to be sealed. You can use an all purpose sealer, however, I prefer a couple coats of Kilz, a water-based sealer that you can pickup at a Home Store or places like Ace Hardware, or Wal-mart paint department.

Once your surfaces are prepared you can base coat with any good acrylic paint from your craft store.

Step 2 - Information about papers

Decoupage papers come in various weights.

Bond Paper - 16lb to 24lb, and is the standard for decoupage artists, the lower the weight the thinner the paper and standard paper is opaque.

Southern Blackberry Designs Tissue Papers - 9lb, made with 100% cotton. Our paper is soft, pliable, yet sturdy, semi-opaque with easy application.

Tissue Paper Wrap - 8-10lb, can be difficult to work with as it will falls apart easily.

Cardstock - 60lb to 100lb

Southern Blackberry Designs Ultra Heavy Cardstock - 110lb

Step 3 - Inks & Toners

Inkjet printed images will run when glue or water is applied. Toner based printers like Laserjets are heat set and can take wet applications, like glue and water.

Step 4 - Cutting your images

The easiest way to cut your images is to hold the tip of the scissors away from you, keep your scissors steady and move your paper as you cut. Most people have different preferences on the kind of scissors they like for cutting paper. I prefer a small scissor with a fine tip. Cut a close to your image as possible. Our tissue decoupage papers have a second paper on the back, this allows ease of cutting a fine paper. Just peel this off after you are finished cutting.



Step 5 - Prepare you Paper

Tissue Paper, Blackberry Designs, **because our paper is 100% cotton our paper works best without wetting it before applying your glue, so you save this step.** If working with regular bond paper you would soak the paper for 3-5 minutes depending on the weight of the paper. Water will soften the cotton and vellum in regular bond paper so you will have less wrinkles.

Step 6 - Apply your Glue & Paper to your surface



The following process should work for all weights of paper. Tissue Decoupage Paper will bend around your corners easily, unlike standard paper. Place your image on a piece of wax paper or other non-stick surface. Using your fingers or a soft brush apply a generous amount of glue, either Elmer's (watered down a bit) or Modge Podge to the back of your image. Apply your glue to your surface, then apply glue to front of your image. Make sure you have a generous amount of glue applied to your fingers, if your fingers are dry they can stick to the front of your image lifting the image from the paper. Lay your paper on your prepared surface and gently pull/stretch the paper to prevent wrinkles, apply a generous amount of glue to the front of your fingers and with gentle pressure work the glue into the paper, removing air bubbles and wrinkles as you go. As with any paper, do not over work it. Use a damp sponge, we like the kitchen cellulose sponges, to clean up any excess glue on the surface of your project. Leave the glue on the surface of your paper. Let dry. Your glue with dry clear.

Step 7 - Finishing

Most varnishes come in three types of finishes. Gloss (shiny), Satin (semi-shiny), Matte (dull). I prefer a water based varnish like Delta, from the local craft store. Once your image is applied and has dried, a good finish is everything. Make sure your surface is free of any lint or airborne particles. I use a soft brush to apply my varnish. Generally with standard paper you will need to apply several coats to get a finished look. Our Tissue Decoupage Papers takes about 3 coats to finish the surface. Make sure that your varnish is dry between coats.

We have lots of free projects, tips, tricks and instructions on our website!

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