

## WORKSHOP: "FOAM PRINTING CARDS"



**Summary:** We will etch designs into pieces of 4"x6" scratch foam with a pencil or knitting needle. Printing ink will be spread on a flat piece of plastic with a foam roller and applied to the foam designs for printing onto paper. Prints will be attached to repurposed cards (covering existing printing) using adhesive dots and matching envelopes are included.

### Materials and Equipment:

speedball printing inks  
speedball transparent ink base  
4"x6" card stock  
adhesive dots  
pre-folded 5"x7" cards  
matching envelopes  
masking tape  
stiff sheet plastic for rolling out inks on  
scrap cardboard to work on  
instructions/ideas sheet

4"x6" pieces of scratch foam  
scissors  
pencil and eraser  
knitting needle  
sketch paper  
foam roller  
scrubby  
palette knife  
reusable gloves for washing up (optional)

### Class Plan:

1. Sketch your design first or work directly on your scratch foam if you're feeling brave.



2. If you are using text in your design BE SURE TO REVERSE IT on your scratch foam design because printing will reverse it again, back to the right way around.



3. Transfer your drawing onto your foam by tracing over it with a pencil or knitting needle. You can also just trace around objects and inside stencils. Press heavily to make an impression in your form (this is how the image will be formed in printing). Transfer your drawing first using tracing paper if making an impression through the paper you are using is too difficult.



4. Other objects can be used to add texture, just be sure not to go all the way through your foam.



5. For a colour blocking in sections, scratch all over a whole area like in the butterfly below.



6. Gather all your equipment for printing before starting.

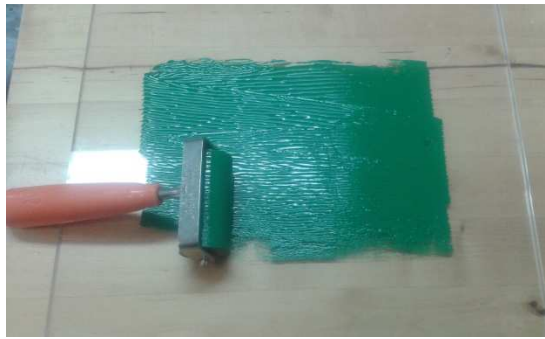


7. Choose your ink colour(s). To make your inks go further you can mix in up to 20% transparent base to extend the inks. This will make your colours a little more transparent, but we've found this isn't noticeable on paper.
8. Spread your ink(s) on the stiff sheet plastic with your palette knife. We started with one colour and worked from simple to more complicated, adding more colours as we went.

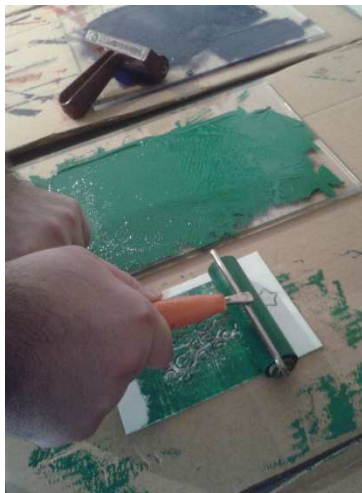


9. Roller your inks smooth with a brayer or foam roller on the stiff sheet plastic. A brayer is ideal because it doesn't absorb the inks like a foam roller does, but both will work effectively and a foam roller is

inexpensive to try out the process.



10. Roller a layer of ink onto your scratch foam design with the foam roller or brayer.



11. Flip your design ink side down onto a piece of card stock and press by hand or with a wood roller if available (e.g. a thick piece of wood dowel).
12. Peel off your scratch foam and repeat as desired with other images and colours.
13. It is a good idea to re-ink your design with each print. Below left is a first print and below right shows a second print.



14. You can also roller straight over a stencil without using a piece of scratch foam at all.



15. Leave your printed card stock to dry or speed up the drying with a hair dryer on a low-speed cool setting.

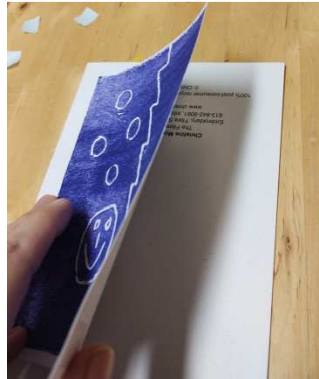


16. Apply adhesive dots to the back of your prints. Use 4 dots per card to ensure you have enough, but cut them in half and spread them out for best results.





17. Attach your print to the pre-folded card stock covering the existing printing on the stock (we are repurposing it), positioning one edge first and lowering it into place.



18. Put the matching envelopes with your cards and have fun!
19. The inks we are using are screen printing meant for paper. They can be used on fabric but are not wash fast. Below is a card (on the left) that worked nicely with green ink printed on red. On the right is the same print after going through the washing machine. There are fabric versions of these inks that can be purchased and made permanent according to package instructions.



20. Although not wash safe, you can also print on a fabric that already has a print, for an interesting effect.



21. For cleanup, use the small scrubby (or an old toothbrush) gently as needed to help get the inks out of the grooves of your scratch foam design.



**Useful Information/Adaptions/Variations:**

- Flat plastic or metal lids from containers can be substituted for the plexi-glass sheets for rolling out inks to make more 'ink pads' for use.
- Regular foam also works. We recommend pressing a bit harder to get a clear design, versus the scratch foam.



- Participants can take their own photographs and convert them to line drawings using a freeware computer program like Gimp to use their own imagery for print making.

**Trouble Shooting:**

- Printing works ok with acrylic paints, but the images are a bit blurred and detail is lost. The paper also curls with acrylic paint prints. Use printing inks for best results.
- Re-inking is a good idea between prints as second prints are fragmented and fainter.