



# RUBBER STAMPING

## INFO SHEET

INFO: I/002

### Stamps

Traditionally stamps comprised of a rubber die image stuck to a foam backing which in turn was stuck to a wooden block with a picture of the image on it. These are still very much available but now there are also clear polymer stamps that come without a wooden backing and which cling to a clear acrylic block. When stamping always clean the stamp before using a different colour ink pad. When stamping an image several times with the same colour it is advisable to clean the stamp every now and then so that it does not become overloaded with ink, giving a less sharp image. Never put a rubber stamp attached to a wooden block under a running tap to clean it as water will work its way down between the rubber, foam and wood and eventually dissolve the glue holding it together. To clean your stamps you can either stamp the dirty stamp several times on a thin kitchen sponge soaked with water placed on an old ice cream carton lid and then dry it by stamping it onto a wad of kitchen roll or use alcohol-free baby wipes, again drying with kitchen roll. If the stamp has very fine detail on it it may be necessary to use a soft, old toothbrush with some stamp cleaner to gently clean all the nooks and crannies. Store stamps away from direct sunlight and moisture. It is best not to store them face down on the rubber image but on their side or back. When storing wooden block stamps on their backs do not store more stamps on top as the weight could damage the rubber die image. They will last a lifetime if stamps are looked after properly.

### Dye Ink Pads

These are water-based and are quick drying for basic stamping. They are usually acid-free, fade resistant and non-toxic and come in a range of colours. They dry very quickly when stamping onto ordinary paper because they can soak into the paper as well as air dry. If stamping onto glossy card they will eventually dry but generally take a lot longer as they can only air dry. It is possible to emboss an image using a dye ink pad if working quickly and stamping onto glossy card. These pads are best stored upside down as this ensures a good, even spread of ink over the surface.

### Pigment Ink Pads

These are glycerine-based and are slow drying to allow embossing using powders and are also usually acid-free and non-toxic. There is a wide range of colours and also a clear embossing pad. When stamping onto ordinary paper they will eventually dry but they will take a long time because they have to soak into the paper. It is possible to speed up the drying process by applying heat from a heat gun. If stamping onto glossy card they will never dry so they must be embossed. In the main the standard single colour pads can be stored upside down like the dye ink pads. Do not store metallics or pearl colours upside down as these can end up flooding the stamp because too much ink comes to the surface of the pad.

### Multi-Colour Ink Pads

These are usually pigment Ink pads and are therefore slow drying. Most multi-colour pads are made up of separate coloured sponges put together and as such give a more definite edge to each colour. There are some which are made of a fabric base pad which has been inked up with various colours, one blending into another eg. Rainbow Pads. The Rainbow pads are dye Ink pads and are therefore quick drying. All multi-colour pads should be stored the right way up on a level surface to prevent the inks running into one another.

### Archival Permanent Ink Pads

These can be either oil based pigment, dye or solvent ink pads. Drying times vary depending on the surface. They are fade-resistant, acid-free and non-toxic and permanent when dry. They are great for scrapbooking and for watercolour techniques. Solvent based pads are excellent for stamping onto a multitude of surfaces including glass, plastic and metal.

### Embossing Powders

These are used in conjunction with an embossing heat gun and give a beautiful gloss finish to the stamped image. There is a variety of colours including metallics and pearls. There is also a clear embossing powder and enamel as well as a range of ultra thick powders (UTEE) which can be used for triple embossing and other techniques such as Melt Art. The standard embossing powders are as fine as salt grains whilst the enamel looks more like sugar. When using the coloured powders best results are gained by stamping the image on white card using a clear embossing pad or on coloured card using a white pigment ink pad. When using the clear powder the colour of the ink pad used will shine through. If enamel is used for basic embossing the finished image will not be as delicate. Usually enamel is used for triple embossing. Powders can also be used for triple embossing but will require more layers as they are that much finer. You cannot use a hair dryer to melt the powders as it has more blow and less heat than a heat tool or embossing gun. It is possible to melt embossing powders by holding your paper face up over a toaster but this can also lead to burnt fingers if not careful.