

Shiva Artist's Paintstiks

The following instructions are a summary from the book *Paintstiks on Fabric: Simple Techniques, Fantastic Results*, by Shelly Stokes. Instructors and shop owners are welcome to share these instructions with students and customers.

About Fabric

You can use almost any type of fabric with Paintstiks, including cotton, rayon, linen, silk and synthetic fibers. You will find that stenciling and other masking techniques work on many fabrics including heavy fabrics, but rubbings are limited to lighter weight fabrics. Heavily textured fabrics will not react the same as smooth fabrics, but that does not mean you can't use them – just don't expect the same results.

Pre-wash your fabric to remove any sizing. Use plain detergent. Avoid products that contain fabric softeners or bleach additives.

One thing to watch for – fabrics that are treated to be "stain-resistant" may also be "paint-resistant!" This is especially important if you are working with pre-made table linens, as many have special coatings. Always check labels and do a test before you begin a big project.

About Paintstiks

Shiva Paintstiks are "self-sealing," which means that a protective film forms over the surface of the Paintstik when it is not in use. To remove the film, you can peel it away with a paper towel, rub it gently on a rough surface, or carefully pare it away with a knife.

Preparing to paint

A smooth work surface is helpful when working with Paintstiks. Any texture placed under your fabric will show through as you apply paint to your fabric. You may wish to cover your work area with plastic to keep your work surface free from stray paint.

Paintstik colors are permanent once they are dry. Wear old clothes or use an apron to prevent accidental "enhancements" to your wardrobe.

Fabric tends to move as you apply color. You may find it helpful to tape your fabric to your work surface to prevent shifting while you are working.

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Applying Paintstik color to fabric: There are several ways to apply Paintstik color to your fabric, including direct application, masking, rubbing, and stenciling.

Direct Application: You can apply Paintstik colors directly to fabric as if you were coloring with a crayon. Once the colors are applied, you may wish to use an old toothbrush or a stiff stenciling brush to smooth and blend the colors.

Rubbing: Place a textured object under your fabric. Then work with the Paintstik directly on the fabric. As you rub the Paintstik across the fabric, an image of the textured item under the fabric will appear. It is not necessary to press hard when making a rubbing – a light touch is helpful to get a clean image.

Stenciling: Unless you are cutting stencils from freezer paper, you will want to apply the Paintstik color with a stencil brush instead of using the Paintstik directly over a stencil. (Direct application will cause a lot of paint build-up around the edges of the stencil, and generally create a mess.) Rub the Paintstik color on a separate "palette" surface. Load the paint onto a stencil brush. Place your stencil on top of your fabric, and apply the paint through the openings in the stencil. It often works better to use a circular "scrubbing" motion than an up-and-down stippling motion. Add multiple layers of paint to get a solid image.

Masking: Use masking tape, paper, or any other material to cover areas of your fabric while you apply the paint. For example, lay a grid of masking tape down on your fabric. Apply Paintstik color directly or using a brush, then peel up the tape to expose the grid on your fabric.

Cleaning Up: Paintstik colors are easily removed from your tools and brushes with standard or citrus-based solvents. With a little bit of extra work, they can be cleaned with soap and water.

Making the color permanent:

After applying Paintstik color, allow the painted fabric to dry for 3-5 days, and then heat-set to make the colors permanent.

To heat-set the color, set your iron to the proper setting for the fabric. Place an old piece of fabric or muslin on your ironing surface, put the fabric paint-side down on the muslin and press for 10-15 seconds in each spot. The muslin should absorb any excess oil that remains in the paint.

Warning: If you have not allowed sufficient drying time, you will drive oil into the muslin and probably into your ironing surface. If you must heat-set your paints before they are completely dry, put a piece of greaseproof paper (such as parchment paper) over your ironing surface to prevent staining.