

## Helpful Tips for Decorating with Stencils

Stenciling has grown in popularity, especially in the world of interior decorating and home design. You don't have to be a master painter to be able to use stencils to enhance your decor, and many find it to be an enjoyable part of home decorating. Stenciling is also a good way to revive an old piece of furniture, or make an old piece fit in with your current decorating scheme.

Stenciling is much faster than hanging wallpaper, and a much more cost effective method of redecorating. A practiced stencil artist can even do designs that actually look like wallpaper. Stenciling can also be done on almost any surface.

As with any new undertaking, you need to make sure you have all of the necessary supplies before you begin to stencil. Your best investment will be in your stencil brushes, as these are essentially the main tool of any stenciling project. Try to purchase the highest quality stencil brushes you can afford. You'll be thankful you did when you see the difference they make in the quality of your work. You'll need to purchase brushes in a variety of different sizes and shapes. It's much easier and faster if you have enough brushes to use a different brush for each color, that way to don't have to stop and clean your brush between each color change.

Believe it or not, part of your stenciling success depends on having good quality paper towels at your disposal. Many stencil techniques require you to use what's called the dry brush method, in which you blot off almost all of the paint off of your brush and onto a paper towel before stenciling. To do this successfully, you need to have a paper towel that is capable of absorbing the paint from the brush, or you will end up ruining your design due to your brush being too wet.

Make sure that you have the stencil firmly secured in place before you begin. Painter's tape will usually do a nice job, but for really intricate designs, or hard to reach places, you may find that a spray adhesive works best. Keep in mind, that if your stencil slips, you will end up with a big mess, instead of a beautiful design.

It is important to always clean your stencils well, because paint build up will interfere with the design, and make it harder for you to see what you are doing. It will also make it harder to use because the stencil won't lie completely flat due to paint bubbles, causing you to mar your design. You can purchase special cleaner for your stencils, and this works well to remove all of the excess paint build up. If you do a good job of getting them clean, you probably will only need to lay them flat in a sink and gently scrub both sides with water.

Since your brushes are a big investment, especially if you have purchased high quality brushes, it is crucial that you get them cleaned well after each use, to ensure their longevity and your success on the next project. It's a good idea to keep a small plastic container filled with a brush cleaning solution on hand while you work, and toss your brushes into it as soon as you are finished using them. Allowing them to soak will make them much easier to clean when you're finished with the project for the day. Before you start to work again, your brushes should be completely dry.

Stenciling can be a good way to pep up your current decorating scheme. It can be done in virtually any room of the house, and with practically any design you wish.

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### About the Author

John Taylor loves to stencil. Check out his favourite stenceling website: <http://www.stencilsmore.com>