

Make your own Alcohol Inks

Supplies:

- Food dyes in assorted colours (check out the Queen brand ones at the supermarket)
- Isopropyl Alcohol or Rubbing Alcohol (you can buy this in the supermarket for around \$8 a bottle)
- Eyedropper
- Small bottles (to store your inks in, I bought 10 x 30ml dropper bottles on ebay for around \$10)
http://stores.ebay.com.au/Empty-Ware?_trksid=p4340.l2563
- Photo paper or glossy cardstock (cheap stuff seems to work fine)

Instructions:

If you have some dropper bottles simply fill the bottle about 2/3 full of alcohol, then simply add food colouring a bit at a time until you are happy with the depth of colour (simply test on a piece of paper and keep adding food colouring a bit at a time). When you use the inks, you will be adding more alcohol to make them move on the paper so you need good strong colours to start with.

Don't forget you can always create new colours by combining various amounts of other colours together. Eg: lots of yellow and a little bit of blue to make a yellowish green, lots of red and a touch of blue to make a lovely mauve-purple.

I cut my card/paper into A6 size sheets (1/4 A4 sheet paper) which makes them perfect for the fronts of cards, but of course you can use whatever size paper is right for the project you have in mind.

I found a good way to avoid fingerprints on the finished product was to put some repositionable tape on my work surface (make sure it's not something that is going to be ruined if it gets a bit stained) and stick the paper lightly to the surface to prevent it moving while you work on it.

Using an ink applicator (Tim Holtz, Adirondack or homemade ones) place a felt pad on the applicator. (Yes these can be washed and used again.)

Choose 2-3 inks in complementary colours and place a few drops of each colour on the pad.

Squirt some alcohol on the pad and then apply to the paper (If it seems like the pad is getting stuck on the paper, add a bit more alcohol to get the ink moving.)

Use a dabbing and twisting motion to cover the paper with ink. The alcohol should make the colours blend together. I usually start with the pad and my colours and do 1 sheet then simply add more alcohol between sheets and keep going until there is barely any colour left. This will give you a range of sheets that gradually get lighter but are still in the same colour groupings so they should work together really well.

Techniques to try:

- Dab and rotate the applicator to create swirly mottled patterns.
- Put the drops of ink in a line on the applicator, add alcohol and try dragging in straight lines for stripes.
- Drag the applicator in slightly wavy straight lines and you get a sort of wood grain effect
- Make your own Tartan by dragging stripes horizontally and then vertically.
- Try diagonal stripes.
- Drop ink directly from the bottle onto the paper and blow with a straw to create spidery flowers. (You might need to wet the paper with some alcohol to get it to move.)
- Just experiment and have fun with it, and don't forget, even if it's not exactly what you wanted for your project, small pieces of the paper will make great flowers or other embellishments.

Make your own Mists

YouTube Recipe:

- Tim Holtz or any other brand water based ink pad reinkers
- Water
- Perfect Pearls

This is the one you see a lot on YouTube, simply add reinker to water in a spray bottle and add perfect pearls, mix and use to create beautiful backgrounds.

Jayne's Recipe: Anything goes!!!

You will need:

- Food dye, acrylic paints, watercolour paints, folk art paints, metallic paints (Jo Sonja's metallics are absolutely beautiful, but can be pricey), ink from bingo markers, stamp pad reinkers, etc, etc, etc, anything that will dissolve in water is fair game.
- Mica powder, loose shimmer eyeshadow or perfect pearls (if you use perfect pearls you won't need the glue as they have a binding agent built in)
- Glue (I used a couple of drops of Aquadhere or any other pva type craft glue, the glue is only used to make sure the mica powder "sticks" to the paper)
- Water
- Spray/Mist bottles (ebay: <http://stores.ebay.com.au/beautyparty> 12 x 75ml for \$10.99)

I have used: Food dye, Watercolour paints (in tubes), Bingo Markers (simply remove the top and use the ink), Folk Art paint (both metallic and normal), Acrylic craft paints, just about anything that will colour water will work!

I bought some mica powder (again on ebay) and found about ½ teaspoon to 100ml of water gives a beautiful shimmer (in fact I keep a supply of just water, glue and mica powder in one of my bottles to add a shimmer to any surface that is already coloured, for instance a chalked background or some coloured paper flowers). I've also used loose shimmering eye shadow, so don't be afraid to try anything.

Add water to your bottle (throw in a couple of glass beads to help the mica mix into the liquid in the future) add your chosen colouring medium to the bottle and shake to combine, test the colour on some scrap paper until you are happy with the shade and depth. Add your shimmer agent (mica powder, eyeshadow or perfect pearls) to the bottle. If using mica powder or eye shadow add a couple of drops of pva glue to ensure the mica will adhere to the paper once the paper dries. Shake like crazy and then test and adjust until you are happy with the result. Handy hint (when you've made one you like paint some card with it and write the "recipe" down on the back of the card for future reference).

To use:

Tip: Make a spray booth from a cut down or shallow cardboard box (the box from a tray of croissants from Woolies works perfectly for me).

- I normally colour a whole sheet of white or cream A4 card at a time and then cut it up to A6 sheets.
- Lay some paper towel in your spray booth, add your card on top, take 2-3 colours and spray randomly on your paper
- Use your heating tool (embossing gun works brilliantly) and dry the paper, keep adding mist or water until you are happy with the result.