

ESSDEE

Taster Kit LINO CUT

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Linocut Taster Kit

Congratulations on the purchase of this Linocut Taster Kit. You have taken your first steps into becoming a printmaker, following in the footsteps of Picasso and Matisse.

Design

Essdee SoftCut™ Lino is an easy to carve material designed especially for relief printing. You can draw directly onto the SoftCut™ block with a pencil or transfer your design using tracing paper. Remember, when you make your print the design will be reversed, so take care with lettering. When choosing a design try to keep things simple by designing a bold image with good contrast to make your image stand out.

Cutting Technique and Lino Cutters

Lino cutters are sharp! Never carve towards your hand. Always carve away from your body with your spare hand behind the blade. Never use excessive force when cutting and practice your technique to avoid slips.

The narrow number 1 Lino cutter is great for fine lines and cross hatching. It can be used at a moderately steep angle to give sharp, deep and narrow cuts. The U-shaped number 2 Lino cutter is a universal and easy to use cutter which can be used at a shallower angle to produce a variety of wider cuts.

When you are ready to carve, loosen the aluminium collar on the lino handle and insert your chosen cutter, then tighten the collar to secure the blade.

Start carving your SoftCut™ block, remembering to carve away from your hand and use a shallow angle between the cutter and the block. You can move and manipulate your SoftCut™ block with your spare hand rather than constantly turning the blade.

The areas of your Linocut that are not carved will form the printed design, so use the cutters to remove the background and form the details of your image. If you are having difficulty visualising your print as you carve you can use a black marker pen to colour the surface of the SoftCut™ and give a visual representation of the final print.

Ink roller and inking plate

Block printing ink can stain! Always wear protective clothing and take care to protect furniture.

When you are ready to make a test print, take the ink and squeeze out a small 1- or 2-centimetre

length of ink onto an ink tray, flat plate, tile or piece of glass. Using the ink roller (also known as a brayer) make short strokes to spread out the ink and evenly coat the roller. Lift the roller regularly to avoid repeatedly working the ink in the same areas. The ink makes a sticky sound when the roller is coated with a thin layer of ink. Place your finished linocut onto a flat surface and roll the ink onto the block, making sure you transfer the ink as smoothly and evenly as possible. Avoid rolling ink into the cut areas. If the ink coverage becomes bare or patchy then add extra ink.

Printing

When you are ready, make a test print using scrap paper or newspaper. Place the paper over your design and press down lightly with your hand. Try to avoid moving the paper to avoid a blurry or smudged print. Press down on the back of the paper with a large spoon, applying pressure and making sure you cover your entire print. Partially peel back the newspaper and check for a good transfer of ink. The paper can be replaced, and more pressure applied to the back of the paper if necessary.

Cleaning up

The roller and your ink plate can be cleaned in water by running under a tap until all the ink is gone. Shake any excess water out of the roller. The SoftCut™ Lino blocks are also fully washable and can be used to print again.

Keep your Lino cutters in a safe place, out of reach of children.

If you love the carving and printing experience why not explore the Essdee range of block printing materials, tools and accessories at

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