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Creativity is knowing what's possible and doing more! ~ Trish Hodgens

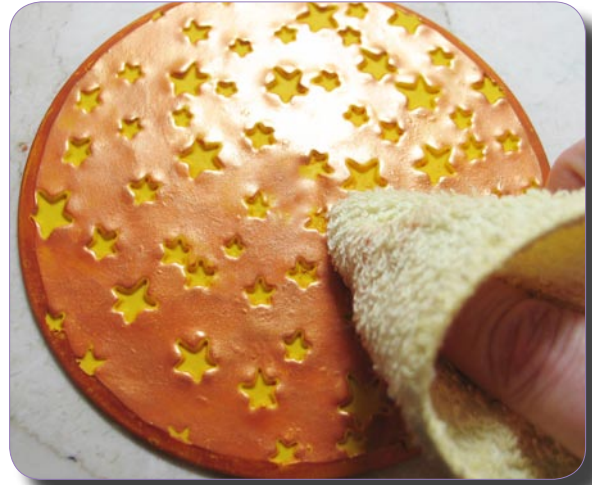


Highlighting Textures

By Trish Hodgens

If you haven't had a chance to try it, you will want to get your hands on some Inka-Gold. It is a colored paste that you paint, sponge or rub on and then rub a little to bring out the lustrous shine. It cleans up with soap and water. What could be easier?

This technique works great with Inka-Gold but will also work with other paints.



Supplies

Texture of your choice - Makin's Stars from Set D

Paint or Opaque Coloring - Inka-Gold

Release Agent - Armor All

Towel or Rag to Buff if using Inka-Gold

1. Choose your texture.

For this particular technique I chose a texture that has a deep design.

When you begin, the first thing you need to consider is "does it matter which side of the texture sheet I use?". Sometimes it is more critical than other times. In this case, with the stars, it does matter.

2. Choose which part of the texture you want to have color added to and which part you want to retain the color of the original clay.

Take a look at which part of the pattern is going to be raised and which is recessed.

3. Choose your coloring agent.

If you are using a product such as Inka-Gold, it will stay on the surface and won't go down into the recesses.

You may decide to use slightly watered down acrylic paint. If so, the paint will spill down in the recesses and you will then rub the surface to remove the coloring from there. This is also called a "color wash".

For this example, I wanted a starry recessed background.

I will walk you through the steps to create this background and then you can apply what you learn to all sorts of textures.

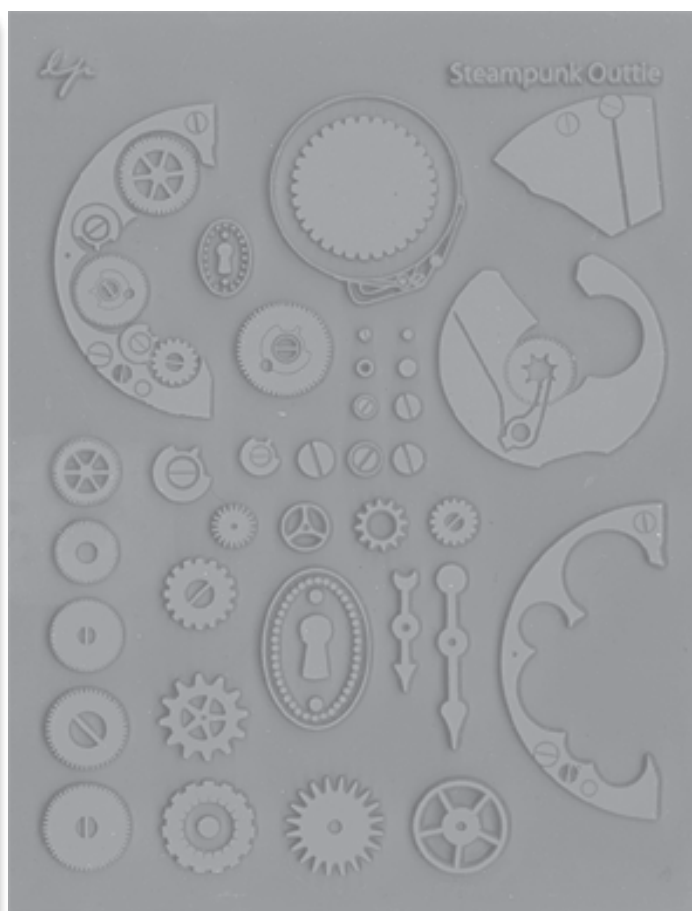
Take a look at your texture sheet or stamp. Is the design an "innie" or an "outtie"?

Here are examples of both, shown on the new Steampunk Stamps from Lisa Pavelka.



Steampunk Innie

The "innie" has a recessed design that you push clay into.



Steampunk Outtie

The "outtie" has a raised design; you push the design into the clay.

Texture sheets are great because you get both designs, one side, an "innie" and the other side, an "outtie".

For this tutorial, we are going to use the "outtie" side of the Star texture sheet by Makin's to make the design in the clay. This will recess the stars in the clay sheet.

1. Always spray your texture sheet with a release agent. I keep a bottle of Armor All handy but you can often use water with the same result.
2. Determine the "outtie" side of your texture sheet.
3. Lay it on a PM2 sheet of yellow clay, with the raised texture against the clay.
 - * It is easier if the clay is thicker than the thickness of the raised design of your texture sheet. If the clay is thinner, you have to be careful how hard you push the design into the clay to avoid pushing all the way through.
4. Use a roller or brayer to press the design completely into the clay.



* If you look closely, since this is a clear texture sheet, you can see if a good impression has been made. If you are using a stamp or some other texture sheet that is not see-through, try to roll the whole surface well and then slowly raise the texture sheet off the clay to see if the impression is good. If not, carefully lay the sheet back on the clay and roll again to get the areas you missed.



Are you ready to get messy? Okay, so you don't have to get messy if you don't want to but I like to use my finger for this process.

5. You can bake your clay now or after you apply the Inka-Gold. You decide which is easier for you and what works best for the project you are working on. It is easier to mar the surface if the clay is unbaked.
6. Tap your finger in the paste and then rub the color onto the clay. Because the stars, in this case, are recessed, it is easy to stay on the surface, leaving the stars untouched.



* When deciding on a color, keep in mind, if you use a color that is similar to the clay color, the effect will be much more subtle. In this case, since the clay is yellow and we are applying orange, the stars really show up.

7. As you work, the Inka-Gold may dry on your finger. Just wipe it off, use a wet cloth if necessary, and then tap your finger in the color again.
8. When you have finished applying the color, if you have not baked your clay, wait to buff until you have. If you have baked it, grab a cloth and gently buff the surface. The Inka-Gold will shine up beautifully.

If you decide to use the "innie" side of a texture, the process will be the similar except you will have to take more care to keep the color on the raised design.

Paint Wash

You can also add a wash instead, using acrylic paint slightly watered down. Paint the surface with the thinned paint and then wipe the raised areas of the design leaving the paint in the recessed areas.