

Technique of the Month

Aqua Painter™ Tips

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Basic Care & Use:

1. Choose paper that is of heavier quality, such as the Confetti or Naturals cardstocks (Ultrasmooth cardstock is ok if you don't plan to do a lot of blending).
2. Stamp with an ink that won't bleed, or emboss your image.
3. Fill the barrel with the liquid of your choice.
4. Squeeze the barrel so the liquid fills the reservoir and begins to drip from the brush, though not so much that liquid runs wild from the brush tip.
5. Use the painter as you would a blender pen or standard paintbrush – practice first on scrap paper to get the feel for this handy tool. Unlike a blender pen you control the amount of liquid that mixes with your colour choice. If your paper gets too wet; dry with a heat tool to stop colours from unintentionally bleeding together.
6. Between colours, clean your painter by running the brush across a paper towel or scrap paper while gently squeezing the barrel until the brush runs clear.
7. Clean your Aqua Painter™ after each use and let the 2 pieces air dry before storing (this will prevent mould and bacteria from forming and possible damage to the tool).
 - a. If you forget to clean up for a few days...fill the barrel with warm, slightly soapy water; shake a bit to clean the barrel then squeeze quite a bit of soapy water through the reservoir and out till the brush is clean. Rinse with clean water to remove soap and air dry.

Try these liquids in your Aqua Painter™:

1. Water is great for blending and creating a soft watercolored look.
 - a. Pick up inkpad colour, reinkers or even marker coloured on a palette to watercolour a stamped or embossed image.
 - b. Use to blend watercolour pencils within a stamped image.
 - c. Don't use directly with chalks – use a sponge to pick up some chalk and rub on scrap paper – use the painter to pick-up this “scrap” chalk.
2. Liquid Bleach is great for bleaching out areas of your embossed image. When the image is bleached out as desired use a heat tool to dry the cardstock and stop the bleach processing. Then use markers to colour your image. Try this with darker cardstocks.
3. Future Floor Wax acts as a binding agent when using Pearl Ex – simply dip the Aqua Painter™ in your Pearl Ex and colour your embossed image as desired. This technique is particularly gorgeous on black cardstock.

Other uses:

1. Use a water-filled Aqua Painter™ to dampen cardstock prior to distressing.
2. Reach for your water filled Aqua Painter™ to seal envelopes.

Blenderiffic!

Author unknown

For years, women have looked for the secret potion to erase those fine lines. We stampers have the solution at least for our stamping. The blender pen is the magic potion that can be used with watercolour pencils, water-based markers, watercolours, pastels, water-based inks, and more.

Stampin Up! sells the blender pens in sets of three. Each pen has two flexible brush tips and is filled with a non-toxic, acid and xylene free solution.

Blender pens make watercolourists of us all! Blender pens are extremely portable and make little jars of water obsolete. Whether you prefer the watercolour pencils or an inkpad palette, the blender pen is ready to help. When using pencils, simply colour the image as usual and then use the blender to smooth out and blend the colours. A twist on this technique is to touch the blender pen tip to the lead of the pencil and then use the blender to colour in the image.

If you prefer to pick up ink from the lid of an inkpad, replace the paintbrush with a blender pen and colour in the image. It is even possible to make a palette with a plastic lid or wax paper by colouring on it with markers in a variety of colours. Use the blender pen to "paint" an image. Markers sometimes are difficult to use on matte papers. The matte papers will absorb the ink so quickly that it leaves an unsightly blob. With a blender pen, simply touch the tip of the blender to the marker tip and you will be able to control the colour that makes it to the paper.

When working with embossed images, try colouring directly on the embossing with a marker and then dragging the colour onto the image with the blender for more control.

Blenders work well with pastels as well. Simply touch the tip of the blender to the pastel and colour the image. You may wish to pick a corner of the pastel to use for this purpose as the blender fluid hardens the pastel chunk a bit. A bonus of this technique is that the blender will seal the pastels to the paper. This is also true of powders such as Pearl Ex when used with blender pens.

Whatever medium you choose to use them with, the cleaning process remains the same. Simply scribble on scrap paper until the fluid comes out clear. The tip may get stained, but as long as the fluid is clear, the blender is ready for the next colour.

Eventually, the magic fluid will be used up and it will be time to replace the pens. A good way to recycle them is to use one for bleaching small areas of projects. Simply dip the tip in the bleach and colour away, pun intended! Be sure to label the blender used for this purpose. Others have taken the matter into their own hands and experimented with making their own blender fluid to refill the markers. The essential ingredients are water and glycerine, but some add a few drops of alcohol as well. If you choose to do this, I don't recommend using the refilled markers for anything scrapbook related because these homemade solutions have not been tested for archival durability and safety. Be sure to label these as well.

Afraid to let your children use your fancy (read as expensive) markers? Why not give them a blender pen and a custom palette made just for them. Simply colour blobs with several markers onto a piece of window plastic. If you want to be really fancy, mark off a grid and label it with a Sharpie or other permanent marker, and use it again and again. The homemade solution and an old blender are perfect for this activity.

Have fun playing with blender pens this month!