

# Accessible Printmaking Techniques:

## Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint

This PDF has been created as a result of an AccessArt Printmaking Skill Share by Zeena Shah. Zeena explored how low-tech printmaking techniques can be used with broad audiences. You can find these and other resources online at the Studio Project at [www.accessart.org.uk/studioproject](http://www.accessart.org.uk/studioproject)

### How to make a Linocut

“SoftCut” lino is far easier to work with than traditional lino. However you still need to use a lino cutting tool to create the block, and this needs to be sharp, making linocut unsuitable for very young children. Choose **“Block Print with Quickprint Foam”** instead (below) for very young children

#### *You will need:*

SoftCut lino  
Lino cutting tool(s)  
Acrylic Paint  
Acetate  
Roller  
Pencil  
Scissors



#### *Safety First:*

Consider also using a Bench hook, and or Hand Guard



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## Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint

Cut a small square from the lino to make your first print (approx 8cm x 8cm). Working to this size means you can create a design within the block size, and you can create larger printed area by repeat block printing.

You can soften your SoftCut lino further by leaving it on a radiator to heat up slightly.



Draw your design on the soft cut with a pencil. Remember two things:

1) Your marks will be reversed when you make a lino print, so any lettering etc should be drawn back to front.

2) When you start cutting the lino, you need to decide if you are going to cut OUT the lines (which means they will appear white on the print), or cut AROUND your lines (which means your lines will print positively).

Experimentation will help you understand (and remember) these two ideas. Instead of drawing directly on to the lino, you can also trace your design on tracing paper, then place your traced

design pencil side down on the softcut lino, and then rub firmly with a hard implement to transfer the traced image.

Cut out your design (remembering the points above). Experiment with how thick or thin your cuts are. Very fine cuts will be less likely to print, as the paint fills the gaps.

**Safety First!** When you are cutting, always make sure your hands are behind the linocutter. Or use a bench hook or hand guard.





# Accessible Printmaking Techniques:

## Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint

Squeeze some acrylic paint on to an acetate or similar surface. Spend some time rolling the paint out – the more you roll it the better the paint coverage on your lino.



Gently roll the paint over your lino. Try to make sure it covers the lino evenly.

Place a sheet of paper on the desk and place the lino face down on the paper

Use a clean/dry roller to apply even pressure on the lino.



# Accessible Printmaking Techniques:

## **Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint**



Very carefully peel off the paper to reveal your lino print.

### **Try this...**

- Experiment with printing on fabric, and making repeated prints to create a design.
- Print on envelopes/cards to make stationary sets





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## Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint

### How to make a Block Print with Quickprint Foam

Quickprint Foam is a thin polystyrene based material which can be used to make prints quickly, safely and cheaply, making it suitable for even the youngest child to use. Many prints can be made from a single block.

#### *You will need:*

Quickprint Foam\*

Blunt Pencil

Acrylic Paint

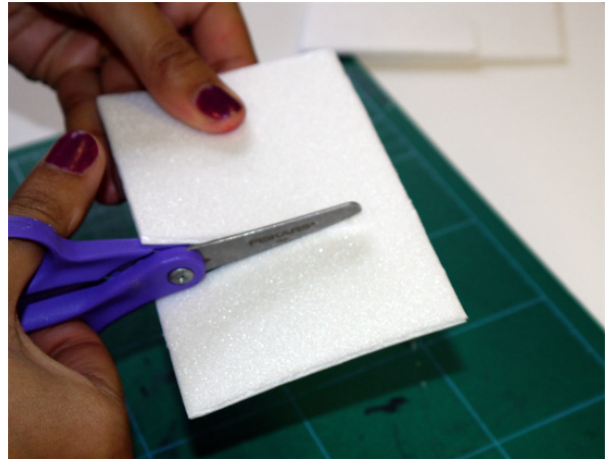
Roller

Paper

\*You can also try using pizza base packaging

As with the lino print method above, working with a small section of foam (approx 8cm x 8cm) means that you can concentrate on creating a workable design.

As you create your prints from the block, you will learn quickly about the marks you make and how they work as a print, and this method allows you to make many prints, learning as you go.



Take a BLUNT pencil and make marks in the foam. The marks must be quite deep, so you must apply quite a bit of pressure, or go over your lines several times.

#### **Remember:**

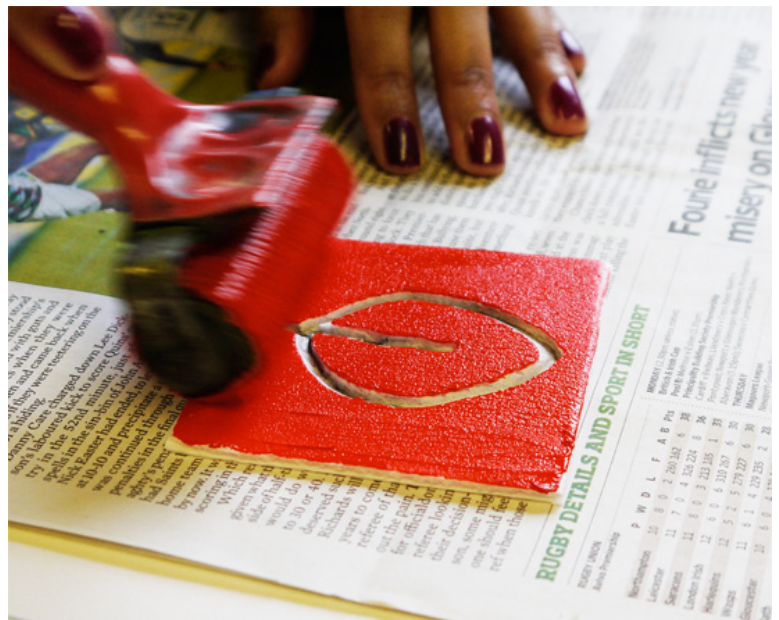
Letters and numbers must be back to front.

# Accessible Printmaking Techniques: **Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint**



Roll out acrylic paint on acetate, as described in Linoprint, and then rollover the Quickprint foam with the paint.

Place the inked foam face down over paper, and using a clean, dry roller apply even pressure.



Take off the paper to reveal your print.



## Accessible Printmaking Techniques:

# Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint



If you are printing on fabric, ink up your foam and then lay a piece of fabric over the foam, and again use a roller to apply pressure.

You can rinse your foam to reprint in other colours.

# Accessible Printmaking Techniques: **Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint**

## How to make a Mono Print

Mono printing is a quick form of printmaking which allows you to work spontaneously and intuitively. You can generate many prints and is incredibly enabling; it can suit many ways of working – from the gestural to the more detailed.

Out of all the forms of printmaking mentioned in this resource, it also requires the least investment in terms of specialist equipment or materials.

### *You will need:*

Acetates (this will be used as the “plate”)

Acrylic Paint

Roller

Pencils, or Paintbrushes

Paper (or fabric)

There are two main ways you can make a monoprint, each has its own distinctive outcome:

### **Method 1: Making marks into the ink (Working NEGATIVELY)**

Take an acetate

Squeeze on some acrylic paint



Take a roller and roll out the paint. It will be a little slippery at first. Make sure the paint covers the surface evenly.



# Accessible Printmaking Techniques:

## Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint



With a pencil, or the wrong end of a paint brush, rags, feathers, toothbrushes, tools made for the purpose (like a stick with rags tied to the end), or even your finger; draw a design into the paint. Experiment with the marks you make. Work quite quickly – you don't want the paint to start to dry out.

Take a sheet of paper (or fabric), and lay it on top of the wet paint. Use your hand to apply pressure to the paper.

Experiment with the pressure you apply – the greater the pressure the greater the pick up of paint on the sheet.



Peel the paper off to reveal your print.

Remember: Letters etc must be written back to front to print correctly.

# Accessible Printmaking Techniques:

## **Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint**

### Method 2: Making marks onto the dry side of the acetate (Working POSITIVELY)

This method results in a more detailed, lighter, print. You can also write letters/numbers etc the right way round, so is easier for younger children.

Take an acetate and roll it up with paint as in method 1.

Take a sheet of paper, and lay the acetate over the paper, paint side down.

Using a pencil, or the wrong end of a brush, or your finger nail, draw onto the clean side of the acetate.

The pressure of your marks will apply the paint to the paper. Roller over the acetate as before

Carefully lift of the acetate to reveal your print.





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## Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint

### Things to try:

You can also try this method by drawing on the back of the sheet of paper, so that it picks up the paint where pressure is applied. In this case however you will be working in the NEGATIVE – so make sure letters etc are back to front.

You can also work POSITIVELY by taking a clean acetate and applying paint with a brush to the sheet (as if you were painting), rather than ink up the whole sheet. These marks can then be transferred to a sheet of paper by pressure and rolling.

Layer your prints. Make mono print over monoprint to build up texture and detail.

Mix colours as you roll up your paint.

Try printing on textured paper/grease proof paper, tracing paper, brown paper, fabric etc.

Try making monoprints and using them as background to other techniques, eg drawing, collage, painting etc.

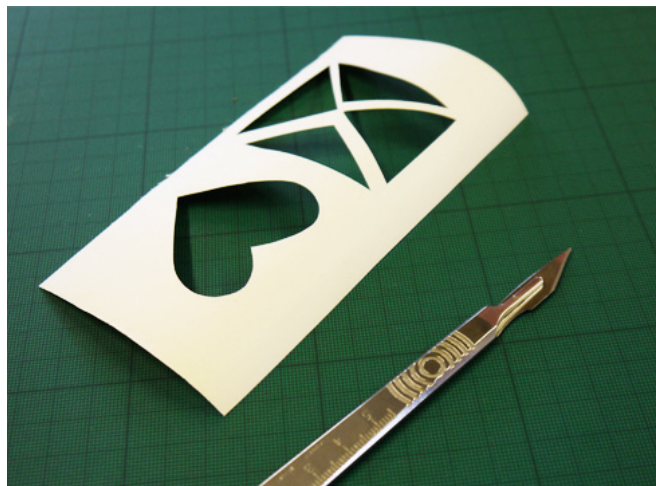


# Accessible Printmaking Techniques:

## Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint

### Screen Printing

Screen printing is a versatile way of making repeat prints with clean edges, on paper or fabric



#### **You will need:**

A screen (you can buy these quite cheaply in kits, or make your own with a simple wooden frame and some kind of silk or mesh tightly stapled across).

A squeegee

Acrylic paint

Paper/fabric

Fabric medium (even if you are printing on paper)

Newsprint or magazines

Stanley knife and or scissors

Masking tape

optional: Freezer paper



First you need to create your masked area. There are a number of ways you can do this, depending upon age/ability/required effect:

1) Cut stencils out of newsprint: Newsprint is the perfect type of paper to use. If you use magazines etc you can cut round existing shapes/images.

You can work in either negative or positive – obviously a heart for example placed under the screen will produce a negative image, whereas a “hole” cut into a sheet of paper will produce a positive.

Cut with a scalpel for accuracy, or with scissors if the user is less able to use a scalpel.

2) Children can use scissors – scalpels are too dangerous.

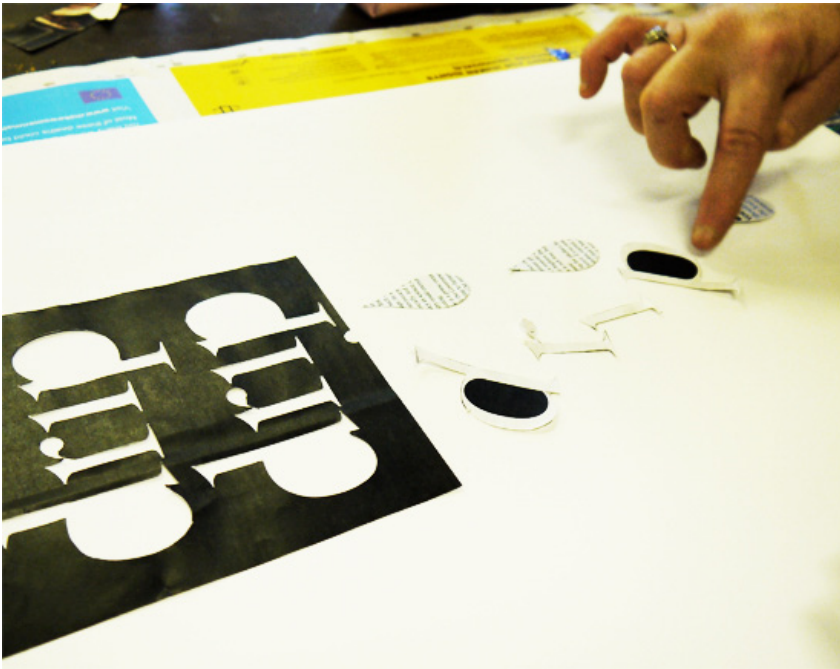
3) Alternatively use Freezer paper: Cut shapes out of freezer paper; then iron the paper on to fabric. Freezer paper enables you to achieve very sharp, well-defined edges.





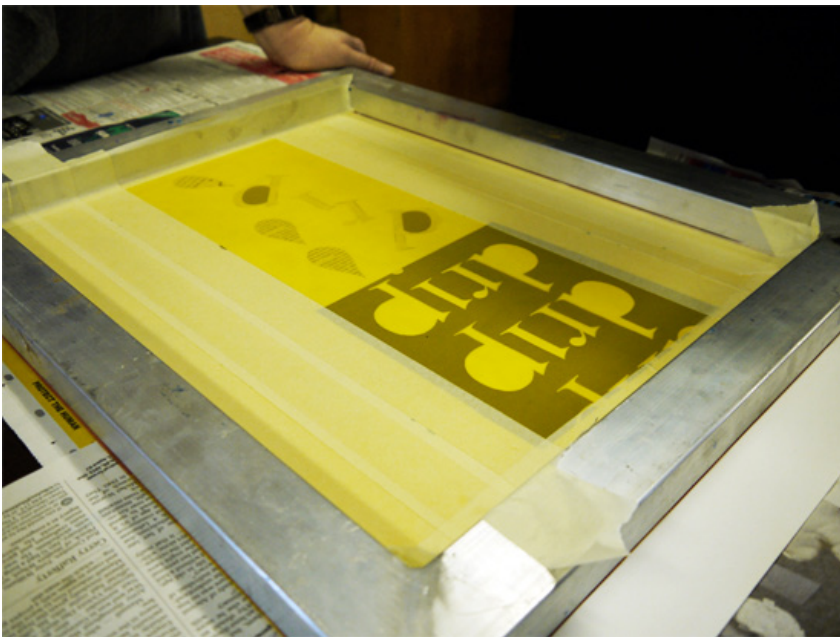
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## Linocut, Blockprint, Monoprint & Screenprint



Arrange your paper items on top of your paper/fabric. Carefully lay the screen over the composition.

Next use masking tape to create a border around your composition, taping on to the screen.



Mix acrylic paint with fabric medium. Start by adding fabric medium (quite a lot) then add the paint until you achieve the colour you want. Stir really well. The fabric medium is necessary to loosen the acrylic and stop it from drying out – otherwise the paint would block the screen.

Put plenty of the paint mix on to one edge of the screen.



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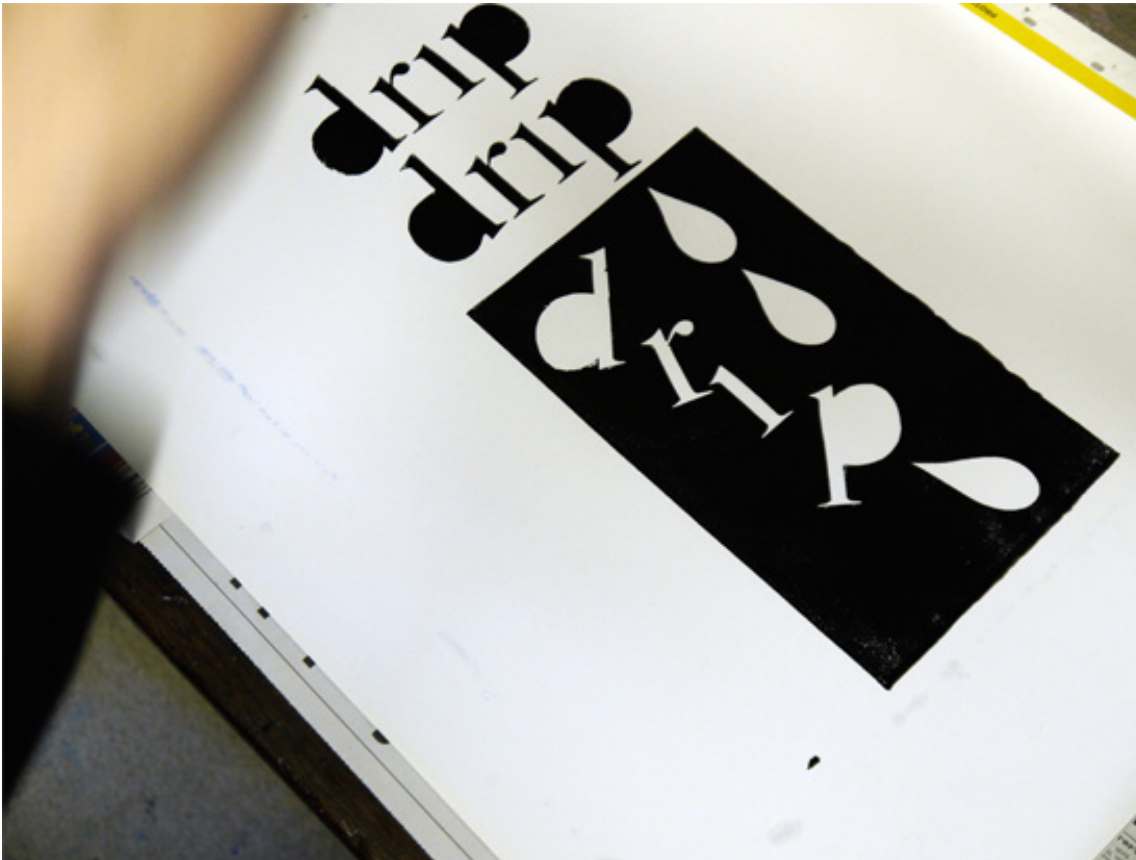
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Hold the squeegee at a 45 degree angle, draw the paint across the screen, applying even pressure. If you are printing on paper draw the squeegee two times, if you are printing on fabric draw the squeegee across three times.

Carefully lift off the screen to reveal the print.

If you have printed on fabric, allow it to dry then iron with a hot iron to fix the image.



Wash and dry the screen well before you print a different image as the previous image might show through.

### Experiment:

Try using doilies, netting, lace etc to create interesting screen print effects.



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