

Feature



Velvet Stamping Lenna Andrews

Stamping or 'heat embossing' velvet is one of those things that looks a lot harder to do than it really is. Some practice is required, but velvet stamping is not complicated.

Gather your Materials

You will need to purchase high Rayon, high Silk content velvet or a combination with one of these materials included. Your choice of fabric is extremely important for good results. I have tried this stamping technique on Velveteen before I knew the importance of silk or rayon content and got only limited results. My rubber stamps impressed the velveteen a little bit, but later the images quickly faded. I would advise staying away from any type of cotton velvet as your results might be minimal. I have had

Editor's Note

An earlier version of this article appeared on Lenna Andrews' [web site](#). VC is grateful to her for including it in this issue. This simple embellishing technique is perfect for creating a number of unique fantasy costuming effects.

the best success/wonderful stamped impressions with 35% Rayon-65% Acetate velvet. Another type of velvet that also works very well is Silk velvet. Velvet can be very expensive, so keep your eye out for sales! Make sure to ask about the fabric content if it is not marked on the bolt. A good idea is to purchase a small amount and test this at home before purchasing larger amounts for a project.



Pillow made with stamped velvet.

You can make beautiful stamped velvet items with very little yardage. Velvet scarves require just over 1/4 of a yard. Velvet vests only need about 1 yard. Small velvet gift bags would take very little yardage. If you do not sew, don't despair! Find someone who does sew, and offer to stamp some velvet yardage for her, in exchange for her sewing your project together!

This tip is from Mary O'Neil, owner of [Hot Potatoes](#) stamps. She has stamped yards and yards of velvet and reports that the heat of her iron has never caused problems for her stamps. When rubber stamps are made, they go through a vulcanizing process that is so much hotter than any ordinary household iron is. I would recommend choosing stamps with a thick cushion, as the cushion seems to take more wear from this process than the actual rubber does from the heat. A deeply etched stamp is important too.

What Kind of Stamps?

This technique works best with bold rubber stamp designs. If you do not know where to find this type of stamp, try Hot Potatoes or one of the other companies listed in the *Resources* section at the end of this article. I have had the most success with these companies because they all make high-quality stamps with a deep etch (thicker rubber) and a good quality cushion under the rubber. The best thing you can do to learn this technique is to use scraps of velvet to test out the stamps you are thinking of using, before starting your project.

How to do this

Gather a few bold rubber stamp designs, and 35% rayon/acetate or silk velvet scraps. You need a spray bottle filled with water, and your iron. It is easiest if your iron has some space on it without any steam



Starting to stamp velvet scarf with rubber stamps.

holes. You will need to work around the steam holes or they may make a pattern on your velvet! An option would be to purchase iron cover plates that cover the steam holes. Turn your iron on to the Medium-High heat range, a cotton/linen setting is usually good. Test your iron for the best temperature for this project by using the scraps. It is in High heat range, not low.

Lay your rubber stamp on the table, with the rubber side facing up towards you. Yes, wood on the table, rubber side up. Then lay your velvet down on top of the rubber, with the fuzzy side of the velvet (the right side) facing down, lying on top of the rubber. Mist the wrong side of the fabric that is facing you. The velvet should be slightly wet – do not soak the fabric.

Place your iron down directly on the wrong side of the velvet on top of the stamp that is underneath the velvet. Try to avoid the steam holes when doing this, press gently, and hold your iron in position for 10-

20 seconds. If you are working with a small stamp, you will not need to move the iron, just hold it in place. For larger stamps that might get steam holes impressed across them, pick up the iron and carefully replace it down on top of the velvet in a different position. Hold the iron in place for another 10 seconds or so.

Continue doing this until about 30-40 seconds have elapsed. You will begin to see

the outline of the stamp from the back of the fabric when it is "done". You will want to pick the iron up and place it in another position if your stamp is large or if you are working around steam holes. It is very important to hold the iron and count, especially when first trying this so that you know the heat of the iron has had sufficient time to impress the stamp into the fabric. Moving to a new position if the stamp is



Completed stamping of velvet scarf. Rubber stamps, iron and spritz bottle of water are shown.



Finished stamped velvet scarf.

large is a “must do” to be sure you have heated the entire stamp.

Another method of positioning the rubber stamp on the velvet, is one that I use when working on a larger piece of velvet where I want to plan my placement more. Lay your velvet down on your workspace, with the right side (fuzzy side) facing up. Place your stamp, rubber side down, on top of the velvet. This way you can look at your design, plan and see how you like it. Hold onto your stamp and the velvet at the same time and flip both over so the back of the

velvet is now facing you. Your stamp is on the table, rubber side up under the velvet.

Spritz the back of the velvet with water, and you are ready to press it with the iron as noted previously. Note: make sure to straighten out any folds in your velvet so that your iron does not touch them and emboss them by mistake. There is no ink involved, no paint, and no mess with this process. Just your iron, your stamps, your imagination and beautiful, elegant fabric when you are done!

The stamped images will be permanent. Dry cleaning your stamped velvet pieces (without steam) is recommended.

Resources

Try the following resources for rubber stamps that are suitable for velvet stamping. The magazine listed is also a great source of information on rubber stamping.

- [A Stamp in the Hand](#)
- [DeNami Designs](#)
- [Hot Potatoes](#)
- [RubberStampMadness Magazine](#)
- [Stamp Zia](#)
- [Zim Prints](#)

Lenna Andrews is passionate about just about anything she's involved with. She has been involved in rubber stamping in one way or another for many years. She bought her first issue of “RubberStampMadness” magazine in 1993, and worked in and eventually owned a rubber stamp store. Lenna enjoys being involved in art exchanges, art swaps, and art challenges because they inspire her to create. She has developed and taught more than 75 mixed media classes over the last 15 years. Visit her web site, [A Little Creative Space](#), to learn more about her work, her free tutorials, and her many on-line workshops.

All photos by Lenna Andrews.