

Potato Printing



Relief printmaking dates back to the time when paper was invented in China around AD 105. It is the process of cutting or carving away at a block until all that remains is the image you want to print. Woodcutting was the most popular early form of surface, but anything can be used, including the humble potato.



You will need: some paper or fabric; a pencil/pen; a potato (or two); a knife; a paper towel/cloth; a paintbrush or sponge; and paint.

Any paint will do! Have you got any old pots lurking in the shed? An old watercolour set, abandoned long ago?



Don't have any paint? Why not make your own? Tempura paint is as simple as mixing an egg yolk with food colouring, or try a colourful spice or fruit like paprika or blueberries.

Instructions:

- Decide on a pattern. Simple shapes like stars or leaves work well. Doodle your ideas.
- Cut your potato in half so that you have a large flat surface area to work with. Blot it dry.
- Draw your image onto the potato or just start carving.
- Time to ink up! Using a paintbrush or a sponge, apply your paint to the surface of the potato.
- Time to print. Press the potato against the paper, gently applying pressure to the edges.
- Carefully lift your potato and there you have it! Your first potato print.



The rather wonderful thing about potato printing is the freedom it gives you to experiment. It's just a potato - it really doesn't matter!

I took a wander around my garden and used the lovely Gerbera overleaf as my starting point. The final images look more like daisies and poppies, which is absolutely fine. I thought I would print them on folded card and send one to my lovely neighbour who lent me these paints.



Sweet potatoes make wonderful shapes for simple leaf patterns. And look at this fabulous artwork below right by Julia Burns, created using just paints and potatoes.



We do hope you have fun with this. Don't forget to keep your creative efforts safe for when we can collect them. If you can send them now, please do. Let us know your name, age, where you are from, and send to: CARM, Unit 12 Mountfield Road Industrial Estate, New Romney, TN28 8LH or email a photograph to: rem@carmromneymarsh.org.uk

Take care and stay safe xx