

# PRINTING AND EMBELLISHING TECHNIQUES

## PRINTING OPTIONS

Many of the techniques you learnt in the Paper chapter work for fabrics too. When printing on fabrics, the important things to remember are: Always wash, dry and iron your fabric first. Washing removes any stiffening agents and preshrinks the fabric slightly, while ironing creates a smooth, flat surface for printing.



### HAND-PRINTING

Several hand-printing methods were covered in the Paper chapter, but fabric has a few unique requirements. First, remember to prep the fabric as described on pages 68-69 and use fabric-friendly inks. The final result will depend on the type of fabric you use: Fine details print better on tightly woven cloth, but graphics printed on loose-weave fabrics have a natural, handmade feel. Once dry, cover your fabric with a lint-free cloth and heat-set it with an iron, according to the ink manufacturer's instructions.

### HAND-PAINTING

Hand-painting your fabric with a brush or fabric marker is labour-intensive and so, is not suited to large-scale production. However, it's a great one-of-a-kind option for packaging luxury products or high-end pieces of art.

**This page:** Apple stamp by Gemma Behrens, Jac Whippet.

**Opposite:** Embroidered fabric tag by Urban Threads.



## DIGITAL PRINTING

Digital printing (print-on-demand) for fabrics is one of the most exciting recent developments in the textile world because it allows for small-run printing (as little as 90cm/1yd) at a reasonable price. This revolution opens up endless experimentation and customisation opportunities for designer-makers. With some good prepping, you can even print fabrics on your home inkjet printer.

## TRANSFERS

If your packaging artwork or logo contains many intricate details, consider transferring it onto your fabric instead of printing or painting it. Print the artwork onto iron-on transfer paper, place it face-down on the fabric, and iron. Voila! The image is instantly transferred. Another option is the image transfer method demonstrated on pages 32-33. It works just as well on fabric as it does on paper.

## EMBROIDERY

Finally, embroidery is a great embellishing technique for fabrics because it creates a lovely texture and conveys a hand-crafted look and feel. Like hand-painting, this is a pretty labour-intensive technique, so it's more suited to small-scale production.

## TIPS

Try working on a lightly padded surface, like an ironing board.

Wetting the fabric slightly before painting encourages colours to flow into each other, creating a beautiful watercolour effect.

## SEE ALSO

Tutorial: pp.68-69  
Digital printing sources  
in Resources: p.170

# TUTORIALS

## ROSE FABRIC WRAP

Wrapping with cloth is great because it's simple and requires few materials. But don't settle for just wrapping your product in fabric and calling it a day! This tutorial takes wrapping one step further by creating a knotted rose on top of the wrapped package.

### BRAND

Joya Bindery

### BRAND ATTRIBUTES

Joyful. Tailor-made. Inspired.

### PRODUCTS

Handmade albums and books

### PACKAGING NOTES

Joya Bindery creates custom, hand-bound books mostly for family albums and weddings. Floral motifs occur frequently in her designs, and since the majority of her clients are women, she wanted her packaging to be soft, feminine, and customised. Most of her books are ordered as gifts celebrating life's happy moments, so the packaging had to reflect a similarly joyous feel.



## Materials used

- OBJECT TO BE WRAPPED (TWO BOOKS IN THIS CASE)
- 28 x 28IN (71 x 71 CM) SQUARE FABRIC (LIGHTWEIGHT FABRICS SUCH AS COTTON, SILK OR LINEN ARE ALL GOOD CHOICES)



- 1 Lay the fabric face down. Place books in the middle of it.
- 2 Take the side closest to you and tuck it under the books, then take the opposite end and bring it over.
- 3 Gather one side and pull it towards the middle of the books. Repeat on the other side and tie a knot.
- 4 Pull one knot-end up and wrap the other around it. Tuck the end of the tip into itself. Now, repeat with the other knot-end.

### TIP

The bigger your wrap, the larger your rose will be! Tie the knot snugly so the corners are neat.