



BUTTON BLISS EASY-PEASY PAINTING INSTRUCTIONS

By Lisa Young

Many stitcheries, quilts, and bags with embroidered sections look fantastic with a little colour in the backgrounds.

You can use a number of methods to achieve this, each with benefits and drawbacks. Read through our instructions and decide which method best suits your needs.

General hints

Use acrylic paints for projects you intend to wash. You will need to paint your background before stitching. This method is only suitable for UNWASHED calico, as the factory processing stops colour bleeding.

Watercolour pencils and artists' chalk can give colour to a completed project. Do not use these methods before stitching, as the fabric easily becomes grubby with transferred colour. These methods can be used on any type of fabric. Fabric medium can be used with pencils to provide a more permanent colour, however they are unsuitable for repeated washing.

Tea and Parisian essence can be used to give a time-worn appeal to fabrics and to dull fabrics that are a little too bright.

*****Acrylic Paints*****

**IMPORTANT!!! — do not wash calico.
The factory sizing treatment helps stop colour bleeding.**

You will need

Acrylic craft paints- anything from top quality artist paints to a set from a two dollar shop will work.

A paint brush- I like to use a size 5 round brush, but a flat brush will work equally as well.

A better quality brush will make your painting a lot easier as the brush head will hold its shape.

Shallow bowl/dish/lid to serve as a paint palette.

Paper towel

Scrap of calico

Lots of Water!!

Transfer your design to fabric, using a lightbox or window and pencil or Pigma pen. Do NOT use a water erasable pen if you are painting, or guess what- the paint will erase your lines.

Lay fabric out on a firm surface.

Follow the process one step at a time for each colour, complete painting all areas in that colour before moving on to another colour.

For each colour, get your brush very wet and make a little puddle of water on your palette. Dip just the tip of your brush into your paint and take the brush back to your puddle. Mix paint into the water to make a very watery ink. Remember some colours will deepen as they dry. Test this watery paint on your scrap fabric to check you like the shade. It should be a wash into the fabric rather than a thick layer of paint on top of the fabric.

A tiny bit of paint goes a long way so add extra colour a pin head amount at a time.. Paint each section using sweeping movements as though you are colouring with a pencil stopping just inside the lines of your design. Keep paper towel handy to blot any colour that bleeds across the line into another area. Push firmly on spill area and most of the colour should be absorbed

The tip to remember is to keep it wet-don't try to use up all the liquid in your brush. This prevents dry lines appearing in your work. While the area is wet you can add shading in corners etc by picking up a tiny amount of pure paint and gently working it into the wet areas you'd like to highlight.

Wait until dry before moving on to next colour. This is especially important for areas adjacent to one another. A domestic hairdryer is great to dry off work quickly so you can move on.

When painted and dry, cover with an old cloth and iron on cool heat to help set paint.

Remember your stitching lines will cover edges so you don't have to be too precise. Have fun with your painting, this is supposed to be relaxing!

*****Watercolour Pencils*****

Watercolour pencils can be used to shade projects that have already been stitched.

You will need:

Watercolour pencils

Water

Fabric Medium

A Paint brush (see above)

Paper Towel

Mix the water and fabric medium following instructions on bottle (50/50 mix or similar)

1- You can colour in areas with the dry pencil and then brush over them with a damp brush or cotton bud. With this method test the colour on a scrap piece of fabric first as watercolour pencils are often very different shades when wet. Colour in with a light stroke. Take your brush or cotton bud and wet it then blot out most of the water- brush should not be wet. or the colour will bleed out of the design area and into embroidery threads. Very lightly drag the brush tip across the coloured section so the colour is just dampened.

2- You can use a wet brush- this method is only suitable for calico and unstitched projects. Take a very wet brush (with water and medium mix) and drag the brush over the tip of your chosen pencil. The water/medium will automatically take up the colours from the pencil. Proceed as if painting with acrylic paints.

We don't recommend colouring directly onto damp or wet fabric, Watercolour pencils have a very high level of pigmentation and it is very difficult to get a soft uniform colour this way.

*****Artists Chalks*****

Artists chalks (soft pastels) come in a huge range of vibrant colours and can be used to shade completed projects on any fabric. Use a cotton bud to apply the colour, working in small circles. This method is best for small sections requiring a blush of colour. Chalks can be used to give a great amount of shading to projects, colour can be built up along edges and faded to centres to give depth to work. Our "Snowman Will Melt Your Heart" is a great example of how versatile this method is. It is important to use a general art fixative to set the chalk as it will drift easily from the fabric.

Have fun and remember- there is no such thing as a mistake in craft!

If you have problems, please contact us through our contact page at www.buttonbliss.com