

Block Printing



As we learned in camp, one trade from the colonial era was block printing. It was done by artists who would create art that could be reproduced without having to start from scratch! Printing allowed people to make things much more quickly. In today's activity, you will get to create an artistic design on a block. You will then be tasked with printing your design on a sheet of paper to make your own "wallpaper," just like in the colonies!

- Step 1: Locate the following supplies in your camp kit:
 - Table covering
 - Styrofoam Square (there are two)
 - Blank Paper
 - Pencil
 - Paint (two larger bottles in kit, but you can use more if you have it at home.)
 - Paint Brush
 - Ruler
 - Cup of water (not included in kit)
- Step 2: Use your blank paper to practice the pattern you want to print. It's best to do this in pencil so you can erase and change things as you go. Most prints are geometric shapes, lines and pictures of flowers, leaves, etc. *NOTE: If you have any letters or numbers in your design, you will need to draw them backwards as the image will flip when you print it.*
- Step 3: Once your design is done, place your paper over your styrofoam square and make an impression of your design on the styrofoam. Once the impression is made, you will want to take the paper off and make deeper grooves on the design with your pencil. This way, the lines will actually show up when you print.
- Step 4: When done, you are now ready to print. Carefully apply one color of paint to your styrofoam block, making sure that the paint only gets on the surface, not in the grooves of your design!
- Step 5: Lay the styrofoam print paint side down onto your paper.



- Step 6: Use the ruler to rub the back of the styrofoam, pressing gently so the design gets etched into the paper.
- Step 7: Use a fresh piece of paper to start printing your design. Start from one corner and line the edges of the styrofoam design with the corner and edge of the paper.
- Step 8: Carefully, peel your styrofoam design off the paper and see what your impression looks like.
- Step 9: Repeat the process as many times as will fit on your paper, being careful to line up the edges of the new design with the edges of the last print you made so, like wallpaper, your design repeats with no gaps of white paper between.

