

Tempera Scratch Surfaces Unleashed



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Transform (almost) any plastic or paper surface into a scratch art canvas!

Reduction, in art, is a process where color or media is removed to reveal negative space, creating a dynamic interplay of light and shadow. For example, in charcoal reduction drawing, a sheet of paper is first covered in solid black, and selected areas are lifted away to form highlights, leaving the black to define the shadows.

This reductive process strengthens conceptual thinking by requiring students to reverse their usual approach to creating. Unlike additive drawing, where material is applied to build an image, reductive drawing encourages the active exploration of negative space. It challenges artists to analyze, adapt, and carefully plan their creative process.

Reductive scratch drawing is one popular method for exploring this process. Instead of relying on pre-made scratch papers or boards, artists can create custom surfaces using Blick Premium Tempera. Its all-natural starch and binder, deep rich pigments, one-stroke coverage, and velvety matte finish make it ideal for this technique. No additives are needed—simply paint directly onto slick surfaces like coated or plastic papers. For uncoated papers, prep with a layer of Liquitex Effects Gloss Pouring Medium and allow it to dry before applying the tempera scratch layer.

Get creative with recycled materials like milk cartons, soda cans, and takeout containers, transforming them into unique scratch art canvases. The possibilities for experimentation are endless!

To preserve the finished artwork, seal it with SpectraFix FinalFix and Blickrylic Gloss Medium.



Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Materials (required)

[Utrecht Chipboard](#), Kraft, 0.040" thick, 30" x 40" (13145-4030); share three sheets across class

[Blick Painter's Tape](#), Blue, 1" (24146-1060); share one roll between four students

[Liquitex Effects Gloss Pouring Medium](#), 32 oz (02001-1009); share one bottle across class

[Blick Premium Tempera Paint](#), Black, 64 oz (00011-2008); share one bottle across class

[Blick Scholastic Golden Taklon Brushes](#), short handle, flat wash, 1" (05859-1001); one per student

[Saral Wax Free Transfer Paper](#), White, 12" x 3 ft, 4 sheets (12917-1012); share one package across class

[Ampersand Scratchbord Tools](#), tool kit, set of 5 (14913-1009); share one kit between two students

[SpectraFix FinalFix Advanced Fixative](#), refillable aerosol bottle, 10 oz (21735-1010); share one bottle across class

[Blickrylic Gloss Medium](#), 32 oz (00711-1027); share one bottle across class

[A variety of paper and plastic surfaces - Recommendations on following pages.](#)

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Suggestions for uncoated papers

Blick Premium Cardstock, choose from a variety of colors, 140 lb, 19-1/2" x 27-1/2" (11408-)

Shizen Handmade Paper by the Pound, assorted patterns, 8-1/2" x 11", (11298-1002)

Batik Lokta Papers, choose from a variety of patterns, 20" x 30" (12609-)

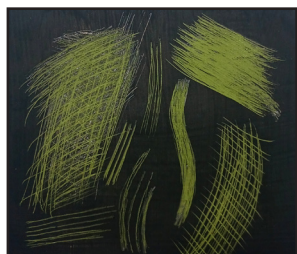
Black Ink Thai Marbled Mulberry Paper, choose from a variety of colors, 25" x 37" (11231-)

Blickrylic Polymer Gloss Medium, 64 oz (00711-1028)

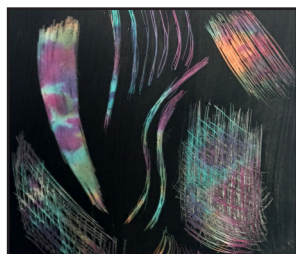
Grafix Dura-Lar Clear Adhesive-Backed Film, .005", 25" x 40" (55525-1041)

Process for uncoated papers

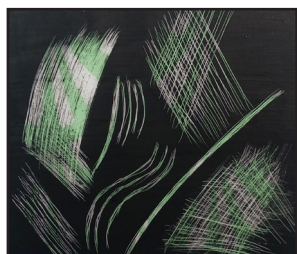
1. Use painters tape to stretch a piece of paper to a chipboard base. Be sure to use tape around the entire perimeter of the paper. Try to keep each tape strip even to create a clean border that will be revealed at the end of the process.
2. Use a soft flat brush to apply two coats of Liquitex Effects Gloss Pouring Medium. Allow to dry in between coats and brush in opposing directions for each application to keep as even as possible.
3. After the pouring medium is completely dry, use a soft flat brush to apply one layer of Blick Premium Tempera Paint.
4. Use scratch tools to draw an image. Simple images and outlines can be transferred using white Saral Transfer Paper. Ampersand Scratchbord Tools comes with five tools to create a variety of lines.



Blick Premium Cardstock



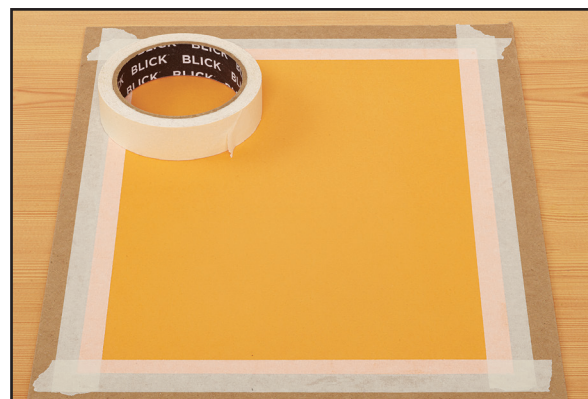
Batik Lokta Papers



*Shizen Handmade Paper
by the Pound*



*Black Ink Thai Marbled
Mulberry Paper*



Step 1: Stretch a piece of paper to a chipboard base.



Step 2 (For uncoated surfaces only): Apply two coats of Liquitex Effects Gloss Pouring Medium

Option: Use Grafix Dura-Lar Clear Adhesive-Backed Film instead of pouring medium. Peel the adhesive backing paper and apply directly to the paper. The plastic surface will protect the paper's surface, just like the gloss medium does, but without the dry time!



Step 3: Apply one layer of Blick Premium Tempera Paint.

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Process for plastic and coated papers

1. It is not necessary to stretch the paper to a board. If a border is desired for aesthetic purposes, evenly tape the perimeter of the paper, as pictured in step one.
2. The coating on slick, coated and plastic papers protects them while scratching. Therefore, no gloss pouring medium prep is needed for these surfaces.
3. Use a soft, flat brush to apply one layer of Blick Premium Tempera Paint to the surface of the paper.
4. Use scratch tools to draw an image. Simple images and outlines can be transferred using white Saral Transfer Paper. Blick Premium Tempera Paint removes easily from slick surfaces; use a light touch and allow the tool to do all the work.

Suggestions for coated and plastic papers

[Legion Yupo Synthetic Paper Sheets](#), Bright White, 74 lb, 26" x 40" (10067-1031)

[Legion Yupo Synthetic Paper Sheets](#), Translucent, 104 lb, 25" x 38" (10084-1008)

[Grafix Dura-Lar Wet Media Film](#), clear, .004, 9" x 12" (55811-1023)

[Mirror Boards](#), choose from a variety of colors, 8-1/2" x 11", package of 10 (12486-9501)

[Black Ink Dotty Embossed Iridescent Papers](#), assorted colors, 8-1/2" x 11", 40 sheets, (09920-1001)

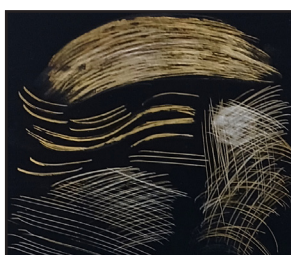
[Roylco Frosted Glass Craft Paper](#), assorted colors, 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" (12612-1024)



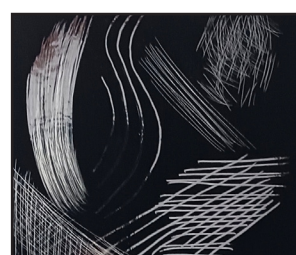
*Legion Yupo Synthetic
Paper Sheets
Bright White*



*Grafix Dura-Lar Wet
Media Film*



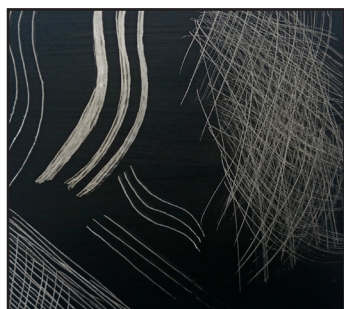
Mirror Board Gold



Mirror Board Silver

Process for recycled materials

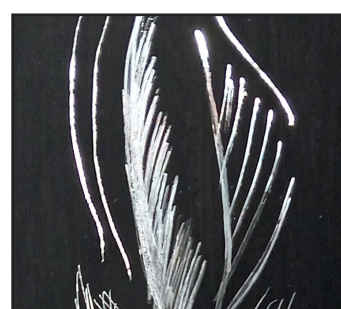
1. There is no need to coat slick surfaces with gloss pouring medium. Plastic milk jugs, paper cartons, and metal cans do not need additional protection. Most recyclable surfaces will be ready to use.
3. Use a soft flat brush to apply one layer of Blick Premium Tempera Paint to the surface of the item.
4. Use scratch tools to draw an image. Simple images and outlines can be transferred using white Saral Transfer Paper, but this can be a bit tricky to do when working with a 3-D surface. Surfaces with sides, like a paper juice carton, should be worked on one side at a time. Avoid placing sides that have been worked onto the table or working surface. Until the image is sealed, the surface will be delicate, and additional, unintended scratches could occur. Blick Premium Tempera Paint removes easily from slick surfaces; use a light touch and allow the tool to do all the work.



Plastic Milk Carton



Paper Juice Carton



Aluminium Can

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Process for sealing and mounting finished work

1. All of the scratch surfaces described above are fragile and will need to be sealed. First, spray a thin coat of SpectraFix FinalFix Advanced Fixative over the surface of the artwork. Spectrafix is an all-natural, non-yellowing, fully reworkable, archival-quality formula. Made with beeswax and other protective natural ingredients, it can be used at any stage of the creative process and combines well with all media. Spectrafix Fixative will seal the tempera paint so it will not re-activate with moisture. This is needed to move onto the second sealing step. The surface can still be scratched or scuffed when handled, so artwork should still be handled with care at this stage.
2. Use a soft brush to gently apply a layer of Blickrylic Gloss Medium. Take care to not press into the surface of the artwork, as it can create new scratches and scuffs. Allow the brush to gently slide over the surface, but do not press or overwork. Younger students will need assistance with this step.
3. After the gloss medium is completely dry, flat pieces can be mounted. Note that artwork made on clear plastics is better left unmounted, as it will take on the color of whatever it is mounted to. These pieces are best displayed in windows where light can shine through to illuminate the scratched areas. To hang clear artwork, create a paper frame and attach a string.
4. Use Yes Stickflat Glue to mount or attach a frame. Yes Stickflat Glue is more viscous than regular glue and is easy to apply with a pallet knife or brush. It creates a firm bond when dry but stays workable for a longer period of time, allowing for easy re-positioning. It is acid-free and won't yellow or curl papers. It also holds to plastics well, making it perfect for mounting all of the surfaces listed here.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work

Connecting

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

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