

Etching

technique focus

TF0044



What you'll need

PR732...Zinc Plates **PR740** Etching Needle Set **PR730...**Quick Drying Stopping Out Varnish **PR694** Mini Printing Press **PR121A...** Printers Inks **PR743** Etching Crystals **TE102** Muslin **PA02...**Soaking Trays

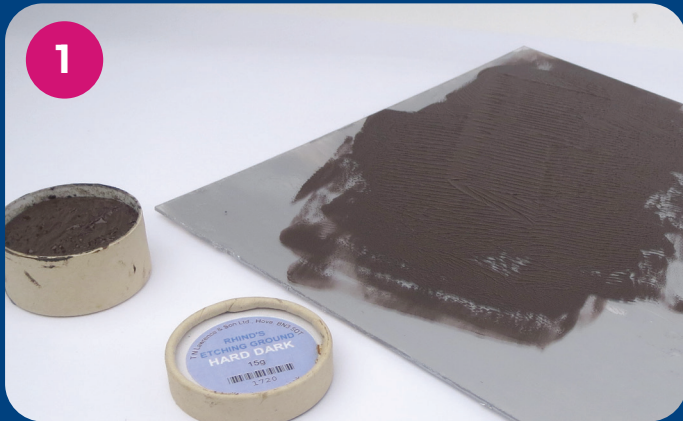


Dryad Education offers a wide range of etching needles for use with zinc plates. Each point provides a different impression: fine, heavy, angled or oval. The steel needles can be sharpened with a grindstone when they become edgeless or dull.



Step by step

1



Prepare your work space. You can use zinc plates or acrylic sheets for etching. Zinc plates must first be cleaned to remove dirt and grease. Once clean, heat the plate and apply the hard ground and spread evenly using a roller or dabber. Leave to dry.

3



Next, apply stopping out varnish with a brush, to blank out areas where no design has been drawn and to the entire back of your plate. Wherever the varnish is painted, the solution will not etch into the plate. Then etch your plate by pouring etching solution in a shallow tray. Lay your plate face down, in the solution and leave submerged for a few minutes. Remove the plate from the solution and rinse.

5



Once the plate is covered, use muslin and acid-free tissue to remove the surface ink. Cut some good quality paper to size that will accept your etching and soak each sheet for 1-2 minutes in water. Remove the paper and sandwich each piece between some sheets of Newsprint to absorb any excess water, leaving your paper damp. If it's too damp, the ink may bleed during printing.

2



When using liquid or hard ground, use an etching needle to scratch your design into the ground layer, ensuring the marks expose the zinc underneath. Wearing a mask and gloves, make up an etching solution from etching crystals.

4



The plate is now ready for inking up. Use a leather-covered hand inker or a rubber kidney to apply etching inks over your plate. Make sure that the ink is worked well into the etched lines. If you find that your etching is not deep enough to hold the ink well in some areas, use your etching needle to re-work these lines.

6



Place a piece of Newsprint on your press, and lay your etched plate face-up, on top of this. Use runners along the full length of the printing press on either side of the plate. Carefully lay a piece of damp paper on top. Cover with another piece of newsprint and the press blanket. Roll print, then remove with clean fingers and leave to dry thoroughly.