

SPONGE STENCILLED WRAPPING PAPER & GIFT BOX

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One of the quickest methods to decorate your own gift wrap, whether it is paper, bags or boxes, is by sponge stencilling.

You will need:

- Plain paper, bags or boxes
- A piece of high-density sponge (I like to use make-up wedges! They are cheap, clean up easily and are a good size.)
- Americana acrylic paints- olive green, deep periwinkle & shimmering silver are the colours I used for the dragonflies.
- A small artists brush, such as a #1 liner, for detail work.
- A piece of poster board to cut your stencil from- I often use an index card, an old file folder or the back of an old Christmas card. Shiniest side up!
- Scissors
- Water in a small container to rinse your brush in
- Something to put your paint out on, such as a clean meat tray, an old saucer, a ceramic tile, or disposable palette paper.

The dragonfly pattern is here for you to print and use. Just cut it out and trace it onto the heavier stock. Now remember...when you are cutting a design to use as a stencil, you don't want to go in from the edge. Poke a hole into the dragonfly and cut it out from the middle.

For the small polka dot, I just punched a hole with a paper punch on the same piece of stock.

Cut an appropriate length of paper for wrapping, or unfold the gift box so it lays flat.

Paint...squirt out about a nickel size puddle of each colour of paint onto your palette (meat tray, saucer or tile). With the square end of your sponge wedge, dab into the green. Be sure to pat off the excess paint on the side of your palette or on paper towelling, or the paint could bleed under your stencil. A little paint goes a long way!

Holding your stencil in place with one hand, dab in the open pattern space with the sponge. Pick up a little of another colour paint, and keep dabbing and blending as you go.

Lift (don't slide!) the stencil and move on to the next, randomly covering the surface of your paper. These, being dragonflies, be sure to turn them as though they are flying every which way!

There is no need to wash the sponge as you change colours or to have a sponge per colour. Just dab off excess paint colour and pick up some more. It's the blending of the colours that help create such a unique effect!

You will have some dragonflies that are greener, bluer or more silver and that's ok!

The first ones you painted are most likely dry, but it's important not to lean your arm or hand into wet paint. Not because it will hurt you (it won't), but because you could smudge up your work!

So that these dragonflies show movement, I used my small brush and added double comma strokes just outside the edge of each wing. Yes, (()) . I also added curly cues from the tail. This shows even more fluttery movement!

Thin your paint with a little water if it's not flowing smoothly from your brush. Add the dots using the same stencil method.

You now have a gorgeous hand painted piece of wrapping paper! Try it on a box or bag!!



(Dragonfly pattern to print and use!)