

## Selectively Marbled Monograms



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Create marble-ous special effects with controlled application of paint on colored paper

Some of the most enjoyable forms of art-making are those that are not thoroughly planned out, where spontaneity and randomness play a part in how the art develops.

Paper marbling is one such process. Artists who practice this elegant art have always fought for control—developing ways to thicken water or ink to achieve the perfect balance between the two. However, part of the allure of the process is that nothing ever happens the same way twice and there is often an unexpected outcome just around the corner.

For those who enjoy the spontaneous flow of floating colors, but want to control exactly where they appear and where they don't, this process offers a balanced option.

A special salt and aluminum solution known as a mordant is often used to help marbling colors adhere to paper or fabric and to keep them from fading. If mordant is applied to an entire sheet, the color will adhere to the entire sheet. If, however, the solution is applied to only a selection (such as a frame, an edge, or a shape), once marbled and rinsed, the color will only stay where the solution was applied. It's similar to the process of using a masking fluid in watercolor, only in reverse.

Artists following this process will create cards with selective areas marblized, then develop the negative areas with an initial in a calligraphy style using a sumi brush. **Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.**

### Materials (required)

**DecoArt Water Marbling Magic Medium**, 6 oz (83523-1005); share one jar across class

**DecoArt Water Marbling Surface Prep**, 8 oz (83523-1015); share one jar across class

**DecoArt Water Marbling Acrylic Paint**, 2 oz, assorted colors (83522-); share 3-4 colors across class

**Blick Premium Construction Paper**, 19.5" x 27.5" sheets, assorted colors (11409-) OR **Blick Premium Cardstock**, 19.5" x 27.5" sheets, assorted colors (11408-); plan for half sheet per student

**DecoArt Water Marbling Tray**, 12" x 15" x 2" (83521-1007); share one between 5-6 students

**Blick Sumi Brush**, Size 2 (04321-1002); need one per student

**DecoArt Water Marbling Sticks**, pkg of 20 (83521-1002); share one pkg across class

**Aitoh Bamboo Paper Folding Tool**, small, 5.875" (12654-1021); share one between 2 students

**Daler-Rowney F.W. Acrylic Ink**, 1 oz Black (21107-2003) and assorted Pearlescent colors (21111- )

### Materials (optional)

**Blick A2 Folded Cards**, size 4.25" x 5.5", assorted colors (77314-) and matching **Blick A2 Envelopes**, size 4.375" x 5.75" (77326-)

**We R Memory Keepers Envelope Punch Board Template** (63295-1001)



Ready to order materials? Go to

[www.DickBlick.com/lesson-plan/selective-marbled-monograms](http://www.DickBlick.com/lesson-plan/selective-marbled-monograms) to access a product bundle for your convenience.

## Preparation

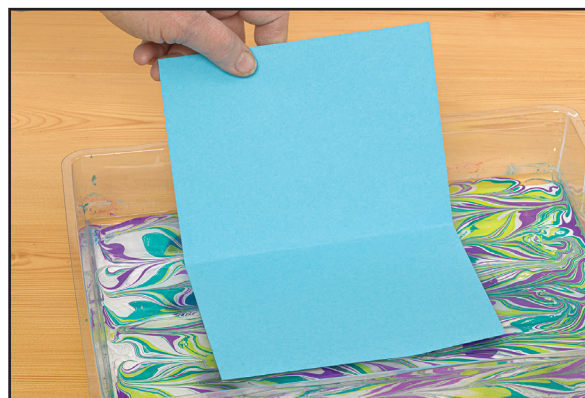
1. Cut cardstock or heavy construction paper into 9" x 4.5" pieces (or similar). Use any color available—light colors, bold colors, neutral colors...even black and dark colors!  
A couple of options to consider:
  - Create matching envelopes using the We R Memory Keepers Punch Template.
  - Use pre-made cards and envelopes.
  - Create flat pieces instead of folded cards. Use paper size 8.5" x 11" or smaller to fit in the marbling tray.
2. Prepare water for marbling. This can be done up to 5 days ahead of time and stored in empty water jugs. Add 10 cups of **hot** tap water to the jug, then add 5 teaspoons of Magic Marbling Medium. Add one teaspoon at a time and stir into the water using a long-handled spoon or brush. Do not shake the jug to mix.  
Allow at least 30 minutes for the medium to dissolve.
3. Prepare Surface Prep Medium. This can be done up to 3 days ahead of time. Add 1-1/2 teaspoons to 2 cups **hot** tap water and stir to dissolve.

## Process for Marbling Paper Cards

1. Fold paper in half and use a tool to make a hard crease.
2. Distribute a small amount of Surface Prep Medium in cups. Very little is needed. On front of card, brush a frame or border approximately 1" wide around the edges, leaving the center uncovered. Allow about 30 minutes to dry or use a hair dryer to quick-dry. For strongest color, it is recommended to apply a second coat over the dry first coat.
3. Stir prepared Marbling Medium and pour into a pan or tray, covering the bottom by at least 1/2". Tray needs to be at least 1" larger than the card size on all sides.
4. Choose 3-4 colors of Water Marbling Acrylic Paint. If using medium to dark color paper, choose white as one of the colors for highlights. Hold bottle so that the nozzle is positioned about an inch above the surface of the water and squeeze a drop. First colors will spread and seem to disappear. The paint is just very thin at first. Adding more drops of color will make the paint more and more visible.  
Some suggestions for designing marblized patterns:
  - Add drops of color on top of one another to create rings.
  - Apply in rows or randomly placed patterns
  - Use a pointed marbling stick to **gently** swirl and move colors into designs with light and small movements.
5. When paint has formed a pleasing design, prepare to make a print. Form the card into a 90-degree angle with the front facing down (horizontal). Pick up by the back side of the card (vertical). Holding the card so, the front lies as flat as possible, place it on the surface of the water.



*Step 1: Brush Surface Prep Medium around edges of paper card. Float Water Marbling Acrylics on prepared water.*



*Step 2: Print card by placing on water surface. Rinse. Color will cling to area prepared with Surface Prep Medium.*



*Step 3: Once card is dry, use a Sumi-e brush to paint a monogram in the center of the card.*

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- Lift the card and hold it over the tray as excess water drips off. Move card to sink or to a second tray filled with clean water and rinse. Paint will remain in the frame area (where the Surface Prep Medium was painted) and rinse away from the remaining area or fade to a very light pattern.
- Once a print has been made, more drops of paint can be added and new designs created. Dozens of prints can be made in one session. Experiment with placement of Surface Prep Solution. Try creating loose strokes, a center focus, patterns, and shapes.
- The paint will reach a point where it stops spreading across the water because the surface is full. Or, the water may be used up and become too shallow to print. Dispose of any unused medium in the sink and rinse the tray with just water (no soap).

### Process for Making Sumi-e Monograms

- While cards are drying, practice making letters using a Sumi brush.

#### To use a Sumi-e brush:

- Work standing up—it allows more freedom of movement.
- Hold the brush vertically, perpendicular to the painting surface. Hold it loosely at the top portion of the handle. Use the thumb, pointer, and middle finger to hold and keep a loose grip.

- Practice strokes on scrap construction paper using just water first. Place water in a small palette and allow the brush to absorb as much as possible. Then, gently pull the brush across the edge of the palette to remove excess, rolling the brush to form a point.

Select an initial and practice the letter over and over, then replace the water with acrylic ink and practice some more until it is consistent.

- Brush calligraphy relies on a number of skills: knowing the amount of ink, brush pressure, stroke speed, etc. To delve further into the art form, we recommend these books:

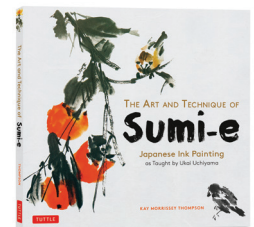
#### The Spirit of the Brush

by Sungsook Hong Setton  
(67315-1001)



#### The Art and Technique of Sumi-e

by Kay Morrissey Thompson  
(87001-1003)



- Once confidence has been built through practice, paint the monogram letter in the center of each card, surrounded by the marblized frame.

#### Options

- Add bright accents to the monogram with gold acrylic ink.

### 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.

#### Connecting

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