

Shiva Paintstiks

Preparing the Paintstiks for Use

Paintstiks will come with a thick skin. Use a small sharp knife or Exacto knife to carve the skin off to get back to the soft Paintstik.

If you set the Paintstik aside a day or so you should be able to "wipe" off the thinner skin that will form with a paper towel.

Preparing Fabric for Shiva Paintstiks

Wash, dry and iron your fabric to remove any sizing etc. which can resist the Paintstik and makes the paint not permanent on the fabric.

Using Stencil Brushes

Stencil brushes are my favorite application method. They come in lots of sizes, choose one that suits the project you plan.

The brush needs to be quite stiff so trim the bristles evenly across with sharp scissors if the brush is too flexible. Cut away some of the bristles right at the base to make a smaller diameter brush.

Cleaning Stencils and Stencil Brushes

Shiva sells a brush cleaner which works very well and will probably last a long time. Dip out a tiny amount on a pallet and scrub the brush in it, wipe off with paper towel and repeat.

Once the brush looks clean wash it with dish soap and water and dry.

You can also use full strength citrus cleaner in the same way to clean brushes. To clean Paintstiks off plastic stencils, put citrus cleaner in a small spray bottle, mist the area of your stencil that needs to be cleaned and wipe the Paintstik off with a paper towel or soft cloth.

Applying Shiva Paintstiks

Use paper plates with a smooth finish, parchment or freezer paper as a pallet. Rub Paintstik onto the pallet and then pick the paint up from there with your stencil brush. Test out your brush and colors on fabric to see how they will look before starting your finished project. Start with a light even application and then build up color or blend new colors on top of old ones.

Mixing Colors and Making them More Transparent

Apply the colors you would like to mix to the pallet and blend them with a stencil brush. Start with small amounts of Paintstik until you get the color you want. Take notes on how you blended the colors so you can reproduce more as you work on a larger project.

To make the colors more transparent use Shiva Blending Sticks, there are separate ones for regular and metallic colors. Test on cloth until you get the transparency you want.

Combining Shiva Paintstiks with Commercial Fabric

Choose the commercial fabric first and plan the areas or blocks where you would like to use Shiva Paintstiks. Using the commercial fabric as a guide select paint stick colors that are compatible or mix two or more colors together until you are satisfied the new color will look as you like it with the commercial fabric. Take notes on how you blended the color so you can repeat it later.

Using Stencils and Rubbing Textures with Paintstiks

Freezer Paper stencils are my favorite and can be used more than once if you are careful. Design your stencil and cut with scissors or a knife. Iron onto the fabric and apply Paint Stick colors with your stencil brush. You can blend colors right on the fabric. The more Paintstik you apply the longer it will take to dry.

Various textured surfaces make interesting effects with Paintstiks. I discovered that it's best to enjoy the unexpected rather than trying to get a really detailed, controlled outcome. Tape the rubbing plate to your work surface and then tape the fabric over that. Rub Paint Sticks directly on the texture or use a stencil brush to transfer the color.

You can use rubber or carved stamps by stretching the fabric on top of the stamp and rubbing with your Paintstik or stencil brush.

Curing Paintstik on fabric

Allow the applied Paintstik to dry on the fabric for 3 to 7 days. The thicker the application the longer it takes to dry. It's hard to wait so long to continue with your project and some TV shows I've seen show heat setting right away. I ruined one of my pieces trying "speed setting" The Shiva Paintstik books recommend the longer drying time.

Place the fabric painted side down on a firm ironing surface covered with parchment paper and press with a dry iron heated to the proper temperature for your fabric. The fabric should be permanent and washable after heat setting.

Kathryn's Tips

Paintstiks on Fabric, Simple Techniques, Fantastic Results by Shelly Stokes is a great overview book with clear pictures on most of the ways to use Paintstiks at a reasonable price.

Kids are a natural with Paintstiks, they will really enjoy slathering on the color. Iron the fabric they will use onto freezer paper to make it more stable. Plan on a long drying time because of the extra thick application of color. Show them how to blend colors right on their pictures.

If you don't wash the fabric first the Paintstik will float on the surface and even though it seems dry will become soft again when you try to heat set. The Paintstik needs to sink into the fabric for the best results.

Regular colors of Paintstik will scorch more easily with heat setting than the iridescent colors. This happened to one of my pieces and I never would have known why except that I talked with a Paintstik pro at the International Quilt Festival!

Rather than worrying about being sure that your marking technique for quilting will come out of your quilt consider marking with Paintstiks. It takes about the same amount of time as regular marking and will enhance the look of the quilted line and become part of the overall design. Use your own freezer paper cut stencils or purchased ones.

Design or copy purchased stencils on 8.5 x 11 or 14" paper. Scan the stencil design into your computer and then print out as many copies as you need on freezer paper.

Be sure to protect your iron and ironing surface with parchment paper when heat setting. When re-using freezer paper stencils cover them with parchment paper too to keep paint off your iron.

Use any fancy punches you may have to create stencils, or stencil strips with freezer paper or masking tape.

Purchase a small set of half stick Paintstik colors that really appeal to you at first. Add single colors as you need them. I purchased many colors online without being able to see how similar some of them were. I wish I had purchased the blending sticks, a few metallics, black, white and primary colors. Everything can be mixed from this group.

Don't forget to clean up at the end of your sessions, if you are like me you never know when you'll get back to the project and ruined brushes or stencils are a sad event.

Projects to Try with Shiva Paintstik

Test Paintstik colors that you like on dark, light and printed fabrics. Iron the fabric onto freezer paper to stabilize it for testing. Apply Paintstik directly to the fabric and also apply with a stencil brush from a pallet. Use your permanent sharpie marker or a pencil to write what you did, on the fabrics next to each test.

Select a group of colors you think you might like to purchase. Use masking tape to mark off squares on your fabric for each color of Paintstik. Apply the colors to the masked squares, and write the color name & number from the Paintstik tube on the fabric for reference.

Mask or cut a stencil with groups of 3 small squares. Use a stencil brush to fill squares 1 and 2 with different colors. Fill square 3 with the first two colors blended one over the other.

Practice freehand drawing on fabric stabilized with freezer paper. Try simple flowers, leaves or geometric shapes you are familiar with. Learn to use a stencil brush for subtle shading and add details with Paintstik applied directly to your sample.

Try rubbing Paintstik onto fabric squares over textured surfaces. Tape the texture to the work surface !

Make a folded freezer paper stencil.

Cut a square of freezer paper sized to fit on your fabric.
Fold the paper in half and crease, fold in half the other way and crease.
Next fold the paper on both diagonals and crease.
Refold the paper into quarters in the diagonal direction
Draw some interesting shapes along the folded edges of the paper.
Cut the shapes out and save them
Unfold and look at the design you've started.
Refold the paper to the side to side direction
Draw shapes along the folded edges again
Cut these new shapes out and save the pieces
Press the freezer paper stencil onto your fabric
Apply Paintstiks to the exposed fabric blending colors and adding highlights and details.

Use Cut Shapes

Arrange some of the interesting shapes you cut from the above stencil on a new piece of fabric and into a new design
Group them fairly close together
Apply Paintstik around the shapes
Be careful not to peel up the shapes with the stencil brush.
Work from the center out or along the edge to create a halo effect.

Clean the stencil brushes you have used, gather up scraps of freezer paper and save for later!

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