

## Printmaking with Karen Edwards

Printmaking is one of the oldest art forms and involves applying ink/paint/colour to an object and transferring that to another surface, a wall, paper, fabric etc. This is a simple printmaking activity using objects and materials you may have around the house. Even though printmaking is used to create many multiples you can still achieve a one off 'unique' effect. You can use this technique on paper too but celebrate your art by wearing it!

### Materials

Prepare your space - work on a flat surface, a table or desk is ideal but a tray on your lap could work. Cover your work surface if needed to protect it from paint. Make sure the items you are using are not precious - don't use your nans best tablecloth!

- Household objects to create your 'printing block' - plastic lids/bottle tops, string, cardboard tubes, polystyrene, the list is endless - have a rummage round.
- Paint - if you have fabric paints/ink - that's great but for this exercise we are using acrylic paint - but you could use tubes of watercolour paint, even household emulsion (tester pots)
- Plastic plate/old chopping board - to use as a paint palette
- Sponges - to apply paint
- Scrap paper - old magazines, packaging will do - newspaper ink can rub off.
- Some water and a clean cloth to keep hands clean
- Fabric - to print on and scraps to test prints on.

### Method

- Choose a found item of your choice to create your pattern.
- Lay your fabric on a flat surface with some scrap paper underneath to give some 'cushioning' this will help you achieve an even print.
- Practice on a similar piece of fabric first, different fabrics will often yield different effects and textures.
- Squeeze a small bit of paint onto your plastic plate/pallet - a little goes a long way.
- Take your sponge and dab a small amount onto the object - your 'printing block making sure it is spread evenly.
- Place it paint side down onto your fabric and apply even pressure with the palm of your hand.
- Remove the printing block carefully to reveal print.
- Apply more paint to the block to print again.

### Tips and things to consider

- Try to repeat the pattern or keep it random - it's up to you.
- You can add a bit of PVA to stop the paint drying so quickly and will ensure paint will not wash off.
- Keep practicing; you will learn what works best for you and which effects you like best.
- Less is best - build up paint - it's easier to add than take away.
- Paint can dry quickly - so be aware - if you want to use the same object you've used to print with in a different colour, clean it before you use again.
- Colours may look lighter when dry.
- When fabric is dry - iron before washing separately from other items.

### Clean up

- When washing hands/materials - don't use your best towels as the paint will stain and will be hard to remove.
- Acrylic is water-based paint but does dry quickly. use hot soapy water to clean equipment and you can use again.

### Further

If you want to invest in some fabric paints - you can buy locally or online, buy basic primaries first red, blue, yellow and a white and experiment with mixing. Have fun and let your imagination lead the way! The beauty of printmaking is the different results and the reveal is always a surprise!