

Gelatin Print Tutorial

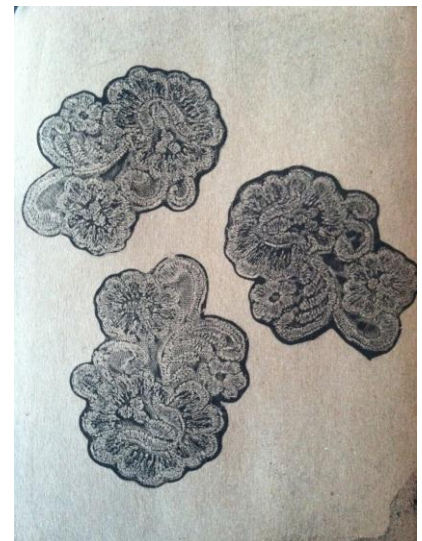
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Here is what you'll need to make your own:

- Unflavored gelatin (I used 2 boxes or 8 packets of Knox brand)
- A dish, pan or cookie sheet to form the gelatin plate in (I used the bottom of a broiler pan)
- Printing ink (I used Speedball Block Printing Ink in Black from Hobby Lobby)
- A brayer to spread the ink on the plate (like this [one](#))
- Something you want to make prints of: leaves, feathers, stencils, etc.
- Paper, heavier paper like card-stock works well, but you can get cool effects with others like, old dictionary pages, sheet music, handmade paper etc.

To make the gelatin plate, boil 2 cups of water. While it's boiling, dissolve the packets of gelatin into 2 cups of cool water. Combine the two cups of boiled water with the dissolved gelatin mixture. Pour the mix into your plate form; skim the top for bubbles so the surface is perfectly level. Place in the fridge, the plate should be plenty hard in a few hours, but I like to keep it in the fridge overnight.

To begin making prints, pour out some ink onto a paper plate or palette or whatever you got. Spread some onto the brayer and apply to the gelatin plate. For each run, you will be making two prints. So once the plate is covered evenly in ink, arrange whatever you want to print on the plate. Place a piece of paper over the plate and rub the ink on the paper, be careful not to shift the paper around too much. Pull the piece of paper up and you will get something like the left hand print (this is called the negative image). To get a positive image, pull up the material on the plate carefully. The picture in the middle is of the ink that was left on the plate when the lace appliqué was removed. Use another piece of paper and you will get something like the right hand print (the positive image).



After a couple of hours of using the gelatin plate it might get a bit mushy, just stick it back in the fridge to firm up again. Over time you might nick the plate or imprint shapes on it, this can result in interestingly altered prints. If you want to change ink colors or otherwise want to clean the plate just wipe it off with clean water, dry it thoroughly before starting to print again.

Most of my finished prints ended up drying curled up. To get them to lie flat, I covered a few at a time with a piece of scrap muslin, and ran my iron over them without steam. Then when they were still warm and flexible I bent them back into shape by hand and then stacked them under heavy books.

On your first attempt it's best not to try to make anything specific, just play around with objects, paper, inks, negative and positive image and so on. Once you have tons of dried prints, and a better understanding of what works and what doesn't write down different combinations or layouts you want to try for next time.

Have fun!