

Patriotic TLS Transfer Using Heavyweight Matte Paper by Jacqueline Gikow

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Supplies

- Image to transfer
- Computer
- Digital Imaging Software (such as Adobe Photoshop)
- Heavyweight matte paper
- Translucent Liquid Sculpey (TLS)
- Sculpey Diluent
- Premo Clay - small quantities of white, red, and ultramarine blue
- Assortment of square cutters in various sizes
- Pin back
- Slo-Zap

I'm sad that this craft project's imagery is driven by a country's tragedy. However, these pins are a way of resolving the conflict between feeling that my chosen profession as an artist and designer is self-indulgent right now and feeling I was given this gift to contribute to the world's need for artists to interpret visually what most people can't.

This is a quick and easy way to transfer images to your polymer pieces using your computer and printer. I hate running around looking for the right photocopier, and I don't want to ruin expensive transfer papers such as Lazertran because there is a learning curve and I'm going to waste some. The idea gives me heart palpitations and an onset of blocked creativity.

I don't know where I picked this method up, but I've modified it with my own specifications and the results are quite good. I do all the experimentation for the right

brightness and lightness of the image in my digital imaging program, Photoshop. I am not familiar with other digital imaging programs, so I can't recommend any.



Selection of images ganged up in a single Photoshop document

I found the images I used on the web in clip art sites (be cognizant of copyright restrictions). Luckily most were large so I reduced them to the size I wanted while also increasing the image quality from 72dpi (usual web size) to 150dpi.



This is an approximation of the change in size. As you increase dot density the image decreases in size. Look in your program manual for details.

Step One:

Mix up TLS with about 1/3 to 1/2 parts of Sculpey Diluent depending on how thick the TLS is. Make sure both materials are completely blended. The mixture should be about the consistency of heavy cream.

Step Two:

Print out your images on heavyweight, matte paper. Any brand will work. For this project I used Avery paper; however, I've used other brands with similar success. My printer is a large format Hewlett Packard DeskJet, but again, any bubble or deskjet will work.

Before doing the final printout, make sure your images are bright without looking washed out when printed.



Step Three:

Brush a coat of TLS on the images. The TLS should be heavy enough to cover the image without leaving bubbles or uncovered areas. You'll have to experiment, but it will soon be evident how much TLS to brush on.

Step Four:

Put the entire sheet of paper in the oven. Fire at 300 degrees Fahrenheit for about 20 minutes. Don't overfire. That will cause bubbling and ruin the sheet of transfers.

When you take the paper out of the oven, cut out the images you are using.



Step Five:

Soak the image in water and then start peeling the paper backing away while it is in the water. The image will remain on the TLS and the paper will work away.

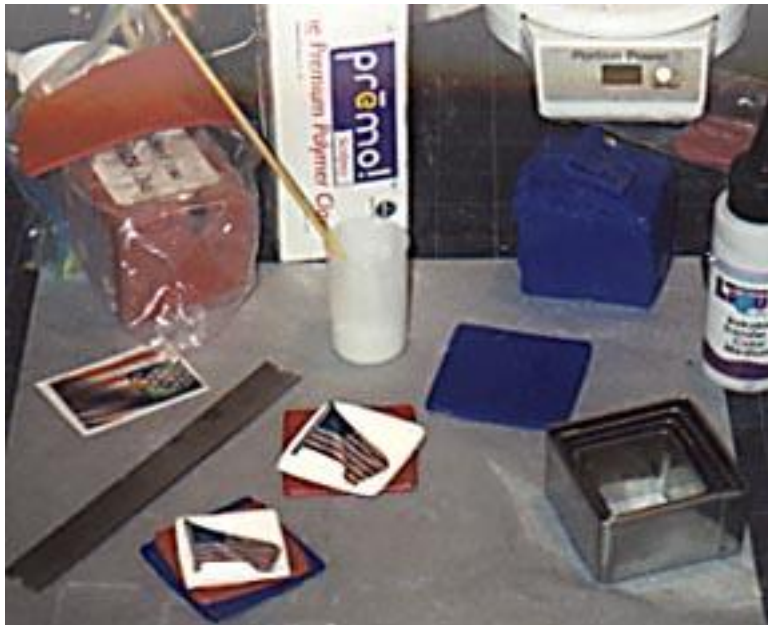
It's easier if you have nails to start the peeling, but once it starts you just have to let the paper roll onto itself and float off.

At this point be careful not to rub too hard because you might tear the image. Let the image dry.

Step Six:

Roll out a small sheet each of white and red clay at #3. Roll out a small sheet of blue clay at the largest setting, usually #1. Using your cutters, cut the white clay with the smallest cutter, the red with the next larger size and the blue clay with the third larger cutter.

To get a rounded edge, I tore open a plastic sandwich bag, placed it on the clay, and pushed the cutters down through the baggie and the clay. Doing this rounds and smooths the top edge.



Step Seven:

Apply TLS to the back of the transfer image and lay it on the white clay square. Mount the white square on the red and those two layers on the blue. Using a brayer, roll over them gently to create a bond.



Step Eight:

Fire the pin at 265 degrees for 20 minutes, then attach the pin back to the clay with Slo-Zap and let it set.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jacqueline Gikow is a freelance artist, designer, and writer who works with manufacturers designing and developing craft and giftware products, and with publishers developing original designs and instructional articles and books.

Jacqueline's work in polymer clay draws upon previous experience as a potter. She is the author of the newly released *Polymer Clay: Creating Functional and Decorative Objects*.

Ms Gikow's educational background includes a Master of Industrial Design from Pratt Institute, an MFA from Arizona State University, and a BFA from Alfred University, New York.