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# Chalking Made Easy: Simple Instructions for Scrapbookers and Card Designers

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Chalking is a quick, inexpensive way to add creativity, color, and character to your scrapbooking layouts and other papercrafts.

With a simple set of chalks, you can add highlights and shading to your paper piecings, diecuts, punch art, stamping, lettering, cardstock, patterned papers, and vellum.

Chalks create professional, custom looks with surprising ease.

Here's what you need to know:

What kind of chalk should I use? It's best to stick to chalks that were designed for use in scrapbooking. You won't want to use artists' pastels unless they are specifically labeled acid-free. Here's a link to the chalks I use and love, made specifically for scrapbooking.

What tools will I need?

A variety of tools create a variety of effects. Use cotton balls for all-over soft color, Q-tips and/or specially designed foam applicators (which look like eye makeup applicators but which you'll find in craft stores) when you want deeper color.

When using Q-tips, make sure to roll the swab around in your fingers to tighten the cotton so you don't get wisps, which can take the color where you don't want it.

My favorite chalk application tool - believe it or not - is a tampon. I got this idea from *Creating Keepsakes*, and decided to try it. A tampon provides a wonderful firmness and width for all-over color. And when it's time to change colors, you can just clip off the used portion and start again. How is the chalk applied?

Experiment on a piece of scrap paper and see what kind of effects you can achieve with these simple tools and a palette of chalks.

Start with a light touch and add more color as you wish. Also, start with the lightest color and layer your darker colors on top, where appropriate for shading.

If you are going to be chalking a diecut or other embellishment, make sure you use extra caution when you are gluing because the chalk will stick to the glue. If you get a little wild with your glue, use your Un-du before you use your chalk.

Here are a few ideas to trigger your own creative imagination:

\* Fill in - or simply outline - a stenciling template with chalk.

\* Use chalks to create just the right color on photo mats or other embellishments. Chalk will even tint ribbons and fibers for a perfect color match.

\* Create a rubbing of an embossed diecut by applying the chalk directly to paper that is placed over the diecut.

Can I fix mistakes?

It's surprisingly easy to fix chalking goofs, but you will need a chalk eraser (available at craft stores.) You can always add chalk over a spot that you've erased, but fix mistakes quickly: Chalks become permanent more quickly than you might think.

Do I need to "set" the chalk?

The pigments in scrapbooking chalks become permanently set in the paper several hours after application, so a permanent fixative generally isn't necessary if the layout is going to be in a protective sleeve.

If you apply your chalks with a light hand, they shouldn't migrate, and you can lightly swipe away any loose chalk with a clean cotton ball, or remove extra chalk by placing your page face down and rubbing gently.

You can also use an acid-free spray fixative - available in craft stores - to help ensure the chalk doesn't smear or migrate, but be careful not to spray the photos.

That's it! Have fun, and don't be afraid to experiment. This is where the artist in you is allowed to come out and play!

Susie Cortright publishes a free weekly scrapbooking newsletter, featuring best of the net design ideas and advanced techniques. Susie is also a scrapbooking instructor for a rapidly growing direct sales scrapbooking company, which offers high commissions, second-to-none support, and low monthly minimums.

You can browse her online catalog here: <http://www.momscape.com/scrapbooking/catalog>, Or get more information on how you can build your own scrapbooking business alongside her:

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