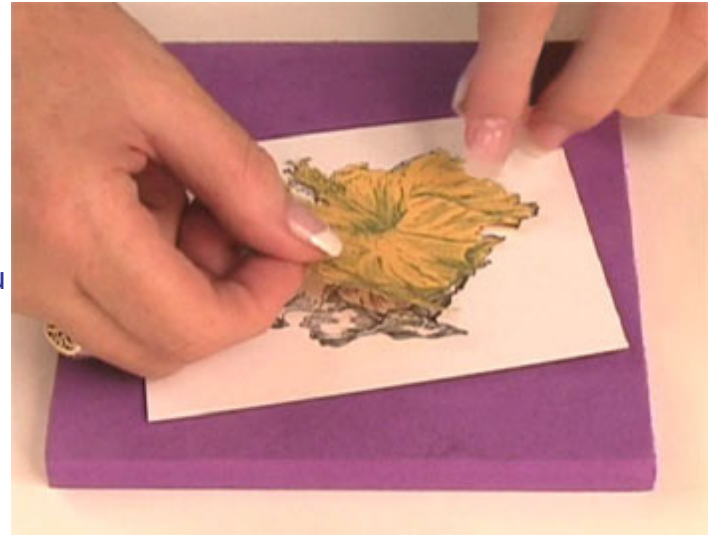


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What is a mask? (March 07)

Information courtesy of [Sugarloaf Products, Inc](http://www.sugarloafproducts.com)

A mask is applied to cover the image in order to create a background, or to stamp other images without interfering with or stamping on top of the first image. A mask can also be used to protect the area around a stamped image. This is called a mortise mask. By masking the images you are working with you can create all sorts of professional looking effects in your art.



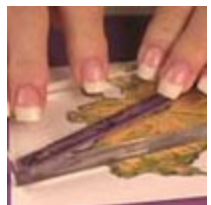
1 - Using the same stamp (of the one you stamped on your art.) stamp onto a piece of light weight paper. A Post-It note or 20# copier is a good weight.

2 - Carefully cut out around the out line of the image. I cut just inside the out line of the image. This slightly 'smaller than the image' mask will compensate for the thickness of the paper. Then, when you stamp over the mask there won't be a gap between the first image and the background, or the first image and the others you plan to add.

3 - Apply a small amount of temporary adhesive to the back of the mask. This will keep the mask from shifting after it is applied on the art.

4 - Lay the mask carefully over the image on your art. Now you can stamp on top of it without stamping on it. Stamp the next element of your composition directly over the mask.

5 - When you remove the mask you will see that the last element you stamped will appear to be BEHIND the first image. The main thing to remember is, the things you stamp first will be on top. If you keep this always in mind when masking, you can plan some very realistic looking art.



6 - There is a second type of mask... This is called a mortise mask. A mortise mask protects the area around the image. I often save my regular masks by tacking them onto the matching mortise mask. Creating is easier if you have everything you need all together.

7 - With a mortise mask you can use sponges and inks, chalk, splatter, or texture on an image without worry of going outside the lines!

8 - In the case of this Hibiscus, I chose to sponge the bamboo with brown ink. I plan to color the flower in with pencils, so I won't need that mortise mask now.

9 - As I mentioned in step 5, a regular mask will create layers behind the first images you stamp. A mortise mask will create layers ON TOP of the image. This is not only great for coloring your image with chalk, ink, and sponges. You can use a mortise mask to add interesting images and textures to background stamps, create "windows" and shapes on your art, and to protect the negative areas while you work.

10 - You can stamp, mask, and add new images or layers as many times as you want. Simply leave your first masks in place and apply the next mask over it. You can create very complex scenes, exquisite vintage layers, or do an incredible, but fast and easy, card for that birthday you forgot about.

11 - Back to the Hibiscus... I'm creating a fast background by sponging green ink around the masked flower and bamboo. This is a very simple way to convert a couple of stamped images into an artistic composition.

12 - The Hibiscus is ready to color and then attach, with layered paper, to a card or to use as an element on a project or a page. Because the masks had already been made, and saved in the See D™ box along with the matching stamps, this project took less time to create then it took you to read these steps!

13 - Save your masks! Once you have taken the time to make a mask, it can be used over and over again. I just tack my masks to the wood mount or store them in the See D's™ box. This little leaf mask is very old. I have used it so many times over the years you can no longer see the image through the over stamped ink, but the mask still works great!

