

Monoprint / Monotype

Monoprinting is a form of printmaking that has lines or images that can only be made once, unlike most printmaking, where there are multiple originals. There are many different techniques and results of **monoprinting**.

Suitable papers

Most types of paper are suitable but try to avoid any that has a shiny texture such as tracing paper as the ink will not dry. Textured papers will give you a textured print.

Suitable inks

Oil based inks are best for this process.

Hawthorn Printmakers supply a range of stay open oil based ink which work well for monoprinting.

Wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment); Disposable gloves, apron

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|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| You will need: | Oil based ink/paint | Palette knife |
| | Roller | Mark making tools/ paintbrush |
| | Plastic plate | Paper larger than your plate |

Preparation:

A. Onto a plastic plate, of the required size, roll on a thin layer of oil based ink.

B. Use cloth, fingertips and mark making tools to draw into the surface of the ink / wipe away areas of ink to produce spontaneous marks, tones and textures. Alternatively add on other coloured ink - treat your plate like a mini canvas. Don't apply the ink too heavily or it will bleed when printed. You can also lay newsprint paper stencils on the plate as a resist.

Printing your plate – *make sure you've had an etching press induction first*

You will need: Newsprint, tissue paper & cartridge paper

Method

A. Lay a piece of newsprint on the press which is larger than your plate and the paper you are printing onto.

B. Place your plate in the centre of the newsprint FACE UP and position your paper over it. Place a piece of tissue paper over the top of your paper to stop any ink from getting onto the blanket and to keep your paper clean.

C. Carefully lower the blanket over the top of the paper and smooth out any creases. Wind through the press.

D. Fold back the blankets and check your print. Place your print on the drying rack to dry. Throw newsprint and tissue away.

Cleaning up

Wear PPE; disposable gloves, apron

Method:

A. Using your palette knife scrape up any ink off the table into a dirty rag and place in the metal bin.

B. Use vegetable oil and a semi-dirty rag to clean off any excess ink from the table and your plate/s. Place this dirty rag into the soiled rags bin.

C. Use a clean rag and soap solution to wipe any oily residue from the table or your plates.

D. Roll your dirty roller onto some newspaper to remove the majority of ink. Use vegetable oil and soap solution to clean any ink off the roller and handle.

E. Use vegetable oil and soap to clean your hands.

Drying period

Your prints will take approximately two days to dry thoroughly, longer if on non absorbent paper. Store dry prints wrapped in tissue paper.

Dispose of any excess oil based ink by scraping into a rag and placing it within the metal bin.

Notes

The **most painterly method among the printmaking techniques**, monoprints and monotypes are essentially printed paintings. The characteristic of this method is that no two prints are alike; although images can be similar, editioning is not possible. The appeal of the monotype is in its versatility and its combination of printmaking, painting and drawing mediums.

A plate monotype/mono-print can be created by working either in the negative or the positive. To produce a **positive mono-print** the artist applies ink as if to a canvas – with rollers/paint brushes etc – and print the plate with the aid of a press. To produce a **negative monoprint** the plate is covered entirely with ink, which is then removed partially or wholly to create tonal effects. This process is carried out using brushes, toothpicks, cotton swabs, fingers, etc. Items such as cotton/fabric/talcum powder etc. are also sometimes added to incorporate 'texture' or pattern into the piece – known as a **collage monoprint** – this gives a 'photogram' effect to the print.

If the ink is too thickly applied it will spread from the pressure when printed, forming a blot/smudge. If too thin it won't show up at all. Almost all the ink transfers to the paper so it is not possible to make more than one print, hence the prefix mono. After printing, the images can be an artwork in their own right, or can be reworked to completion using various types of media – collage, drawing, scanned in and manipulated digitally etc.