

Decoupage How-to

By Maureen Williams

Decoupage is the art of sinking a print with multiple layers of a suitable medium so it appears to be part of the shell rather than raised above it. It is important that the print lays flat on the surface of the shell as any ripples or creases in the paper will be very difficult to disguise on the final result.



Hints & Tips for Decoupage

Any wrapping paper, card or image printed from your computer can be used for decoupage on an egg. If you are using a card it is advisable to split the image from the card backing so as to avoid the paper being too thick and therefore hard to sink.

Cut around the edge of your image taking care to remove any unnecessary background paper between the parts of the image. The background can be replaced using powdered chalks.

To allow the paper to curve more naturally to the shape of the egg cut small slits around a natural line in the image and allow it to overlap (e.g. around the edge of a petal or a leaf) Use a small, sharp pair of curved scissors or a craft knife to trim away the underlying piece of the print so it doesn't form a ridge.

Apply about 4 or 5 coats of your favourite decoupage medium before sanding for the first time. Brush on even layers in alternating directions and then allow to dry thoroughly.

Sand all over the egg using medium/fine grit wet and dry sandpaper. Add a drop of washing up liquid detergent so the sand paper slips on the shell without grabbing the surface and scoring it.

Repeat the application of medium with a couple of layers between sanding until you can't feel any evidence of the edge of the paper.

How you want the finished egg to look (high shine, satin, matte) will determine the overall method for your decoupage. If you are aiming for a matte finish you will need to sand all around the shell until it is very smooth without any tell-tale shiny spots. Allow the egg to dry after the wet & dry rub down and then shine a torch on the surface.

Do an on-line search for a product called Micro Mesh – this is a superb, material like sandpaper which is available in grits ranging from 1500 up to 12,000. As this product isn't paper based, like normal wet and dry sandpaper, it conforms much easier to the curvature of the shell. If you work through all the different grits you can achieve the most wonderful high shine on the shell without the need for a high gloss lacquer.

Below are two goose eggs – the one on the right has been polished using Micro Mesh.



If you are wanting a satin finish an application of bees wax after the final sanding and a polish with a soft cloth will produce a nice lustre.

If you are lucky enough to be able to get some Mother of Pearl Buffing Powder or have some hidden away in your supplies, this will produce an extremely high gloss, glassy shine to your finished egg.

I am including a copy of some wrapping paper which I have had for many years. These alphabet letters are an ideal decoration for simple personalised eggs.





