

SCREEN PRINTING CERTIFICATION HANDOUT

WELCOME TO THE PRINT SHOP AT SPARK MAKERSPACE!!!!

Who are the leads?

Nike (pronounced niki, she/they pronouns) (specialties= screen printing multi colored posters and navigating Spark's organizational channels!)

Julie (specialties= screen printing, youth organizing, and is a liaison with FRESH, a local community garden and food justice org.)

Micheala (specialties= graphic design, book making, experience with letter press and riso printing... but especially book making!)

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What SCREEN PRINTING tools are available in the Print Shop?

- silk screens
- YUDU units
- power washer
- inks
- paper
- transparencies & tracing paper
- printing hinges + tables
- squeegees
- scoop coaters
- emulsion & gray room

Attitude and culture

- Share space and supplies
- Be cognizant of other's work space & their limited time here
- Personal tools and materials left in the shop will be treated as public property.
- If you do have to leave things in the shop, make sure you label them and keep them moving outta here in a timely fashion!
- Re: space usage, at Spark, all classes get precedent; check the online calendar to see if something is happening at that time

General Safety & Cleaning & Maintenance

- put things back where you found them/ where they belong *always*
- all donations should be cleared by a lead or Casey
- the Print Shop does not have tiered access, anyone can use the space, BUT printers needing the space for printmaking do have priority.
- be aware of using materials with strong odors, open the door/ windows with care (not usually a thing with screen printing)
- damaged tools should be taken out of service and *kept* out of service... AND should be reported to the lead & be labeled ASAP!
- PLEASE help maintain the rotation of the community screens and reclaim your/others' screens often/ in a timely manner!

SCREEN PRINTING PROCEDURES AT SPARK MAKERSPACE

CLEANING A SCREEN (reclaiming a screen)

1. Use gloves
2. Attach the hose with the spray gun to the faucet by sliding the neck at the end of the hose so that it locks onto the faucet spout.
3. Wet both sides of the screen
4. Pour a minimum amount of Rhinoclean emulsion remover into the ceramic dish - just enough to cover the bottom of the dish
5. Using the designated brush, scrub both sides of the screen with the cleaner. (It's better to dip then apply cleaner, instead of letting the sit in cleaner)
6. Let stand for 30-60 seconds, before using the spray hose, scrub as much emulsion off as you can with just the brush.
7. Spray & scrub THOROUGHLY until the screen is completely free of any emulsion, including pinholes. Use a powerful spray from the options the spray gun offers, like "angle" or "center". Be diligent and use light to check for pinholes. This is one of the most important parts of screen longevity!

**Any screen that is not labeled with a name and date is free to wash out, as are screens over 3 weeks old. Screens left near the sink are generally understood to be ready to reclaim.

COATING A SCREEN WITH EMULSION

1. Choose a screen:
 - The screen should be bone dry and free of dust
 - Make sure the screen you choose is large enough for your image
 - Clearly label and date your screen, screens can be kept for your future use for up to a week.
2. Get ready to enter the darkroom:
 - make sure the scoop coater you choose is large enough for your image, but not wider than the frame. The scoop coater should be dry and free of debris as well.
 - grab your screens, a clean rag, a flat edge, spatula, gloves, aprons... whatever you're gonna need.
3. Coat your screens
 - Open the emulsion (black bucket) and carefully pour an even amount into the scoop coater
 - Carefully, and with plenty of space from the top and bottom edge of the frame, coat your screen in an even & steady layer on just the flat side of the screen.
 - Carefully put your coated screens into the darkroom cabinet and let them cure/ dry overnight
4. Clean up
 - Use a spatula to scrape all remaining emulsion from the scoop coater back into the emulsion bucket
 - Close the bucket tightly
 - Using just water and a rag/sponge, wash the scoop coater and spatula completely- no blue emulsion should remain anywhere!! Wipe dry and place on the rack to dry

*** The Dark Room light switch for the UV safe light is on the light cord; found to the right of the curtain.

Do not leave any drips of emulsion behind on any surface.! Wipe them away before they dry!

EXPOSING A SCREEN

1. Tape your stencil, right reading, onto the exposure unit
2. Turn on the lights of the exposure unit
3. Find your coated screen from the dark room. Flat side down, place over your stencil, and weigh it down evenly. You do not have to cover anything else- just the portion with your design.
4. Let it expose/cure for 10 Minutes. Set the timer! Less common: If the mesh color of your screen is yellow, (ie a 220 mesh) expose for minimum 14 minutes
5. Remove weights, turn off lights, and bring your screen to the sink.
6. In the sink, wet both sides of the screen and wash out your stencil until it is clear mesh, no blue should remain- it shouldn't take long!
7. Once the screen is dry to the touch, it is ready to print.

PRINTING:

This is very hard to describe with only words! But, here are some reminders:

- Using clear tape or masking tape on the flat side of your screen, tape the border around the edges of the emulsion. (i.e. where you don't want the ink to come through)

- Gather things you need; like the ink, spatula, rag, squeegee*, scrap paper, side table, whatever you need for your work flow and set yourself up. *Choose a squeegee that is not too much larger than your design

- As you print, don't angle the squeegee into the ink

- Don't drag ink all the way into the "well" of the screen; keep the ink in the middle of the screen. (The well is the space where the mesh and the frame meet.)

- Some inks dry more quickly than others. Keep it moving, or keep it moist! If the ink is too thin and causes the prints to bleed around the edges, don't be afraid to pause and print on scrap paper until everything looks crisp again. Basically, pay attention to the ink you've chosen and learn to work with it!

WASHING UP AFTER PRINTING:

1. Do not allow the ink to dry in the screen.
2. When finished with printing, return as much unused ink- from both the screen and your squeegee- to the container as possible before washing the screen
3. Remove tape from the screen
4. Wash spatulas and squeegee
5. Clean work surface thoroughly, including acetate
6. Put away inks, close lids tightly
7. Make sure to label your screen with name/date if you will be printing again soon. Any screen that is not labeled with a name and date is free to washout, as are screens over 3 weeks old.

SCREEN STORAGE FAQ

-Screens left next to the the sink are generally understood to be ready to reclaim and available for use, unless labeled.

-Any screen that is not labeled with a name and date is free to washout/ available to use

-Any that are screens over 3 weeks old are free to washout/ available to use

-Once dry, screens should be moved the screen storage rack

-Any screens in the dark room that are not labeled are also available to use. (I often coat a few at once!)

SCOOP COATER FAQ

-should not have any nicks on its edges, please take care

-use the sharper edge (as opposed to the rounded edge)

- wash THOROUGHLY after using- no blue!

POWER WASHER FAQ

-coming soon

COMMON TYPES OF STENCILS

-tracing paper

-acetate print out

-rubylith, cut paper stencil

- hand drawn transparency

INK FAQ

1. When mixing, do not contaminate the store bought inks with each other. Use a separate spatula or scoop for each color. YES! You can mix your own color!
2. Please Give Back \$\$ to the ink jar

DRYING RACK FAQ

1. Use from the bottom up
2. The drying rack is not for storage; other users may move others' dry prints to a table top carefully!

Spark Print Shop resources, videos, and a pdf of this handout can be found here: <https://www.sparkmakerspace.org/printshop-rp>

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