

STAMP CARVING BASICS

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A great hand carved stamp is a treasure and it's more personal than a store bought stamp. Carving rubber stamps is a great hobby and form of expression!

Carving Mediums

There are a number of types of rubber that can be used to carve a stamp. Here are a few:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Attributes</u>	<u>Where to Purchase</u>
Rainbow Erasers	Very Cheap, Smooth, but rectangular	Dollar Tree, Deal\$ (6/\$1)
Pink/White Pearl Erasers	Cheap, hard to carve	all over
Speedy-Stamp (pink)	GOOD for carving, not too soft, thin	Michael's, Hobby Lobby
Mastercarve	very soft. Easy to carve but breakable	Michael's, Hobby Lobby
Moo Carve	BAD - too soft; not recommended	Michael's, Hobby Lobby
OZ-Kut	Carvers' choice! Various softness and colors	www.stampeaz.com

Tools Required

The sharper and smaller the tool, the more detail/definition you will get. Listed from worst to best:

- Pencil - pull the eraser straight out and squish the metal end into a V.
- Cuticle trimmer - not too sharp but will carve smoothly
- Carving Gauge (blade) - Speedball and Staedtler make carving tool set that come with different sized gauges.
- Carving Needles - for the very serious and detailed carver. Research online.



Carving Your Stamp

1. Find a black & white image such as the rose shown. You can use clip art, coloring books or other pictures.
2. Color the solid part of the picture with a #2 pencil.
3. Turn the picture over onto your carving medium and rub back of the picture with something smooth (like a spoon). This will transfer the reverse image to the eraser.
NOTE: if you are using letters, don't just handwrite them onto your stamp or they will come out backward! Write them on your paper and then transfer them to the stamp with this method. The letters will be reversed on the stamp, but correct when you stamp with it.
4. Now, carve away the areas that will not be inked. It is always best to cut AWAY from, or scoop, the line at an angle so that you don't undercut the design. Start with the most difficult and intricate part of the stamp first in case you make a mistake. When following the curves of your image, it's easier to rotate the carving medium under the blade than it is to twist the carving blade around the stamp.
5. Test your stamp and make changes as needed. If your stamp is not taking ink well, you can "condition" it by rubbing acetone over the surface or coloring it with a Sharpie permanent marker.
6. If your carving medium is flimsy, glue a plastic bottle cap, small piece of wood, or piece of foam door-hanger to the un-inked side of the eraser to use as a handle. I use *E6000* or *Loctite Stik&Seal: NoMess*, but you can get a variety of opinions on AtlasQuest.com.
7. Don't forget to keep an image of your stamp for yourself! You have created a work of art!



Inkjet Label Paper Transfer: Tape a piece of label backing (like paper that had postage stamps on it) onto a paper and print onto it. A "conserve ink" setting is often best. The ink will be sitting on the label paper and you just lay it carefully onto the rubber. Then lift and allow to dry. Smears easily but effective.

Laserjet Acetone Transfer: To transfer a copied/laserjet image: place the copy face down on the rubber carving material and, using a cotton ball, wet the paper with acetone (nail polish remover) and then quickly lift.