

Relief printing with lino

A visual guide to designing, cutting, inking and pulling your own print.



NAME _____ CLASS _____ DATE _____

LEARNING GOAL

I can plan, cut and print a lino relief print safely, and explain why it prints as a mirror image.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- ☐ I can use a cutter and bench hook safely.
- ☐ I can design in bold shapes and reverse any lettering.
- ☐ I can roll a thin, even layer of ink and pull a clean print.

1 What you need



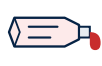
Lino block
the surface you cut



Lino cutters
a V-tool and a U-gouge



Bench hook
holds the block still



Water-based ink
washes off with water



Roller (brayer)
spreads thin, even ink



Inking plate
to roll the ink out on



Baren or spoon
to press the paper



Paper
plus spares for tests



Stay safe with cutters

- Always cut **away from your body** and away from the hand holding the block.
- Keep your holding hand **behind the blade**.
- Hook the **bench hook** over the table edge so the block cannot slip.
- Cut slowly, in short strokes; turn the block for curves.
- Carry cutters blade down; return them to the tray.
- Hard lino? Warm it a little (on a radiator or under your hand) to soften it.
- Cut yourself? Tell your teacher straight away.

2 Step by step

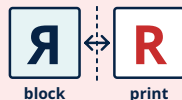
FOLLOW THE PANELS IN ORDER

1 Bold shapes



Use strong, simple shapes and shade every part that will print. Thin, fiddly lines are hard to cut.

2 Mirror image



The print is reversed left to right, so draw letters and numbers **backwards** on the block.

3 Transfer



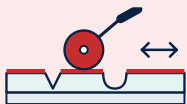
Trace in soft pencil, turn the tracing over onto the lino and rub the back. The lines transfer reversed.

4 Cut



What you cut away stays the colour of the paper (white on white paper). The raised surface takes the ink.

5 Ink the block



Squeeze a little ink onto the plate. Roll until it looks like velvet, then roll the block in several directions.

6 Print



Lay the paper on the inked block. Press all over in small circles with a baren or the back of a spoon.

7 Pull the print



Hold one edge down and peel back a corner. Too pale? Lower it and press again. Then lift it off.

8 Clean up



Water-based ink washes off with water. Wash the roller and plate, sponge the block, return the cutters.



3 Plan your print

Sketch three ideas. Shade what will print in ink; leave the cut-away parts white.

IDEA A

☐ Bold shapes
 ☐ Flip check done

IDEA B

☐ Bold shapes
 ☐ Flip check done

IDEA C

☐ Bold shapes
 ☐ Flip check done



Flip check

Hold your sketch up to a window or a mirror, or trace it and turn the tracing over. That is how it will print.

Best idea: _____

4 Mark-making test strip

On a lino scrap, cut each mark. Print the strip, then stick it in or sketch how each mark printed.

Straight lines V-tool	Curves turn the block	Cleared area U-gouge	Short flicks like fur or grass	Cross-hatching for tone	My own mark invent one

5 Troubleshooting

TICK ANY THAT HAPPENED

WHAT YOU SEE	LIKELY CAUSE	FIX IT NEXT TIME	ME?
Blotchy, lines filled in	Too much ink	Roll a thinner layer, until it looks like velvet.	☐
Patchy or speckled	Too little pressure or ink	Press firmly in small circles everywhere; add a little ink.	☐
Lettering back to front	Forgot to mirror	Draw letters backwards on the block; flip check first.	☐
Smudged or doubled	Paper moved	Hold the paper still with one hand while you press.	☐
Ink in cleared areas	Cut too shallow	Clear large areas a little deeper with the U-gouge.	☐

6 Reflect on your print

WHAT WENT WELL?

WHAT WILL YOU CHANGE?

WHY DON'T CUT PARTS PRINT?



GO FURTHER

Plan a two-colour version of your design. Which parts would print in the first, lighter colour? Ask your teacher about reduction printing.

