

Screen Printing 101

PREPARE

Screen printing all starts with artwork. Remember that the better quality of artwork you have, the better the print will be. If the artwork has multiple colors then you will need to separate and print them individually. Each color will be created into a different screen and applied separately.



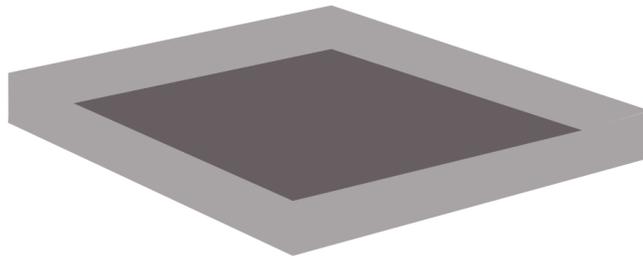
POSITIVE

Next you need to print out a positive of the artwork in order to burn the image into the silk screen. There are a lot of different ways to create a film positive. The positive needs to be as dark as possible so no light passes through.



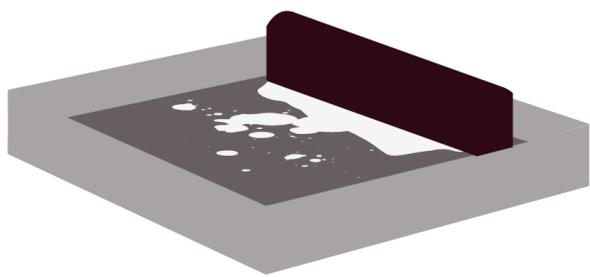
EMULSION

A screen printing frame is a wood or aluminum frame with polyester mesh stretched across it. When printing shirts you want to get a 1/10 mesh. A light sensitive emulsion is coated on the mesh but before you put it on be sure to wash the mesh. After the emulsion is applied, let it dry for an hour or so.



EXPOSER

After the emulsion has dried put the positive on the screen and expose it to light for a certain amount of time depending of the light source. The light will harden the emulsion but the black positive will block light and leave the artwork area soft. When you're done, rinse the screen with water to remove the soft emulsion. Now you have a stencil where ink can pass through.



PRINT

Mount the screen in the printer head and apply the ink to the screen. Use a squeegee to press the ink downwards with a lot of pressure. Let the ink dry before you move to the next color. Next you need to cure the shirt. You can use an oven, heat gun or a conveyor dryer. When you're done be sure to wash the screen. The ink will dry extremely fast and is impossible to get out once it does.



ENJOY

Now you have a reusable stencil to print on shirts, jackets, hats, bags, bottles, or anything you want.