

Cutting your own stencils does require a little patience, but is easy and rewarding. With a few simple supplies, you'll soon be building your own stencil library.

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## You Will Need:

- A craft knife (one where you can easily snap off the blade to get a new sharp one is ideal).
- A cutting board or piece of card on which to cut the stencil.
- A piece of acetate or stiff plastic, see-through is easiest.
- A printout of the [stencil design](#) (you can enlarge or reduce this on a photocopier).

Some tape (ideally low-tack so your stencil doesn't get sticky).

## Preparation for Cutting a Stencil

Use a few pieces of tape to secure the printout of the stencil design to the piece of acetate along the edges so that it doesn't slip when you start cutting the stencil. Position the design so there is a border of acetate at least an inch (2.5cm) around the whole design.

- Always use a sharp craft knife start cutting out the stencil. A blunt blade makes the task more difficult and increases the risk that you'll get frustrated and less careful with it.

Begin cutting along the longest, straightest edges of the stencil design as these are the easiest. Your aim is to cut each line once only, so press firmly and smoothly.

Use your free hand to stop the acetate and stencil from moving off the cutting board, but keep your fingers well away from where you're cutting.

- Turn the stencil around so you're always cutting at an easy angle. As you've taped the design to the acetate, it won't move out of place.

Once you've cut out the whole design, tidy up any rough edges (so paint doesn't get caught up in these), and your stencil is ready to use. It's time to get your [stencil brush](#) out and start painting.

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By

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Marion Boddy-Evans is an artist living on the Isle of Skye, Scotland. She has written for art magazines blogs, edited how-to art titles, and co-authored travel books.

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Painting with [stencils](#) allows you to reproduce a pattern or design over and over again, as many times as you like. These tips will help you get good results.

## Stenciling Tip 1: Prep It

To achieve a straight line with a repeated stencil, such as one that runs down the length of a wall, you'll want to lay out a guide with a pencil and a long level, a chalk line put on with a line level or a projected one via a laser level. This will ensure that you won't end up with a design running slanted along the wall and will allow for repositioning your stencil with confidence.

## Stenciling Tip 2: Get Sticky

Double-sided or another masking tape can work for adhering your stencil in place, though if you're working on a surface with a finish that could come off, you may wish to use something a little less permanent, such as low-tack painter's tape or spray-on stencil adhesive. Ensure all areas of the stencil are flat before you load your brush with paint.

## Stenciling Tip 3: Think Thin

Don't overload a brush with paint, as it'll seep under the edges of the stencil. Load the brush lightly, so that the ends of the bristles are covered evenly; wipe off any excess on a piece of paper or cloth.

You'll get better results by applying two thin coats rather than one thick one. Wait for the first to dry before applying the second.

## Stenciling Tip 4: Use a Professional Brush

[Stenciling brushes](#) are round with short, stiff bristles. Use them in a quick up-and-down movement to dab paint onto your stencil. This helps prevent paint from getting under the stencil's edges. A sponge or small roller works well too.

## Stenciling Tip 5: Work From the Outside

Start [painting](#) on the edges of the stencil, working from the edges inward, rather than from the center outward. Again this helps prevent paint from getting under the edges, as you're less likely to accidentally bump the brush against an edge.

## Stenciling Tip 6: Going Multicolored

To use more than one color in a stencil, use painter's tape to mask off areas of the stencil you don't want in a particular color.

## Stenciling Tip 7: Practice Makes Perfect

If you're using various stencils together, first try each out on a piece of paper or cardboard. It's far easier to find out that something isn't working at this stage than when you're painting on your final surface—especially if that surface involves you on a ladder!

## Stenciling Tip 8: X-Rated Stencils

Old X-rays work well for [creating your own stencils](#), so if you're unfortunate to need to have some taken, don't throw them away.

## Stenciling Tip 9: Wash Regularly

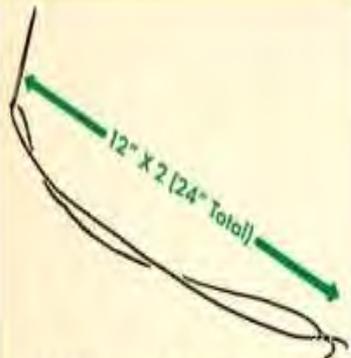
If you're doing a repeat design, wash your stencil regularly in warm water to keep the edges free of paint. If there's some paint globbed on an edge, you won't get a crisp edge to your painted design. Because paper stencils don't lend themselves to washing, acetate stencils are better for repeat designs. With a paper or card stencil, wipe off the excess paint, and then leave the stencil for a bit so the paint on it dries before using it again.

## Stenciling Tip 10: Store Stencils Flat

A stencil needs to be flat to be usable. To stop it from buckling, put it between two pieces of cardstock or cardboard and store it somewhere flat, such as in a book or large telephone directory.

**If you try Painting with your own stencils, please send us your work!**

# How to Sew a Button

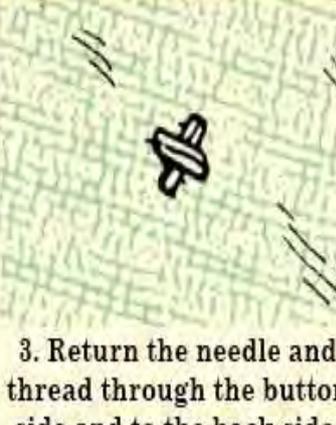


12" X 2 (24" Total)

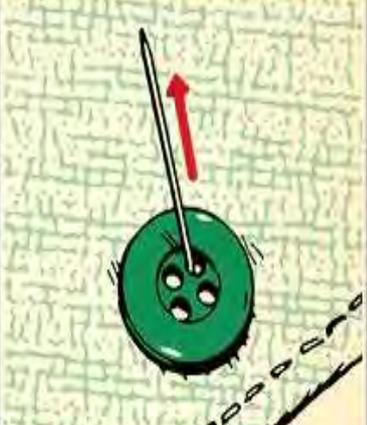
1. Thread your needle with ~24" of thread, pulling it halfway through so you have equal lengths on both sides of the needle, and then tie the loose ends together.



2. Starting on the back side of the fabric, pass the needle through the fabric and pull your thread nearly all the way through.



3. Return the needle and thread through the button side and to the back side, creating a hash mark. Repeat this process at a perpendicular angle to create an X on the button side of the fabric.

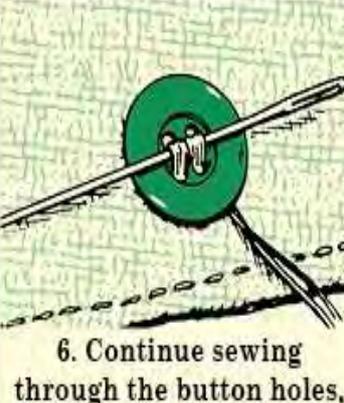


4. Place the button on the X mark before passing the needle from the back side of the fabric up through one of the button holes.



*This technique creates space so your button isn't sewn too tightly.*

5. Position a spare needle or toothpick across the button before returning the needle and thread through the opposite hole. Pull the thread taut.



6. Continue sewing through the button holes, passing through opposite holes each time and always pulling the thread tight, until you have passed through each set of holes three times.



7. Secure the base of the button by wrapping it with a portion of the remaining thread. Aim for six tight loops around the base.



8. Pass the needle through to the back side of the fabric at the base of the button, pulling it taut, then tie it off with a simple overhand knot.

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# HOW TO STENCIL LIKE A PRO: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE

Learning how to stencil is a fabulous way to bring out your inner-artists and create a unique handcrafted finish on any surface: walls, floors, furniture, wood, metal, paper, fabric.

Stencilling is easy as it is fun and inspires a feeling of creative satisfaction. Pieces made by hand have a certain charm and a vibe that is undeniable; a quality that store-bought art cannot compete with. Not to mention, stencils are economical. You can reuse a quality mylar stencils many times with simple care and proper storage. Whipping up a designer looks for a fraction of the cost is just a dab (or roll) of paint away.

## TOOLS + SUPPLIES

- **Application tool:** brush, dabber, sponge, or roller.
- **Adhesive:** Painter's tape or Spray Adhesive.
- **Paint:** Acrylic (matte), chalk paint, stencil creme.
- **Paint Tray:** to hold paint or blend and create custom colors.
- **Paper towel or Rags:** To offload the paint before stencilling.
- **Ruler/Tape measure:** Measure and align the artwork.
- **Stabilizer (optional):** Dowel, Pencil, or any stick-like tool.

# KEY STAGE 3 DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY- SHOP FRONT 1

Name:



Design Idea - My Shop Front

[WWW/EBI](#)

## DESIGN SPECIFICATION

MY DESIGN MUST INCLUDE:

- ✓ THE NAME OF THE BUSINESS
- ✓ LARGE WINDOWS FOR DISPLAY
- ✓ AN ATTRACTIVE DOORWAY
- ✓ A THEME OR COLOUR SCHEME THAT IS RECOGNISABLE

MY DESIGN COULD INCLUDE:

- ✓ A LOGO OR IMAGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE BUSINESS
- ✓ AN OUTSIDE EATING AREA FOR FINE WEATHER
- ✓ A DISTINCTIVE THEME, E.G. VINTAGE

Planning- materials/resources and how I am going to make it

# KEY STAGE 3 DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY- SHOP FRONT

Name:



## Design Brief

A new coffee shop/café is opening in Great Barr. The owner has asked you to design the frontage for the shop. The shop will serve drinks and home-made cakes and pastries, to eat in or take away. The owner hopes to attract a wide range of customers of different ages. You will need to present an idea for the shop front that is attractive and original. The name of the business must be clearly displayed, and you may also wish to design a logo for the business to make it memorable to customers.

**Plan your design over the next 2 pages before creating a model of your shop front. Your model can be made from card and other recycled materials that you can find around the home. Prizes will be awarded to the top 3 competition entries**

[WWW/EBI](http://WWW/EBI)

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- ✓ A DISTINCTIVE THEME, E.G. VINTAGE

## Sketch Ideas for Font/Name of Shop

## Ideas for Logo- annotated sketches

# KEY STAGE 3 DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY- SIGNS AND LOGOS

Name:

A B CAKES  
AB CAKES  
*AB Cakes*  
**AB Cakes**  
AB Cakes  
*AB CAKES*  
**AB CAKES**

Practice- lettering styles

[WWW/EBI](http://WWW/EBI)

## DESIGN SPECIFICATION

MY DESIGN MUST INCLUDE;

Ideas for Font/Name of Business

Ideas for Logo



Reverse applique is very easy depending upon the design you wish to use. I wanted to share with you how I take a design from the fabric I'm working with, enlarge it & create a cute accent to whatever it is I'm making. For this tutorial I'm making an A-line skirt from a thrift store sheet & adding some 2nd hand fabric as my "peek-a-boo" fabric for the reverse applique. Let's begin!

## Step 1: Step 1: Create Design

Something simple like a circle or triangle, using a simple design/stencil from the fabric you're using, whatever! The possibilities are never-ending :) You just pick out a design to cut out of one piece of fabric to let another fabric peek through.

I'm using an old school method of enlarging a design from the main fabric of my skirt. I'll enlarge it once more to the actual size I want (also because I'm actually making 3 skirts, I needed to copy the image 3 times). This will help me to assess what size my "peek-a-boo" fabric should be. You'll want at least 5/8in. allowance for the "P-A-B" fabric. I wanted to keep my "P-A-B" fabric tidy so I decided a simple square with hemmed edges would work best.

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## Step 2: Step 2 - Pin & Sew

Once you've decided where your design will go you'll need to pin the "P-A-B" fabric to the back & design outline to the front. Make sure the "P-A-B" fabric's right side is pinned to the back of the main fabric, so the right side can pop out once finished!

Now, I don't have a fancy-schmancy sewing machine. Not one that you can simply upload an image, press a button & voila! It's following the outline of the image. Nope, I have to do that manually... that's why I pin my design to the top, so I can follow the outline. Start. Stop. Twist, turn, adjust. Start. Stop. Turn. Start. Stop... this is the lesson in patience. Be patient with yourself, your machine and your project. Understand that the more complex the design, without the fancy-schmancy sewing machine, the longer & more tedious it may be. But then you can also revel in how awesome it turned out AND THAT YOU DID IT YOURSELF!!



Ok now back to the project...

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### Step 3: Step 3 - Removing Design Assistant

Now you just spent all that time tediously following this complex & awesome design, you don't want to rip out that paper & risk damaging all those stitches! So? I take a spray bottle & thoroughly moisten the paper. Yay! Now you can easily tear out the design w/out stressing your stitches.

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### Step 4: Step 4 - Cutting Out Design

Cut out design, leaving 1/8 to 2/8in from the stitches of the \*MAIN FABRIC\* ONLY!! <-- This is sooooooo important!! I use a simple "pinch & pull" technique; lightly pinch the top fabric with one hand & the bottom fabric with the other, then gently pull apart, securing that the top fabric is now away from the bottom & cutting can proceed without issue. Leaving that 1/8 to 2/8in is also key. This allows for a bit of fray but not so much that it would endanger your design.

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### Step 5: Step 5 - Wash & Enjoy!

Now that the design has been cut out, you'll want to toss your creation in the wash... I use a regular wash cycle & 1 complete dry cycle \*1 TIME ONLY\* to allow for that bit of fraying. After that I use a delicate cycle & only dry for about 10 min, allowing it to air dry after. Alrighty! Go out & sport your cute \_\_\_\_ (<-insert project here) with reverse applique!



## TO MAKE MINION FINGER PUPPETS YOU WILL NEED:

Felt in yellow, blue and black. I used the ones in [this multicoloured pack](#).

Googly eyes

Cotton – I used black, blue and a see through thread.

Needle

Pins

Super glue

Card or paper for your template

## INSTRUCTIONS:

The first and most important thing is to make a template that will fit around your finger after you've finished sewing. I drew a fat finger shape and then cut it out to check the fit. This actually took me a couple of tries to get it right so if your unsure do cut out one for each side and make sure you will still have room for your finger once you've finished sewing!

Pin your finger template onto your yellow felt and cut around it. Do this twice so you have a front and a back piece.



Pin the template onto your blue felt and cut around it, this is for their dungarees. Chop a bit off the top and cut out the dungaree shape. I did this freehand but if you're worried you could always cut your template into the shape you want first and then cut around that.

From your black felt cut out a long thin strip to use for the glasses, a small circle for the logo on their dungarees and two arms and hands. I did originally think of doing the arms as part of the main body but frankly it was a faff and I'm all about trying to keep things as simple as possible! This is what your assembled bits of felt should look like.



Next start sewing on the pieces that will be on the outside of your minion finger puppet, you need to do this before you sew the front and the back together. The order I did mine in was overalls, then black band for glasses, then the black circle. I left cutting the band for the eyes until the whole puppet was complete as I wanted to make sure it was the right length.

The next thing is the mouth, I did this by backstitching

Now you're ready to sew the two pieces together. Pin them together with the black arms in place where you want them, make sure they poke far enough in that your sewing will hold them in place.



Finally use some super glue to stick your googly eyes in place and your minion finger puppet is ready to go. Use one or two eyes depending on what minion you want to make. You are now officially mum of the year.





!



I'm really pleased with how this worked out and of course its a popular craft to make for small kids to play with. The felt was super easy to work with and as the pack I received has so many gorgeous colours in it I know that I'll be making loads more felty crafts over the next few months!