

Part 4 – Colouring

In this part we are going to cover the many types of colouring which can be used in parchment crafting: pencils (blendable and watercolour); felt tip pens; inks; acrylic paint; and the various ways to use them. You will find you will have a favourite, and it is more than likely going to be the one you are best at! Me: I just love all my blendable pencils. I'll discuss the various materials you will need, in each of the methods when we get to them. I do stock both Polychromo (36) and Derwent Coloursoft (36)

Blendable Pencils

There are a few different type of these wax based pencils on the market including the Polychromo pencils from Faber Castelli; Derwent Coloursoft, Caran D'Ache and Prismacolor, which are softer and blend beautifully for soft flower petals.



Hint: For best results, you need to keep your pencils sharpened to a very fine point. I stock a very good sharpener for this by Faber.

You don't have to trace your pattern, and as you become more experienced, you will find that you prefer not to trace before colouring, to give a more natural look. However there are several methods which require you to trace your outline before you start.

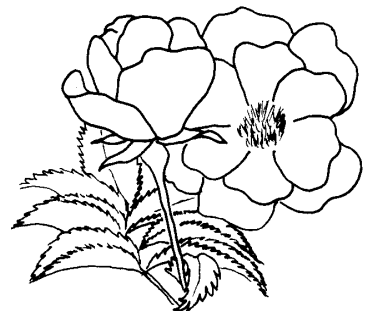
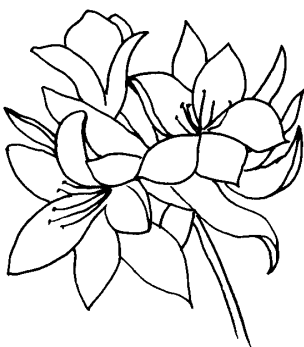
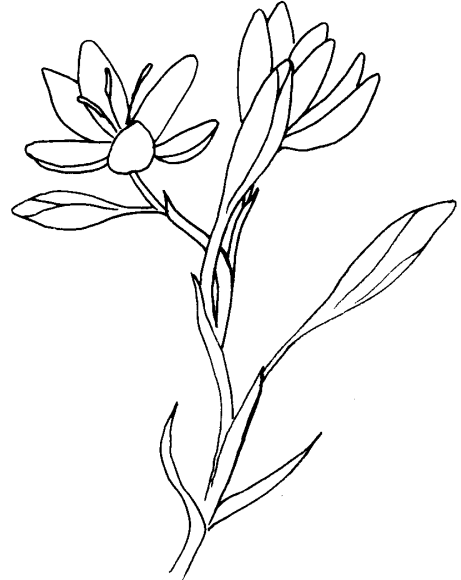
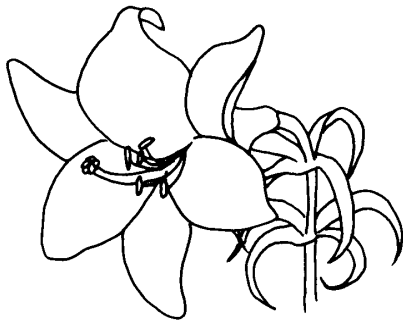
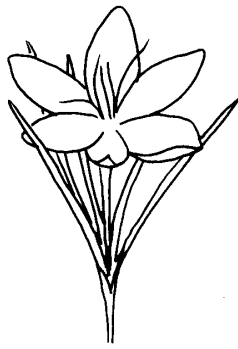
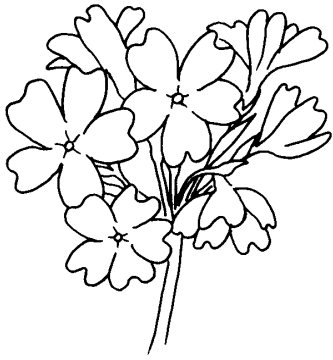
Translucent colouring is one of the easiest ways of adding colour to your images by using your very fine liner pen (mine is a Copic "Multiliner" 0.05 with waterproof ink) to trace out the design, and the detail, then simply colour in from the back **and** the front. It is very effective, quick and "arty" looking. You can also use ink or felts for colouring with this method. It is important to put as much **detail** as you can with the finest black waterproof pen you can find, including the shading and fine lines of the petals or leaves for example, before colouring. This method is also very good for drawing animals and birds because you can detail their fur or feathers. You can trace off any image you like, from a seed catalogue or a photo for example. Here is one I did earlier (left) and a card made using the Brazilian method of using the pencils.

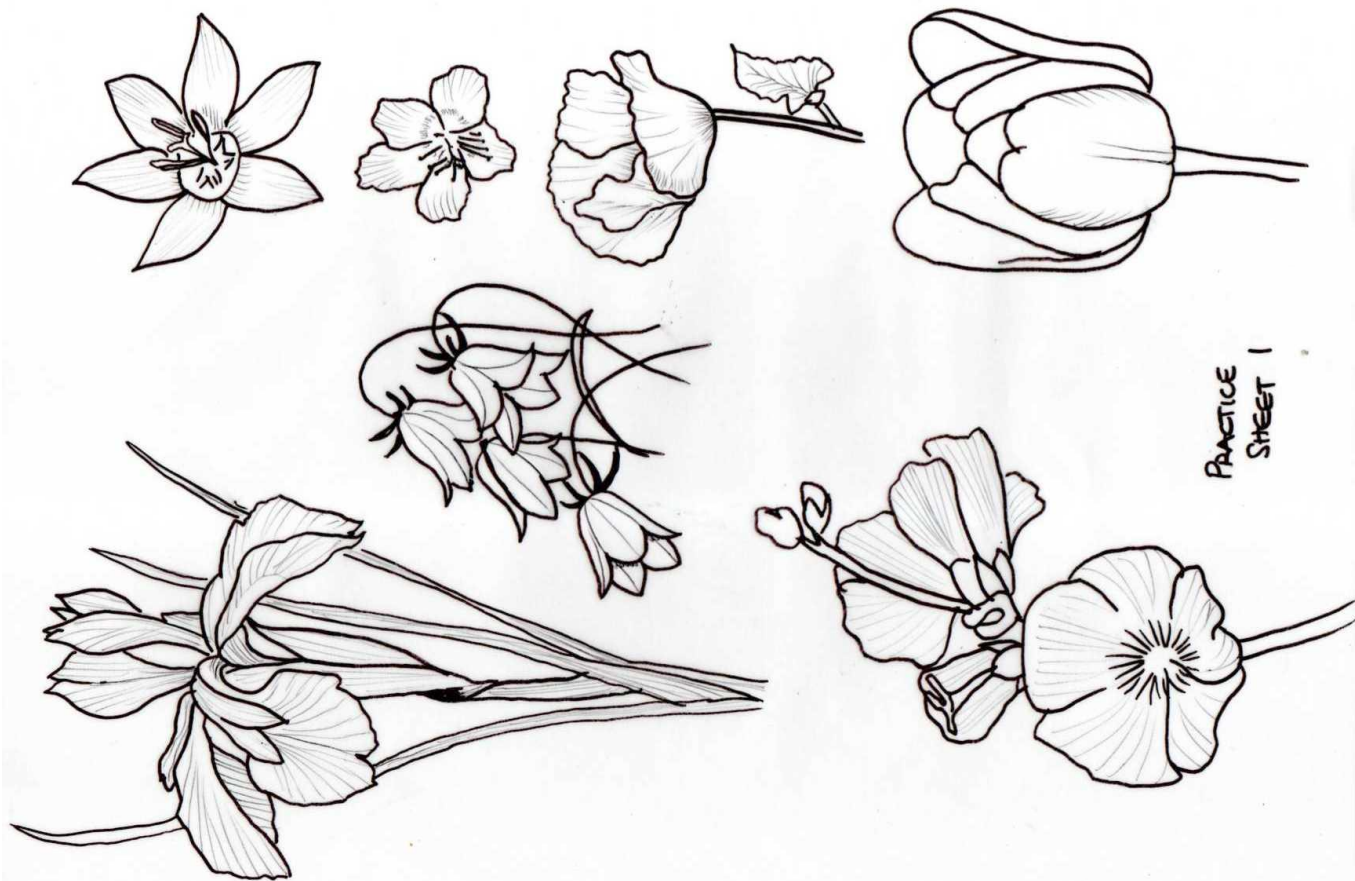


In this example to show you how versatile it is, I have used felts in the top flower, Polychromo pencils on the left and ink on the right. Both felts and inks are applied with a number 2 brush. The images are available for you to practice with, later in this section. [Practice sheets follow on the next two pages.](#)



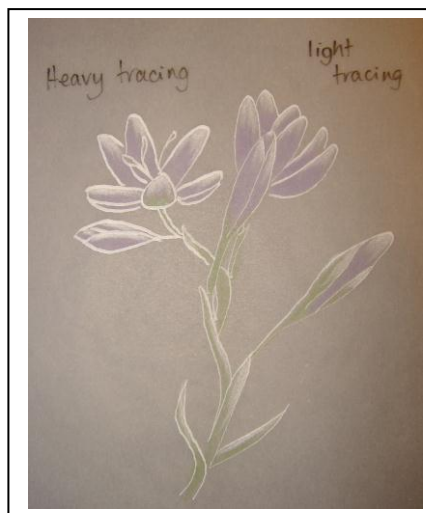
The rose is completed with blendable pencils on the front of the work, after tracing in fine black pen. This is called the Brazilian method





Colouring on the back of the parchment (Argentinean)

For this style you can use the cheapest of colouring pencils, even kids ones. You start by tracing the design in ink (white or choose a colour close to your colour scheme), and then transfer your paper to your embossing mat and **FIRST emboss from the back** (remember to “bounce” it); best results will be achieved by using the two smaller PCA® shaders (mini & micro); **second** on a hard surface (I use an laminated sheet, black one side, white the other) still on the **back of the work**, colour your choice in a flicking style (a bit like you use for embossing) but in the opposite direction towards and into your embossing already done. You can use the images on the previous pages for practising the different types of colour and then compare the difference. Don't over emboss or you won't see any of the colour on the front.



As you can see the example on the very left was traced heavily (on purpose) to show you how much nicer it is to trace lightly (as per example on the right), so please try to keep your tracing with ink as light and fine as possible. It makes your image much more realistic and much prettier.

Colouring on the back AND the front of the parchment (Brazilian)

This time you will trace your outline in black, very finely, either using your mapping pen or a very fine tipped black drawing pen. (Mine is a Copic Multiliner 0.05 with waterproof ink). Make sure you use your blendable pencils on the front of the work.

As before, emboss and choose three shades of pencil in the same colour range (for example, dark, medium and light pink), and from the back colour in your design with the medium shade, all over your individual images. Then turn to the front and work with the darker and lighter shades, making sure you pick out where the shade and light appear, and use long strokes with sharp pencils. Use the darker shade from the inside of your images outwards, then take the lighter colour and again using the long strokes, work from the outside of your image towards the inner.



I have manipulated the scan left to purposely show the darker and light shades, and thus the green has come out very yellow. To the naked eye, it is much smoother than this. Also the green should be a much darker for a tulip leaf.

BLENDING

Are you wondering yet, what the word “blendable” means? Well there are a couple of ways to blend your colours: from very subtly to completely. It all depends on the way you blend them and with what. You can blend colour on a whole sheet of paper or on the smallest of images. Firstly we will look at changing the colour of a whole sheet; some people call this “dorsing”. You can use one colour or a whole rainbow spectrum to blend one colour to the next. It does save on buying more expensive already coloured “rainbow” paper.

You will need: crayons (oil pastels) or you can use your blendable pencils, but it is cheaper to use the oil pastels. A sheet of kitchen paper; Zest-It (or a solvent like white spirit but these have an unpleasant smell) but you can also use essential oils – expensive but smell lovely!

Large areas: Work on a hard smooth surface (again I use my laminated sheet). There are two ways, you must try both and see which works best for you.

1. Using light circular strokes on the paper with your crayon cover the area you wish to colour. Don't scrub the crayon into the paper because you will never be able to blend it without seeing those heavy marks. Now fold your kitchen paper into triangles several times until you get a good solid edge; lightly **dampen** it (do **not** soak) with your blending fluid and start to blend your colour with again, in circular movements until your colour is blended evenly.

2. Put your blending medium directly on to your kitchen paper, then rub your crayon evenly on top before in turn, rubbing the colour on to your paper. Try both to see which gives you the best result.

You can also mask off areas you don't want to colour and this is quite effective, you can use your low tack tape or any cut-out shape stuck firmly down, to have this masking effect. Simply peel it back to reveal the uncoloured parts. You can also create effects like marbling by putting a few spots of colour directly on to the already coloured paper and blending



Small areas: a long time ago I made a discovery of using little nibs by Ranger, called “Cut n Dry” (available on my website); but didn't shout about it because I felt sure someone had already discovered it, until I told a well-known designer and she shouted about her discovery! Take a very small jam jar (the type you get in B&B, on planes and boats) make sure it is clean and dry; cut a piece of sponge to size and squeeze it in the jar, then soak the sponge with the blending fluid, and close the lid when not using it or it will evaporate. The little nibs are only 5 cms long and about 4mm wide, and they come in a pack of ten, enough to allow you one colour per colour group. I stock Zest-It which has a sponge pot ready to use and little holders for the nibs, made to size and you only need one and swap nibs as needed.

Complete your colouring in the way described above using the Brazilian method, then dip the tip of one of the nibs into the blending fluid – you don't need too much. Firstly colour the back and blend in little circular movements then, move to the front, colour with the lightest shade and again, lightly blend, with either circular or light strokes depending on the result required, then the same with the darkest colour.

Using the Blendable pencils

When working with the blendable pencils on the front of work it is a good idea, in my opinion, to work dark to light. In other words, start with your darkest colours first and work towards your lighter colours,

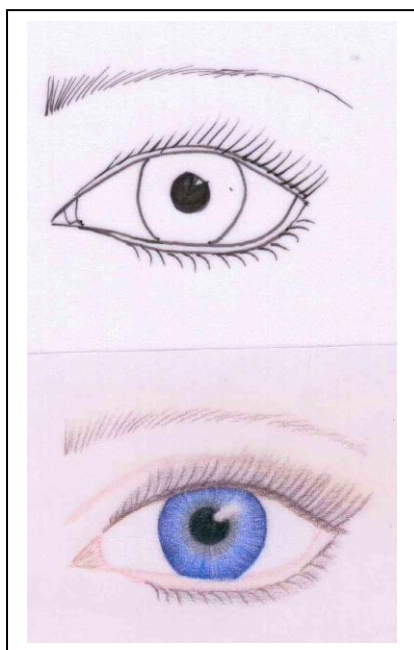
always with a pencil with a **sharp** point. Blending the previous colour with the next one to build up depth. I find the pencils are excellent when drawing birds, flowers, animals and human faces!

EYES

This works well for all eyes – human and animal. I learnt the process when I attended an artist colour pencil workshop several years ago.

Remember that you rarely see a round eye; part is almost always obscured by the eyelids.

1. Firstly put your paper over the top of an image of an eye and making sure your pencil has a very sharp point, and working from the **front**, colour the iris (see examples below) which is the coloured part of the eye. Note that the outside edge of an eye is usually slightly darker on the rim. When colouring try to use little flecks to make it look more realistic.
2. Colour the pupil in as black as you can get it, leaving a small white area either a wedge or a dot or even a small blob for the twinkle! It is a reflection so depends on natural or artificial light source. Remember that eyes come in pairs and the twinkle or reflection should be in the **same place in BOTH eyes** (otherwise you will have a Clarence – remember “Daktari” the TV programme – the cross-eyed lion)!
3. Using a darker coloured pencil, *outline* the whole of the iris then add a little bit of shade to the upper part of the eye just under the eyelash line, to give a shadow.
4. Colour the white of the eye from the behind, white and blend, and the twinkle from the front. This adds to the livening up of the eyes.
5. To add the lashes and brows (on the front): make a small light guidance outline on the eye; because the action of putting the lashes on will do this more naturally unless you want to have make-up on the eyes. Turn the page upside down, and with a **very sharp point**, on your brown pencil, start with a couple of very short very fine uncurled lashes in the corner of the eye then start to curl then away in the direction of where the ear would be. Look at your own eyes to check reality.
6. Bottom lashes: a very light outline to add depth then add two or three short lashes in the middle and tiny dots on either side
7. Brows: the first two - three should be upright strokes, then little dots for the rest. Otherwise it looks too heavy and made up.



HAIR

Again, something that needs loads of practice and is not immediately easy to do! This is also done in the Polychromo pencils as it is the easiest medium to learn with.



Finished strands. Enlarged x 4 to try to show you detail.

Again with VERY sharp points and with the darkest colour, brown say, work out where the hair is going to fall and how it is going to curl or wave, then add a few strokes especially to the edges and a few in the centre.

Never make hair straight, it never is in reality. Remember that the hair does fall in and out of waves and curls so ends will disappear and appear from nowhere.

If your hair style has a parting, then remember that the scalp will always show through, so you should leave a little fine gap without colour. Then, as before, start working your way up the lighter colours, again with a VERY sharp point on your pencil. Remember to leave gaps for the highlighted colours to shine through. Now turn over the paper and take one colour, which ever you like as these are going to be the highlights, so say a pale yellow for blonde, and colour in the whole of the back of the hair area.

Follow with light embossing in the highlighted areas only, to bring up the brightness and highlights.



Different coloured strands make more interest in the hair



Work out where your hair movement & shades are



Before embossing

There is a video on drawing plaited hair, link on the covering welcome email.

Hair with inks and felts

However if you go on to work with felts then your colours are going to be in reverse. You will start off with a pale yellow wash, add a little light brown on top, again in a wash. Then using only the very tip of your brush use the same light brown colour to add some fine detail; then add some darker brown, and some really dark brown in the same way and finally a little black in places for shadow. Then turn to the back and emboss only where you want lighter areas to show as your highlights.

BIRDS AND ANIMALS

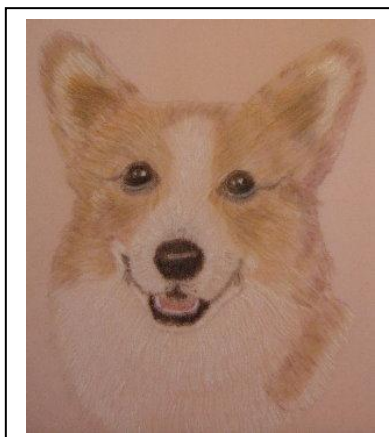
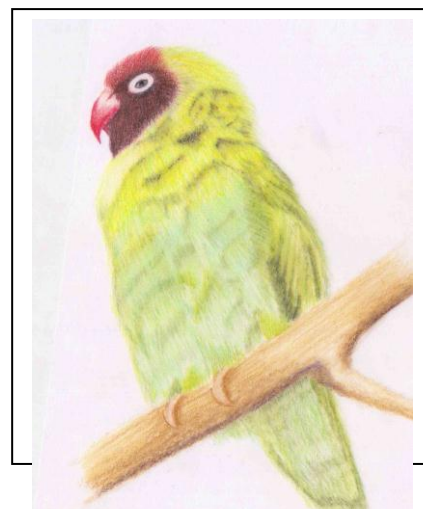
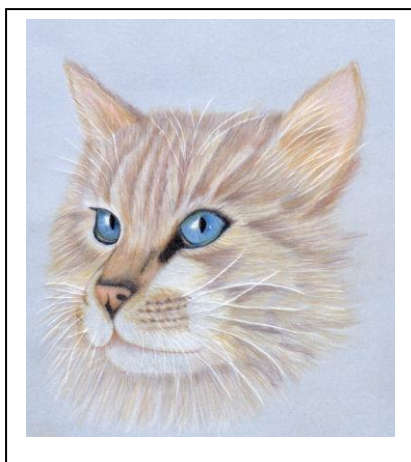
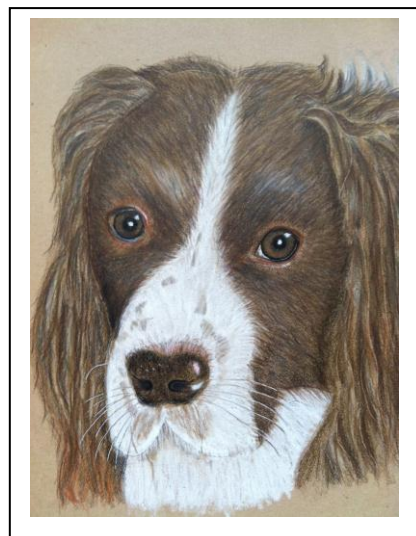
I love recreating drawings from real life birds and animals. It is so satisfying when someone says “did you really draw that? It’s wonderful” and pride beams! You can take any photo, or image from a book, or search the net for something suitable to copy. Take a good look at your subject before you touch your pencils. Look at the eyes; look at the way their fur or feathers lie; look where the shade and light falls. Then print a copy as well as the original. You are going to work with one copy under your paper and the other right in front of you so you can see every detail clearly.

I always **draw the eyes first**, because that gives perspective on the rest of the body. Follow the instructions for the eyes as for human eyes, but follow the shape and colours from your example.



Left is an original image taken from a book of birds and above my interpretation of one of them.

With a VERY sharp point on your Polychromo pencil and the darkest colour, make **very short** “feathery” strokes start laying down your colours, always referring to your original image. Change your colours as dictated, and watch for areas where you should shade with a slightly darker pencil of the same colour. Just keep working at it, it will look a bit bare at first, but as you add more layers it will come to life.



All these drawings were created from photos from books, and the corgi was taken from a photograph. It is the same method for all drawings, put your paper on top of the image; start with the eyes, making sure you have the “twinkle” in the place on both eyes – your own eyes are drawn to them, also put a shine on any wet nose by using the same method. Remember the length of stroke is important: do you want long or short hair? Always refer to the

FELT TIP PAINTING

When I first tried this, I made the classic error of thinking it meant that I had to use the felts directly on the paper, which I tried both back and front, but found way too harsh! The whole idea of using felt tips is to create a watercolour effect but without using too much liquid on the paper which makes it buckle. So the secret is little layers and plenty of them: very light layers let it dry thoroughly and apply another layer: so patience is the name of the game.

You will need: a No 2 round brush, a white tile or small plate or saucer, a water pot, water based felt tip pens (to start with, the cheaper the better, you can always upgrade later if necessary), kitchen paper.

So first, practice on some scraps of paper. Trace one of the flower designs from one of the practice sheets above in waterproof ink, copper was used below. Allow to dry. Working with one colour only, scribble some colour on to your tile and with one drop of water, mix it together with your brush. Now rinse your brush and tip it on to your kitchen paper to take off excess water. Dip your brush lightly into your "paint" and colour the whole of the petal. Allow to dry whilst painting another section. When applying your brush to the paper, use a round and round method and keep your brush as flat as you can to the paper, to ensure you blend colours evenly. When removing your brush from the paper, make sure you lift it hair by hair, very slowly so you don't leave an unsightly blob. If this does happen using a clean, almost dry brush you can mop it up but do it quickly before it stains the paper.

When you are satisfied the paint is dry, put on the 2nd coat, but this time adding more colour to a lighter shade and apply to the same areas, but this time where you think the light needs to be.

Repeat this for a third time with a darker colour even deeper for the shady parts. Repeat for all colours used.

When the work is completely dry, turn to the back and emboss. This will brighten your colours, so check you don't do too much – remember the parts you don't emboss are as important as those you do. You can finish off by very carefully painting in some very very fine lines to emphasise the markings on the flower or image.



Stage 1 – lightly colour the all of the petals and leaves

Stage 2 – this time use about 80% of the colour leaving the bottom untouched

Stage 3 add third layer around the tips and where the shadows and turnovers are seen

Stage 4 turn to the back and emboss to add light and highlight the turnovers



INKS

One thing I learnt early on when painting with inks, was that you should never dip your brush directly into the ink pot – you lose control if you do, because you cannot see how far you are dipping and how much ink is going on to your brush. Always use a white tile, plate, saucer or plastic palette and take the ink from there on to the brush.

So to start with, gather what you will need: a damp sponge (I keep mine in an old “Quickies” nail varnish remover pad flip top box as it is airtight – but anything like that or even a small airtight food container this will do); artists inks, round no 2 brush and kitchen roll.

Trace your design with your mapping pen in the colour of your choice. I would suggest if doing pink flowers, then use pink ink etc.

Painting with two colours on the same brush and the same time: put the ink on to your palette by using the end of your brush (non-hair end, that is!), dip and dot it on to your plate – not too much, you can always add more as you need it. Do the same for your second colour. This could be say yellow and sepia, or pink and red, or pink and purple – your flower, your choice – I have used yellow and orange.

Dip your brush into your water jar, and then roll it over your sponge to remove any excess moisture, your brush should be just damp. Your first tip into the ink will fill up the bristle but not to saturation point (!), and then tip it into your second colour. I would suggest that you use the darker colour as the 2nd tip colour. Just make sure your brush is NOT soaked with ink, or your paper will buckle. Try the colour on a spare piece of paper before putting on to your design. Apply your brush to the paper making your brush almost flat to the paper, with the tip of the brush meeting the outside edge of your tracing (start with the petals). Put a little of the darker colour in the centre of the design to show it in shadow. When doing the leaves, you can use yellow and green mixed, and green only where any leaf turns under. When the ink is dry, you can add a few very light strokes with the tip of the brush hairs, to add some texture to the leaves, then turn to the back “bounce” and emboss lightly I used the PCA® shader – you will see how it will brighten the colours.



Blob ink on to saucer. Trace image in inks as per colour scheme. Try to use much finer lines than shown here (these lines are this size for photographic reasons)



Full brush of lighter colour and tip with darker. Try out on scrap of paper first. Tip then put the brush flat to the paper

Tip brush end with darker ink and add very fine lines to add texture, then turn over and emboss back and use scribe to add more fine lines. I have manipulated the colour in this image to show where the darker ink should be.... In reality it is a smooth transition.

Overleaf you will find my rose pattern and the finished felt tip painting completed by Dorothy Holness



Dip Dots

One very useful and very pretty addition to add to a card is tiny little dots of paint called Dip Dots. This is quite a simple way to add colour to a parchment card and very effective.

Try it out on scrap paper to practice. With your paint on the palette, dip a small or micro ball tool into the paint and then dot your paper. If you want all dots to be the same size, wipe the point clean after each dot and re-dip. If you want to make your dots progressively smaller (say on a flower spray), then dip, and dot, dot, dot until your point runs dry. Always wipe the point clean before re-dipping – residue will ruin your round dot.

SUBMISSIONS:

Choose* from the practice images on the two pages given above. Present it by mounting on a card or making into a card.

Only the painting will be marked. Please submit:

1. 2 flowers in Argentinean style, using pencils
2. 2 flowers in Brazilian style, using pencils
3. One flower in inks
4. One flower in felts
5. A pair of eyes in pencils, taken from an image of your choice
6. One section of hair in pencils, taken from an image of your choice
7. One animal or bird from any image or photo of your choice in any medium of your choice.
8. One extra piece, of your own choice and style, this can be from a pattern or your own design and can be an animal, bird, human, flower etc. if unsure, please ask.

So there are ten submissions in this colouring section. Please label your pieces with the number and name of the submission and mount them for presentation.