

# Cold Enamelling

LEAFLET  
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# Cold Enamelling

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## **Introduction**

Working with Cold Enamel opens up a whole range of colouring possibilities, which may become a fascinating hobby. Although the finished work is as attractive and resilient as traditional enamel, no kiln is required when using these materials. An enamelled finish is now possible on many types of surface, including metal, woods, cardboard, plaster, etc. The techniques of using Cold Enamel are not difficult, and once they have been mastered you will be able to produce attractive items for yourself and useful gifts for family and friends.

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## Materials Required

1. Plastic sheet/newspaper to cover work surface.
2. A pair of rubber/plastic gloves.
3. An apron.
4. Mixing sticks.
5. Measuring cups.
6. Cold Enamel colour – opaque and transparent colours are available.
7. Cold Enamel hardener.
8. Articles to decorate – check the suggestions throughout this book.
9. White spirit.



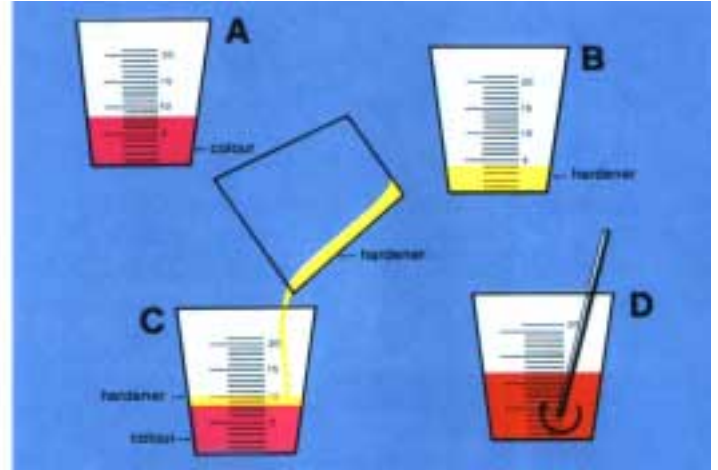


### Important Notes

Before you begin working note the following points carefully.

The best working temperature is about 20°C. If the workroom is colder the material will be more difficult to use.

The colours must always be mixed with hardener before use, the correct ratio is **2 PARTS COLOUR to 1 PART HARDENER**. This proportion is **very** important and measuring should be done with care. The mixture will completely cure to a hard finish in approximately 24 hours. If there is any imbalance in the proportion the Cold Enamel will not set. The best procedure is to use mixing cups which have accurate measure markings.



After measuring, mix well and allow the mixture to stand for 10 minutes to ensure that there are no air bubbles present.

The mixture will remain workable for approx. 1 hour. After this time it will thicken very rapidly but can still be used with care on sloping or vertical surfaces.

When larger amounts are required, it is advisable to pour the mixture into a wider, saucer like container. The thinner the layer the longer the Enamel will remain workable. This should extend the mixtures 'workable' time by approx. 30 minutes.

Although the colours have a very long shelf life, if they should crystallise, simply place the bottle of colour in a bowl of warm water until it becomes liquid again.

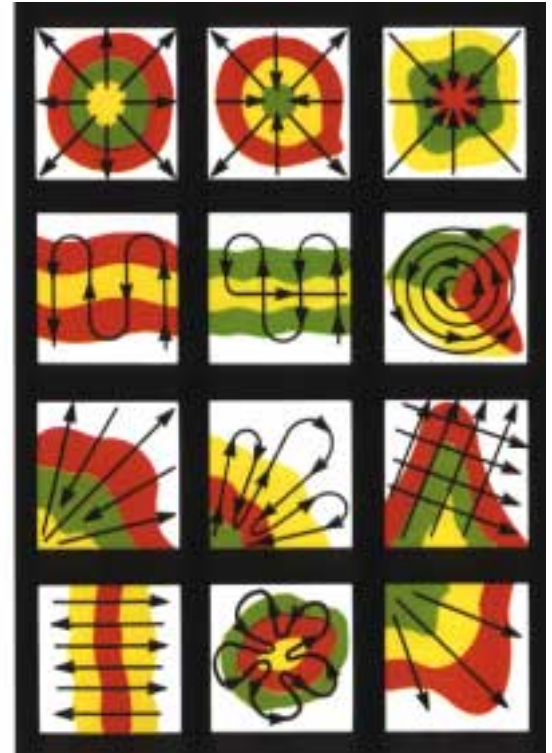
Most stains whilst wet may be removed with white spirit and soap. Once dry however the Cold Enamel can not be removed.

Always wear a pair of plastic or rubber gloves as some sensitive skins may be allergic to this material. Contact with skin and eyes therefore should be avoided.

All colours, whether opaque or transparent, are intermixable. To create a unique colour always mix the desired colours together first before adding the appropriate amount of hardener.

Cold Enamel will work on most materials with the exception of P.V.C., (soft plastics), and rubber.





### Suggested First Project

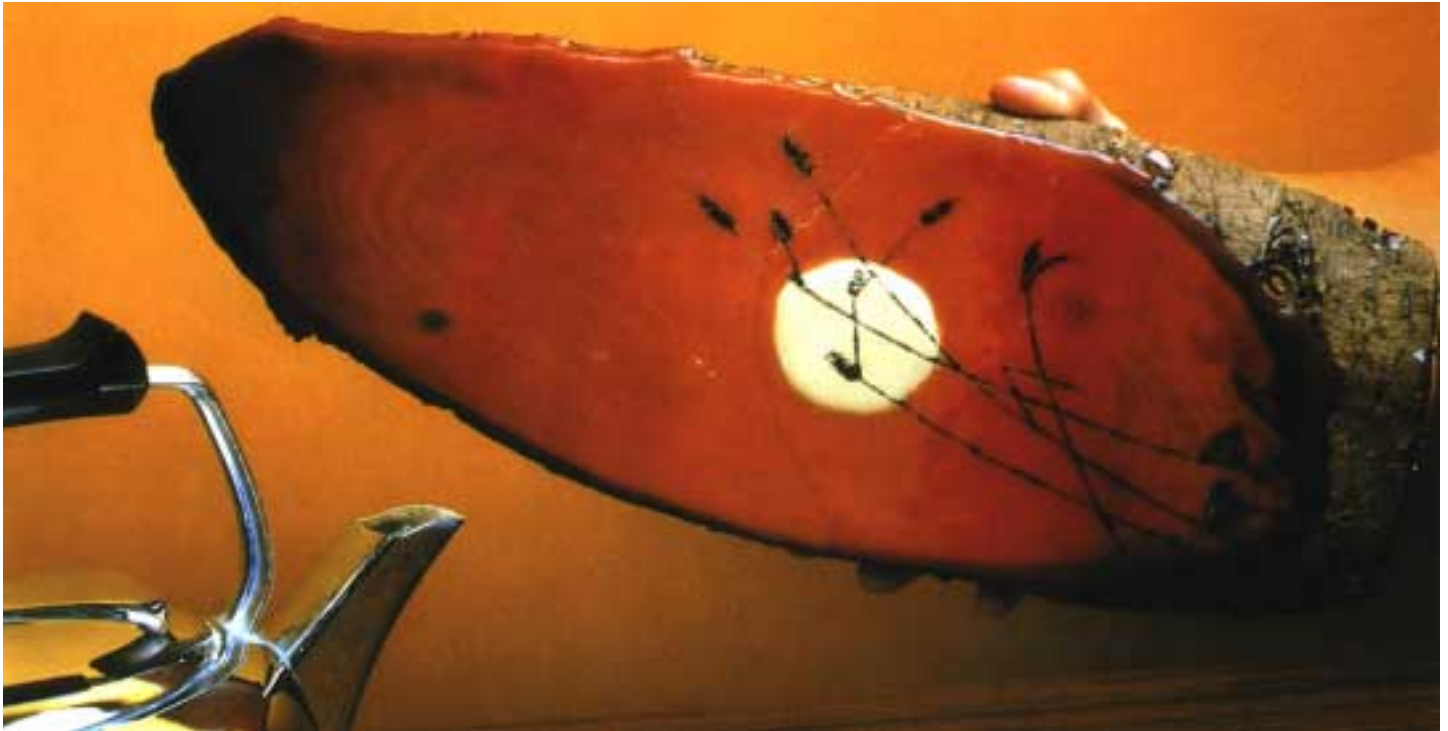
Perhaps the best and simplest way to begin is to decorate a matchbox. Having mixed your colours and hardener, cover the whole of the top of the matchbox with an opaque colour. While this first colour is still wet and workable, drop a second

colour onto the surface. Using a mixing stick, darning needle or old pencil draw one colour through the next for exciting results. Experiment with the use of different colour combinations or several colours for endless possibilities.

## Surface Finish

The natural surface finish of Cold Enamel is fairly high gloss and occasionally you may require more of a matt surface. To achieve this the article should be held in the steam from a

kettle or steam iron before the Cold Enamel has properly hardened, (after 3-4 hours). The steam vapour will make the surface dull and it will remain so after hardening.





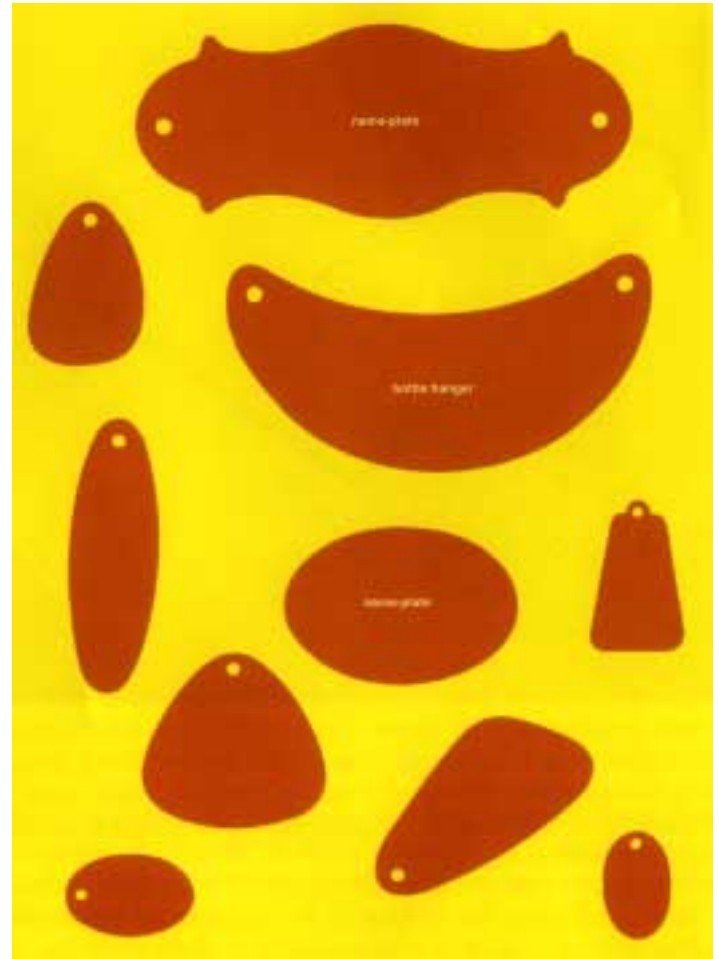
## Jewellery

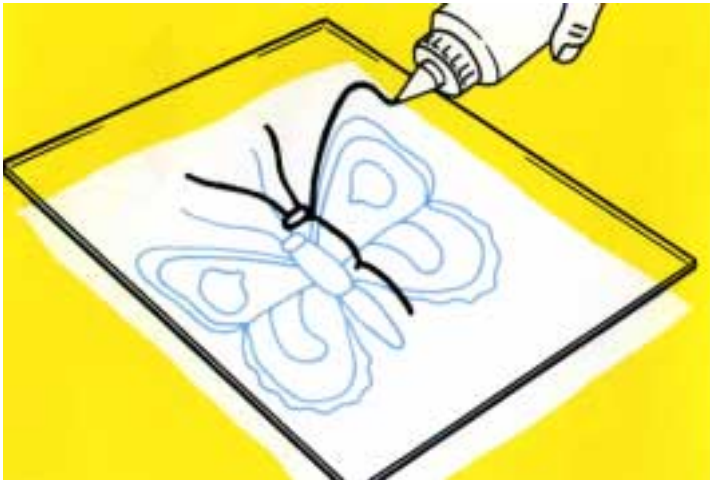
Jewellery findings are readily available and many are complete with blank, smooth surfaces ideal for applying Cold Enamel. You can however cut your own shapes from metal sheet, plywood or even strong cardboard. If using metal, always clean the surface first with white spirit on a wad of cotton wool or a clean cloth. Using the same working methods as before, apply your colours. If you decide to make brooches, you can use clear Cold Enamel as an adhesive to attach a safety pin on the back. See instruction later in this PDF to include a photograph in your jewellery

## Nameplates

Using Cold Enamels very attractive name plates and house numbers etc., can be produced. Ideas for shapes are shown here. These may be traced and cut from metal, plywood or strong cardboard. The first stage is to completely cover the surface with white Cold Enamel (or another light colour). After 24 hours when the surface has hardened, dry transfer lettering is used for making the text of the nameplate. Such lettering is readily available from most stationers. Once the lettering is complete, coat the area with a layer of clear Cold Enamel. Once dry this will seal your work.

For articles to be used outdoors, such as house numbers, ensure that you coat all sides and edges so that the finished piece is weatherproof. (Especially when using wood and cardboard)





## Working on Glass

Cold Enamel colours are an ideal medium for working on glass. The transparent colours are particularly effective at imitating stained glass window effects. In addition to the materials listed on page 2 you will also need liquid lead or glass painting outliner paste. Liquid lead is a relief paste available in a selection of different colours including grey, which resembles the lead lines in stained glass work. Wherever possible, work on glass that is horizontal to avoid the colours from running.

First of all clean the surface of the glass to be used with white spirit on a wad of cotton wool or a clean cloth. Lay a drawing of your design underneath the glass and using

liquid lead, trace the outline of your design. The liquid lead will take approximately 30 minutes to dry, any mistakes or adjustments can be made by using a sharp knife/scalpel to cut away unwanted lines. The lead lines prevent one colour from running into the next. The Cold Enamel colours can now be used to fill in the spaces between the lead lines. Make sure the colour fills the area and touches the lead but is not allowed to overflow the lines. Once the Cold Enamel has set the work is finished.

Glass items that can be used include picture frames, bottles, mirrors, vases, paperweights and general glassware.



### Working on Polythene Sheet

Cold Enamel will adhere to most surfaces but not to polythene. This means that you can work on polythene with liquid lead and colours as before. After approximately 24 hours when your work is hardened you can carefully pull away the polythene from the back. The resulting work may



then be glued onto another surface for display or decoration purposes. If you wish to apply your work to a slightly curved surface such as a bottle, gently heat the item and carefully bend it to shape.



## Photographs

Should you wish to incorporate a photograph into any article, for example a pendant, follow these simple instructions. Place any colour on to the pendant that you wish to use as a background colour for your design. After about two hours, (before it dries), press the photograph onto the surface. When the layer of colour is completely dry (24 hours) make up a mix of clear Cold Enamel and completely cover the surface with this. Whether you use black and white or colour photographs the effect is very attractive.



## Pressed Flowers

Flowers to be used should be small and preferably flat so that they will not stick out too much. The method is as for photographs and the flowers or leaves may be placed on a coloured background or a transparent one for use on glass.

## Simple Casting Technique

Cold Enamel can easily be used to create small clear casts that you can embed items into. As the setting Enamel is very adhesive the choice of mould/support chosen is very important. Latex rubber moulds will not work and some thin plastic moulds will produce good casts but may have to be split to be removed. Using an ice cube tray you can make a simple yet effective Cold Enamel cast. As the plastic is very smooth and non-porous, once the enamel has completely set it is easy to remove the cast. When using this technique, remember that you are creating the top of your cast first so that the smooth bottom will be upper most in the tray.

- 1.** Mix enough clear Cold Enamel to fill the bottom of the well in the ice cube tray. This layer provides a base for your item to sit on. Bear in mind, when deciding on the depth of this layer that it should not be so deep that the item you are embedding will protrude from the top of the tray. Leave to set.
- 2.** Sit the item to be embedded onto the layer of clear Enamel and cover with another layer making sure the item is completely covered. Remember at this time that the cast is bottom up so 3D items will need to be upside down. Leave to set.
- 3.** Once the 24 hour setting time has passed, turn the ice cube tray upside down and firmly press to release the cast. If the cast will not pop out it may not be completely set. Leave for a few hours longer and try again.

## Tips and Suggestions

The range of items to be embedded into Cold Enamel is unlimited. Try things such as coins, jewellery, polished stones, baby's first tooth, beads and sequins.

After letting the second layer of clear Cold Enamel set, applying a thin layer of coloured Enamel, will give your cast a 'base' to sit on. Before applying the third layer, try sprinkling glitter onto the second layer for a shimmering effect.

Groups of items can be put into the casts to create a theme. I.E. embed two or three tiny seashells with a sprig of seaweed and colour the last layer blue. Once the cast is turned out you will have a miniature underwater scene.

## Design Suggestions

Many other items can be incorporated into your Cold Enamel work. Below are a few suggestions.

Using the technique on page 12 for adding photographs or flowers to your work, you can also incorporate other flat items such as wrapping paper, silver foil and cellophane.

Mini works of art can be created by painting on card with acrylic paint and covering with a coating of clear Enamel. They can then be stuck onto various jewellery findings including cuff links, ear rings, key rings etc.

As Cold Enamel is very adhesive, small objects can be pressed into setting Enamel for a raised effect. These objects could include small beads, sequins and flat buttons.

For a sparkling effect sprinkle glitter onto setting Enamel, (after approx. 2 hours), then finish with a coat of clear enamel.

## Further Instructions

The secret to successful Cold Enamelling is having an exact 2 : 1 ratio in the mixture. Any imbalance in the proportions and the mixture will never set. If there is too much hardener the mixture will have a much shorter working time before becoming viscous, but you will find that after 24 hours you will make finger prints on the surface of the Enamel that cannot be removed. The small plastic cups that have measuring indentations, (such as the kind that accompany medicines), are ideal.

Transparent colours can be made opaque by mixing with the opaque colours. All colours are intermixable but it is advisable to mix the colour you require before adding the appropriate amount of hardener.

Take great care not to allow specks of dust to settle on your work before it dries. If this happens you will find it difficult, if not impossible to remove the dust once your work has dried.

Avoid the temptation to touch the work before the 24 hour drying time is complete as fingerprints cannot be removed. If you want to check the progress of your drying Enamel, paint a small amount of your mixture onto a scrap of card and use this to test instead of the finished work.

## Materials available from Specialist Crafts Ltd.

### **E006A . . . Cold Enamel Colours. 20 ml bottle.**

**001** Yellow+

**002** White+

**005** Red+

**006** Light Green+

**009** Black+

**011** Light Blue+

**012** Turquoise+

**013** Clear\*

**016** Cherry Red\*

**017** Green\*

**018** Blue

**030** Pink+

**031** Mint

**040** Pearl\*

(+opaque \* transparent colours)

### **E700. Hardener**

**A** - 20ml bottle **C** - 50ml bottle **D** - 100ml bottle

### **E009 Set of 10 plastic mixing cups**

### **M213D Packet of 20 mixing sticks**

### **E010A... Liquid lead paste. 150ml bottle**

**001** Lead

**002** Pewter

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