

Kitchen Lithography



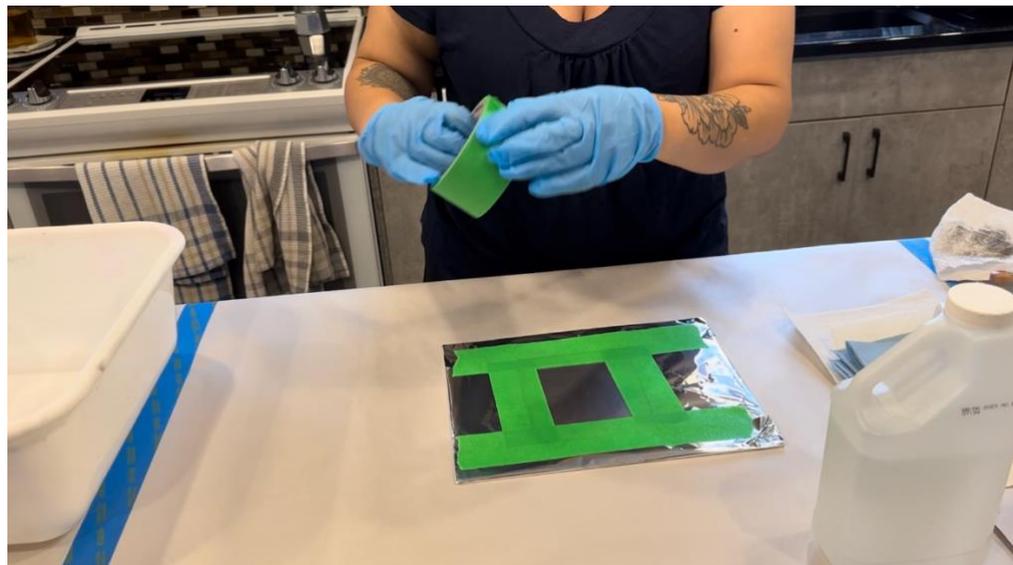
- Newsprint for registration sheet (usually larger in size than the paper you will cut for printing)
- Extra strong aluminium foil
- Painter's tape
- Plexiglass sheet or plastic board, small
- Disposable gloves
- White vinegar
- Kitchen paper or soft cloth
- Ballpoint pens (black/blue)
- Gel tip pens (black/blue)

For etching and printing

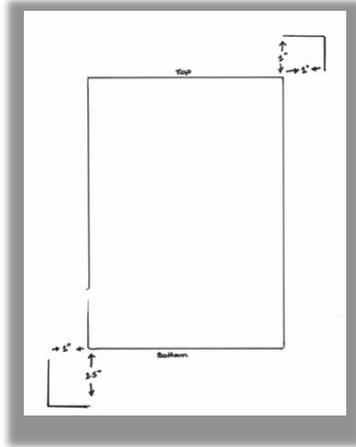
- Tub or large Tupperware container, flat
- Coca cola or generic brand cola (not diet cola)
- Bowl for tap water
- Plexiglass sheet or other flat plastic surface, taped down if necessary, for ink
- Putty knife or paint scraper
- Roller (preferably a brayer)
- Newsprint or newspaper, plus extra
- Soft sponges (or one large sponge cut into several pieces), several
- Thin paper (printer paper works as well as Japanese papers)
- Parchment paper
- Wooden spoon or rolling pin
- Lithographic ink
- Vegetable oil
- Dishwashing liquid, preferably Dawn blue

Method

1. Cover your work surface with either newsprint or newspaper and tape using the painter's tape.
2. Prepare the surface for your image, which will be drawn on aluminium foil. I use small plexiglass plates found at art supply stores locally, as these are inexpensive (usually less than \$4 for the small sizes), but any firm plastic surface will do.
3. Wearing disposable gloves, cut a piece of foil using a pair of scissors. This is to prevent too much creasing. Also, this will help in avoiding touching the foil, as fingerprints will be registered without gloves.
4. Wrap the plexiglass or plastic with the foil and tape the edges with painter's tape.



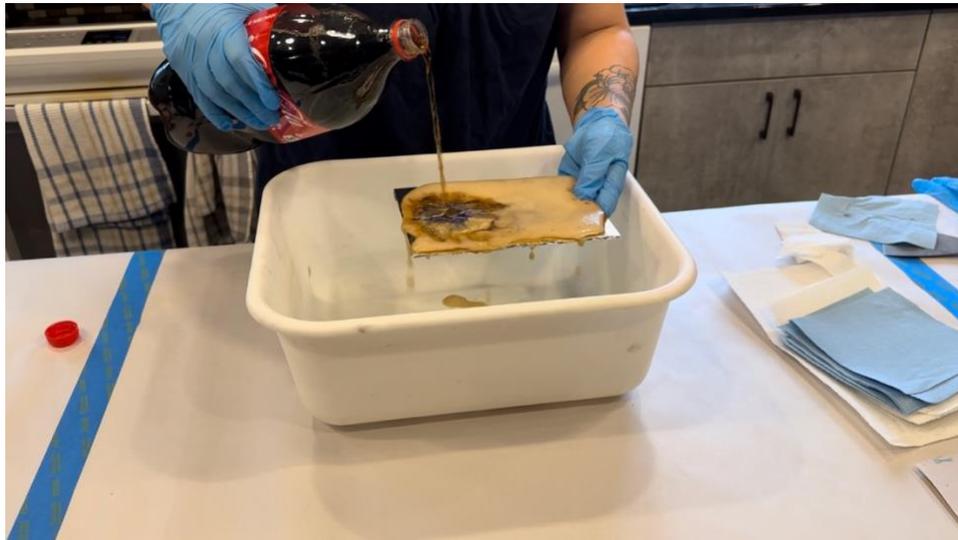
5. Prepare a registration sheet using newsprint. I place my plexiglass or other plastic plate right in the middle of the sheet and then just trace around the edges so that I have more or less exact dimensions. If you have worked out if your image will be horizontal or vertical, give 1 inch on the top and both sides of the traced plate on your registration sheet, and 1.5 inches from the bottom of the plate. Make registration guides for the corners of your paper to make it easier to line up the paper. Cut your paper at this stage as well.



6. Pour a small amount of white vinegar on a piece of kitchen paper or cloth and wipe the plate gently. Leave to dry.



7. Still wearing the gloves, make your drawing use the ballpoint or gel tip pen, keeping in mind that all of the dark areas will take ink. Once the drawing is complete, leave the plate for a few minutes and prepare your etching and printing station.
8. Place your drawn plate, drawing facing upwards, in the tub or flat Tupperware and pour cola over it. I usually leave my ballpoint-drawn plates for several minutes. If using gel-tip pens, you will see the ink start to break down but it will leave the drawing on the foil. If your cola is flat, etch for a longer period of time. Fresh cola etchings take between 1 and 5 minutes, but I have kept my plates in flat cola for up to 10 minutes.



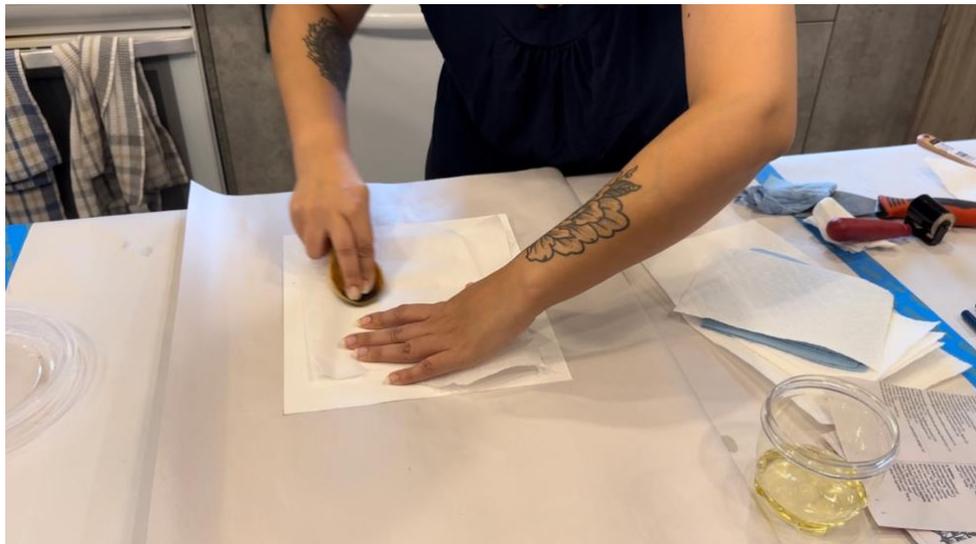
9. In the meantime, prepare your ink. Lithographic ink works best for this process. Using your putty knife, spread some on the inking plexiglass. Then use your roller or brayer to prepare the ink for printing. You can do this earlier in the process if your drawing will not take you very long to do.
10. Wash your plate with water to remove the cola and wipe away to dry. If you have other plates, save the cola in the tub for etching later.



11. Placing your plate down, keep a damp sponge handy, and be ready to ink up your plate.
12. Sponge the plate first with the damp sponge, though the sponge should not be dripping, and then begin inking it. Between each pass of ink, sponge the plate again. You should be able to build up the ink with four passes of ink to start. Also, should you find ink build-up in areas, use either a wet q-tip or a piece of kitchen paper dipped in cola (your etching cola is fine) to clean these areas.



13. After four passes of ink, place your plate carefully on your registration sheet. Bring your paper, lining it up to the corners of the registration sheet, and press down.
14. Place a piece of parchment paper on top of the paper, and then using a wooden spoon, move carefully in circular motions to transfer the image. I also use a clean brayer as an extra implement to ensure the transfer. Peel the paper off carefully from the plate This test image will tell you if you have enough ink.





15. Repeat the process, remembering to sponge the plate between each inking. If you are satisfied with the test image, you only need to ink (and thus sponge the plate) two or three times.
16. I find this process gives me between 6 and 8 prints, not counting my test print. Place prints between sheets of newsprint/newspaper and flatten under a weight. I find stacking books on top of the newsprint sheets works well for this process.
17. Once the edition is printed, you can remove the foil and dispose of it.
18. Using a scraper or blade, remove the ink from the plexiglass. If you have excess unrolled ink, save it in a piece of parchment paper for later re-use. Clean your scraper or blade on pieces of newspaper and dispose of these.
19. Use vegetable oil and paper to wipe the surface of your inking and image plexiglass plates to remove any ink residue. Then, use dishwashing liquid to clean this. Finally, finish the cleaning process with white vinegar and wipe your plates.
20. Roll out the excess ink on your brayer or roller on pieces of newspaper. Repeat the cleaning process for the plexiglass plates with your ink brayer/roller.