

The Basics of Working with Derwent Inktense Pencils on Fabric

Supplies:

- Derwent Inktense Pencils or Blocks
- Fabric
- Textile Medium
- Marking Pens
- Freezer paper and/or foam core board
- Paint brushes

Some Basic Tips:

- Prepare a color chart of all your Inktense colors, both dry and with medium applied.
- Use only natural fiber fabrics, such as cotton, silk, or linen.
- The color of the fabric will affect the brightness of the final color. White or off-white fabrics result in the most consistent results.
- Stabilize your fabric with a waterproof backing such as freezer paper or a foam core board.
- Use a fabric scrap of the same material you are using for your art piece to test colors on before applying to your work.
- Keep some paper towels handy to dab any errant pencil or textile medium.
- Experiment a bit to determine which application method you want to use.
 - Dry on dry: Use the Inktense pencils like a colored pencil. Use a dry pencil on dry fabric. Remember, the Inktense color looks very different dry than how it appears after you apply the activation/fixative medium.
 - Wet on dry: Use a brush with textile medium on it to take color from the tip of the pencil, then apply to the fabric. Or dip the tip of the pencil into the medium and apply directly to the fabric.
 - Wet/dry on wet: The fabric is wet using the textile medium before using either a dry pencil or one a wet brush loaded with textile medium and color.
 - If you use either wet technique, be sure to allow your pencil to dry before sharpening.
- Activation Mediums: Inktense colors must be activated using a medium to make the “permanent.” This also dramatically changes the color of the Inktense.
 - Some of the textile media that work well include Liquitex fabric medium, Folkart fabric medium – or any similar product. Use sparingly – heavy applications can bleed.
 - Clear aloe vera gel is also very controllable. Be sure it is 100% Aloe Vera, without any colorant that might influence your final color. Also use this sparingly, avoiding puddling.
 - Both media should be heat set. After heat setting, the aloe vera should be washed out by handwashing in cool water.

Let's Get Started!

- Depending on what you are working on, you may want to draw the outline of your image onto your fabric.
 - If you want the outline to be part of your final design, use a dark permanent marker. Be sure to test the marker on appropriate fabric to ensure it doesn't bleed and/or wash out. Suggested brands include Derwent Line Markers, Micron pens, or Sakura's Identi-pen.
 - If you don't want an outline to surround your image, draw or trace it very lightly on your fabric using a pencil. The Inktense colors are not opaque, so any dark lines, especially in areas with light colors or light shading, might show through.
- Apply Inktense colors to your piece using the methods presented under “Tips.”

- If you are shading, be sure to start with light colors and apply dark colors last. Shading can also be achieved when applying the medium by brushing from dark into the light.
- When you are pleased with your coloring, use a flat brush to apply medium to activate the colors. Always work from light to dark. Be sure to clean your brush between color changes or if you must return to a light color.
- Allow your work to dry completely, then heat set using an iron set on the heat appropriate for your fabric. Handwash in cool water and mild soap to remove any excess medium.
- The colors will withstand machine washing, but to prolong the life of the piece, handwashing in cool water and mild soap is best.