

Coasters and Trivets

Project 6

Supplies and Tools

beading or jewelry glue	permanent markers
carbon paper	rulers
masking tape	sandpaper
nail polish remover or tile cleaner	scissors
paintbrushes of various sizes	small paper cups
paper towels	small sponges
pencils	stencils
	Styrofoam trays

Materials

for coasters: white or very light colored ceramic wall tiles (4 inches by 4 inches)	decoupage medium embellishments (sequins, small jewels, etc.)
for trivets: white or very light colored floor tiles (12 inches by 12 inches)	felt
colored craft sand	floral marbles
	glass paints
	glitter
	paper scrap
	polyurethane

Step 1: Planning the Design

Have the participants plan out their ideas either on paper or mentally so they can choose materials. There are several ways to approach the design of the trivets and coasters. You can use the glass paints to simply paint a free-hand or abstract design, or you may want to stencil the tile. You can also use all paper scrap to produce your design. Of course, you can combine any or all of these techniques to create unique pieces.

Because the paints and decoupage dry quickly, suggest to participants that they plan the designs for each of their pieces at this point.

Step 2: Choosing Materials

When all the participants have their design(s) planned, they can go to the side table (two to four at a time works best) to select the materials they will use for their project. Remind the teens that they can return to the supply table whenever they need items, so they don't have to take everything for all three pieces right away.

Step 3: Prepping the Tiles

Lightly sand the tiles and clean them with the tile cleaner or nail polish remover. This step removes or dulls any finish on the tiles so the paint or decoupage will adhere better.

Step 4: Choosing Techniques

Your main design can be achieved by using several techniques. You can layer these techniques to get more varied results. For example, decoupage paper scrap, then dull it with a coat of watered-down paint for an aged look. Or stencil a design and highlight areas with glitter or sand. Layering can add more texture and depth to a design.

PAINTING

Lightly draw your design onto the tile. Remember to keep small details to a minimum. You can do this free-hand or trace a picture using carbon paper.

Once you are satisfied with your drawing, begin filling in with the glass paint. The glass paint is translu-

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cent and appears too thin when first applied. When the paint is dry, you can add another coat if needed. Another approach is to use a small sponge to blend the color to get a muted effect and soften edges.

For an abstract design, just paint and blend colors until you get the effect you want.

STENCILING

Choose your stencil and tape it into place with masking tape. Using a large stiff brush, a foam brush, or a sponge, dab paint onto the stencil making sure not to brush the paint. Allow the paint to dry a little and carefully remove the stencil.

PAPER SCRAP

Choose pictures or words and carefully cut them out. Apply decoupage medium to the tile and then place your pictures. Apply another coat of decoupage medium over the pictures. You can layer the pictures as much as you want.

COMBINATIONS

Your design may call for the use of some or all of these techniques. This sounds more complicated than it actually is and produces some very creative results. Paint your entire tile to give it a background color (you can use as many colors as you like for this). For example, you might want to use blue for sky or water, green for grass, yellow for the sun, and so on. While the paint dries, choose and cut out pictures from your paper scrap. Decoupage these into place, then add more splashes of paint to add color and interest and to build depth. Or use a stencil over the whole thing.

Remember, as one piece is drying, you can work on the other pieces you have planned.

Step 5: Embellishing

Once you have your base layers painted, decoupaged, and/or stenciled, you can add embellishments for your

finishing touches. Embellishments should be simple and relatively flat. It wouldn't do to have a coaster that always overturned your cup of coffee.

Glitter and sand can be very effective for highlighting areas of your design or adding a subtle sparkle. Use them to fill in small areas or trace designs like smoke or clouds. Small sequins or jewels can also be added to give some sparkle and dimension. You can glue the glitter with decoupage, but make sure the rest of the tile is completely dry before sprinkling the glitter on so you can control where it goes. Glue the jewels or sequins down with beading or jewelry glue.

You can make fabulous embellishments by using permanent markers to outline important features of your design or to write words. Simply draw or trace with the marker, being very careful to keep your lines straight and steady.

Step 6: Gluing the Bottom

When the tiles are completed and dry, glue the floral marbles to the bottom to form "feet." Using the beading or jewelry glue, put a floral marble on each corner of the underside of the tile.

If you'd rather not deal with the marbles, you can cut a square of felt slightly smaller than the tile and glue it to the bottom with the beading glue.

Step 7: Sealing

When your tile has dried, brush on a coat of polyurethane. Make sure to do this in a room with good ventilation. Let the first coat dry at least to a tacky finish and then give the tile at least one more coat to seal.

Note: If you are pressed for time, you can have the teens end with one coat of polyurethane. After it dries, you can add the second coat and have the coasters or trivets ready to be picked up at a subsequent meeting or at the reference desk.