

# Four Ways to Color Fill Sand-Etched Products

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Color filling is a popular way to add color to your sand-etched project. First, sandblast into your object just past a surface etch or about 1/32". It is important for your etch to be deep enough to allow the color fill to lay beneath the original surface level. Next, blow pressurized air over the etched area to remove loose abrasive.

For the first two colors fill techniques, we recommend leaving your photo resist mask on the sand-etched item. The resist protects the areas you do not want to color. A thin paint coating is preferable since excess paint will dry over the top of the photo resist, allowing the paint to pull away from the etched surface during resist removal.

For the third color filling technique, remove your photo resist before coloring by soaking the etched piece in the water; using a resist remover, or peeling off the mask before applying color.

### **Technique #1: Color filling with spray paint**

Spray paints are easy to use and come in a wide variety of colors including eye-catching metallic. Shake and spray paint well before using. Keep the nozzle 8" to 10" away from the color fill area and spray in a sweeping motion.

Let the original coat dry, then add additional thin coats as desired, allowing the paint to dry well between coats. Once the paint has completely dried, approximately one hour, remove the photo resist mask as normal. For exterior applications a final clear coat is recommended.

### **Technique #2: Color filling with AirPen® Pro**

The AirPen Pro dispenser is a hand-held, air-powered tool for drawing fine decorative details or for filling intricate areas. Paints, glazes, and other viscous mediums are effortlessly dispensed by placing a finger over the flow control hole.

### **Technique #3: Color filling with sign paints**

Sign paints (also called lettering enamels) are generally brilliant in color, fade resistant, and durable. Check the label carefully; some signage paints are lead based and should not be used on drinkware. When working with several colors, use a fine-tip brush and apply a thin coat into the edge areas. The photo resistant mask works as a stencil to aid in affixing paint to specific areas, yet avoiding others.

Most sign paints will color adequately in a single application. However, if added paint is desired, allow the first coat to dry 12 to 16 hours before applying added layers. Drying is best in temperatures over 65 ° Fahrenheit. After the paint has dried sufficiently, remove the photo resist mask as normal.

### **Technique #4: Color filling with Rub 'n Buff**

Rub 'n Buff® is a paste-like paint packaged in a tube (similar to toothpaste). It can be purchased at most craft supply stores and is available in a multitude of colors. Rub 'n Buff is easy to use.

First, apply sparingly to the etched area with your finger or a soft cloth. Once dried, gently buff with a cloth. The paint stays in the etched area and buffs off the smooth areas. Rub 'n Buff can also be administered with a brush; but you must first thin it with paint thinner. This paint dries almost immediately.

Color filling is yet another way to add value to your sand-etched products. Of course, there are many kinds of paints and stains in the market to try, experimentation is the key.