

## PROCEDURE FOR WALLS

Paint. Buy paint of your choice – Jo Sonja water-based, which we carry, or Japan oil paints from Stencilase 1-800-334-1776. For an average room two tubes should be more than enough for the major color. One tube is ample for the second color.

Organize. Get all of your supplies together. Your table is in place and spread with newspapers. Tape a paper bag to one side as a wastebasket. Your drop cloth is spread and ladder in place. A paint roller tray grips the top of the ladder and holds a folded paper towel (to check the brush for the right amount of paint), your brush, paint palette and palette knife, tube of first color paint and a sealed jar of paint thinner for oil paint (to be added to the paint by drops when necessary). I shake it off the palette knife and mix it in well before using. On the table are a cookie sheet with edges with small supplies on it, also spray adhesive, paper towels.

The Stencil. Hold your stencil to the light and make sure all the holes are popped out. If not, poke them out with a pointed object. Place #2 stencil over #1 and align it using the register marks (small holes that are not part of the pattern). With your indelible pen, trace the outline of an outer shape, at either end, from the first stencil onto the second one. These will be a lot easier to use when applying the second color than the registers would be. Spray the backside of the stencil with adhesive and use according to directions. Stick it to the wall.

The Room. Have an idea, more or less, as is your style, about the placement of the frieze at the top of your wall. You will begin here. You have some options: If you have a fireplace, you may want to center the pattern above it, if it is large and noticeable. Sometimes each wall was treated as a separate entity, and the pattern began and ended with a full unit at each corner. This can usually be engineered by a little stretching or squeezing in the placement of the units which is imperceptible when completed. Or, you can start and end in the least obvious corner of the room and just carry the pattern around the corner as it comes. This was the borderman style. Moses Eaton was less precise and often simply repeated a portion of the frieze twice to fill in a partial space at the end. Computer buffs can easily plot the whole room using measurements and graphics. The rest of us can use a calculator, graph paper or scratch pads or just start in! Using 3 3/4" painter's tape, mask off the ceiling as you work, not all at once. (Remove it as soon as possible.) Mask woodwork using 2" painter's tape.

After stenciling the frieze, do the chair rail and baseboard horizontals. Now you are ready for the verticals. The pattern is reasonably small. It is hoped you can begin and end with a full unit. Using a pencil to make a dot through the register holes, plan your spacing for the first time before applying the paint. Start with the same top unit by the frieze each time. Measure spacing from the ceiling. If you must use part of a unit, fade it out at the lower level close to the chair rail or baseboard horizontal where it will be below eye level. Sometimes a little squeezing in its placement can help it come out right. If you have a slanted ceiling or floor in an old house which causes the floor-to-ceiling distances to change, make compromises. Stenciling is great for old houses where wallpaper would be a disaster. Don't insist on straight and plumb with the woodwork – just follow it. "Out of square" will be less noticeable in the end. (Follow even gunstock beams – they are an interesting architectural detail.)

Paint. For Jo Sonja water-based paint, tape 4 or 5 paper towels to a flat surface and dampen one end of the towels. Squeeze the paint onto the damp end. Put out about a teaspoonful of paint. Get your brush into it and work it up into the bristles on a clean part of the palette. Wipe your brush gently on all sides of the paper towel to make sure no "gob" is on the edge. Now wipe the blunt bristles gently. Little pigment should come off. We use a very "dry brush" technique. There is always a delicate balance between where "elbow grease" lets off and more paint is necessary. Each person must determine the comfort zone from the danger zone for him/her self by making mistakes. A tired arm = perilous amounts of paint! Keep paint covered with plastic wrap at all times, and slip brush into a plastic baggie when not stenciling.

Rotate your hand in a clockwise/counterclockwise motion, keeping the bristles of the brush perpendicular to the wall. Start at the edges of the mylar and move in toward the middle of the openings. Stippling gives a more faded result – however, the motion is more tiring and time consuming.

Cleaning The Stencils. For oil paint, pour some solvent in the pan. Put the brush in the solvent. The pattern is on the cardboard. Lift the brush out of the solvent and clean the pattern with it. Carefully blot or wipe the front and back of the pattern with paper towels. Use proper ventilation. Pregnant women should not be using oil-based products. For water-base paint, clean the pattern in the sink on the flat with fingers and mild soap. If paint is stubborn, use a green Scotch Brite™ scouring pad.

Your Room should give you satisfaction for many years. The walls can be washed or if you have a border pattern and wish to change the color but keep the stencil, mask off the stencil with painter's tape and paint a new color on all the blank wall. This will create a pleasing border of the stencil.



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