



## Overview to working with Marbling

Marbling is a technique for creating patterns on paper that dates back to 12<sup>th</sup> century Japan, and over time the technique spread to Turkey and then into Europe. It was very popular in Victorian England and was widely used at that time to decorate the inside covers of books.

### What does it involve?

Different techniques are used for marbling on paper and on fabric, but the results of each method are generally pleasing from the first time you try them so in this respect it is a very accessible art form.

Marbling on paper or water both include floating ink on liquid to create swirling patterns, the paper or fabric is then placed on top of the ink/liquid and the pattern then transfers over to the paper or fabric.

### What surfaces can be decorated with marbling?

The most popular surfaces used for marbling include paper and fabric; here are a few applications the technique may be used for:

- Paper – wrapping paper, used to make card shapes in which to place presents, covering notebooks, framing in a simple picture frame, using as a marbled clock face, personalising your own notepaper with cut out shapes, make into bookmarks.
- Fabrics – make beautiful cushion covers, patchworks, headscarves, decorating garments with strips of marbled fabrics, evening bags.
- Other applications – plaster may be marbled, fat candles, glass and china, white card for greetings cards, pale wood, cotton t-shirts and garments, silk ties and scarves.

### Simple marbling technique for paper

You will need:

- A covering for the surface you are working on
- A tray to contain the liquid (roasting tin, or paint roller tin)
- A large jug of cold water
- Marbling paint or ink (which is available from craft shops or the Internet)
- Pieces of paper or card (small enough to fit in the tray)

- A pencil

Method:

- Place the water in the tray so it is 1 to 2 cm deep
- Add some drops of paint to the water a few at a time.
- Using the tip of the pencil, move the paint around the tray until all the colours swirl around each other in a feathery pattern. You can create different effects by using different items to disperse the paint such as the flat end of a spoon, or by blowing into a straw onto the surface.
- Place your paper in the tray by rolling it down onto the surface of the water, make sure the paper is flat and that it does not go under the water
- Gently lift the far end of the paper and roll the paper back from the water – all the paint in the tray should come away onto the paper.
- Leave the marbled paper in a flat place until it is completely dry.
- Skim the surface of the water with a sheet of newspaper to remove any surplus paint – and start again!