

Tyvek® Painting Tips

by
Ronda Brewer



The first thing you will need to decide is if you want to decorate your kite. If so, the following tips will help you to create your masterpiece.

Permanent markers, Design Master spray paints, artist's acrylics and latex paints work well on the Tyvek®. You should always test for the compatibility of your art medium on the Tyvek® whenever you try a new product. Wait 24 hours to see if there is a reaction, such as puckering.

I have used a wide variety of paints, markers, etc on my kites and have found just about anything will work on Tyvek® except "Industrial" markers by Sanford. This particular brand attacks the Tyvek® and makes it pucker. I have used permanent markers, gold leaf, silver leaf, artist's acrylics, glass stain paints, Plaid brand decorator glaze paints and metallic powders on the design. Tyvek® is a wonderful material to experiment with mixed-medias. No matter what medium you use, you should test it on a scrap piece of Tyvek® to make sure there will be no reaction. Then, place the sample in the sun and wait to see what happens. One of the most important things to do is to work thin layers of colors rather than one thick coat. I really like the stained glass look of a wash of color that allows the texture of the Tyvek® to show through. But, you can also get a solid look with additional layers applied. Sometimes, I apply color on the backside to intensify the colors. My "Taz" battle rokkaku was painted with artists' acrylics and metallic permanent marker. It is over 10 years old and has many battle scars but the paint has stayed on remarkably well. The only flaking of paint was where I got the layer too thick. This was my second painted kite and I did not layer the paint.

The first Tyvek® kite I painted and made was because of Leland Toy. He was to teach a class on Samauri Face Painting at the 1990 Fort Worden Kitemakers Conference and I thought the class sounded interesting. So, I signed up for it. I did not know anything about Lee or what a rokkaku kite was. I learned a lot because I did not go into the class with expectations other than I hoped to learn something new. It turned out to be a life altering experience.

I hope this has been helpful for you. Please feel free to share your experiences with me. I would love to see your creations.

Please send your photos to:

ronda@phantomstardesign.com

Remove this page. Use as a reference guide during the assembly of your kite.

