Pyrography
Holiday Ornaments

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Simple Pyrography Ornaments

A little time, a scrap piece of chipboard, a few colored pencils and a bit of string are all that is needed to quickly create this Santa Claus and Santa Bear set of ornaments.

Supplies:

Variable temperature pyrography unit

Standard writing tip pen

two 4" x 9" x 1/8" pieces of chipboard

craft utility knife, bench knife, or scissors

assortment of colored pencils

12" of twine, ribbon, or thick string

hot glue gun

graphite paper

small brass bell or bright colored beads

PYROGRAPHY SURFACES

Pyrography can be worked on any natural product surface - wood, paper, paper mache, chipboard, cotton, gourds, and leather.

Paper mache needs a medium high temperature setting to create an even, medium-dark tonal value. Watercolor paper and blank greeting cards also make great surfaces for your burned designs. For this project I chose a 12" x 12" sheet of 1/8" natural colored chipbaord.

PYROGRAPHY UNITS

One Temperature Tools

The one temperature tool has the heating elements inside of the handle of the tool and comes with a variety of brass interchangeable tips that are placed in a threaded receptacle at the end of the tool. Tool tips for this style of burning system include the universal tip, calligraphy tip, cone tip, large ball shader and large flat shading tip.

Once plugged into an electrical outlet the tool quickly reaches an even but high temperature so the tonal value work in your project must be controlled through the textures or strokes that you use and the speed of the stroke. Very pale tonal values are burned by using a light pressure to the tip against the wood and moving the tool tip quickly through the burn stroke. Darker tones use a medium pressure and slower motion.

One temperature burning tools are inexpensive, readily available at your local craft or hobby store and excellent for first time wood burners to give our craft a try. I began wood burning twenty-five years ago with this style of tool. Several years ago I purchased a new one temperature unit so I would have two tools on the table, each with a different tip, ready for use in my projects.   Today, although I now have two variable temperature systems I still find that I use my one temperature system on a regular bases.

Variable Temperature Tool Systems

Variable temperature systems have a dial thermostat that allows you to control how cool or hot your tip is. You can adjust the temperature setting quickly making it easy to control your tonal values in your project. This style has two types of pens - the fixed tip pen where the tip is permanently set in the hand grip and the interchangeable pen where different wire tips can be used with the hand grip.

This particular burning unit uses a single pen and has a wide range of temperature settings. Changing fixed pens or changing tips on the interchangeable pens is quick and easy.

With this unit I find myself working in the mid-range temp settings, usually between 4 and 6 and working to the extreme black tones is simply a matter of turning up the heat.
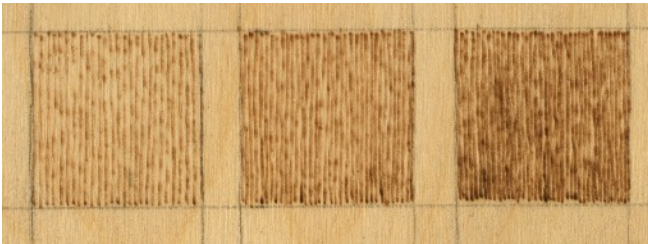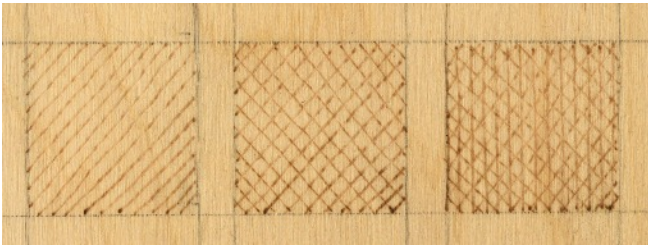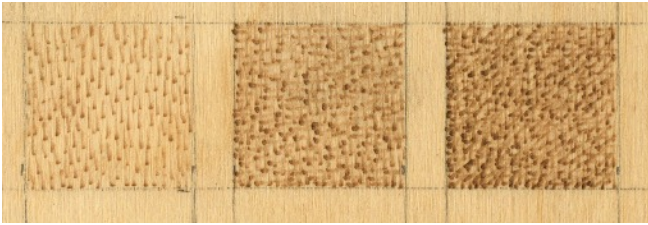
CREATING A PRACTICE BOARD

Working your strokes, textures, and patterns on a scrap piece of the same media you will be burning creates a guide for both tonal values and fill patterns when you work your project.

The sample board below is worked on 1/4" birch plywood using a variable temperature unit and a standard writing tip.

Any line, texture, or repetitive pattern can be used to fill an area of your pattern or for shading. Graduated tonal shading can be created by working layers of shading over one area, making each new layer slightly small is size than the one below it.

Practice boards can become delightful finished projects. The Grocery Bag on page 2 shows a free motion quilting pattern practice board.

TRACE AND CUT

Step 1: Using a sheet of graphite tracing paper trace the line art patterns to the chipboard. Use a light pressure on your tracing ink pen to avoid indenting the chip board.

Step 2: With a utility knife, bench knife or craft scissors cut out the Santa shape and his boots from the chipboard.

BURNING THE PATTERN

Step 3: Using your standard writing tip pen and a medium to medium-hot setting outline all of the tracing lines for your Santa design.

Fill in the fur area of Santa's hat with small half circle shapes to imply clumps of fur.

Use a cross hatch texture to shade along Santa's hat, the sides of Santa's coat, and the inside edges of Santa's boots.

Use a fine long line stroke to add the hair detailing to Santa's beard and mustache. Cross hatch the beard and mustache areas where around the face.

Shade the bottom half edge of the belt with a short line scrubbie stroke.

USING COLORED PENCILS

Step 4: Add the coloring to your Santa using either artist quality colored pencils or watercolor pencils. Use a light pressure when applying the pencil color to keep the coloring on the high areas of the chipboard, allowing the dark indented burn lines to remain.

For Santa's hat and coat use bright orange and bright red across the entire area. Add some darker shading using a deep red or deep purple color.

Add white to the hair, mustache and eye brows. Add a small amount of white to the center of the hat fur, boot fur and ball on the hat. Soft beige is used to shade the side areas of the fur.

Pale gray, medium gray and black are used to create the coloring on the belt and boots.

The face is tinted with soft beige, light orange and bright orange.

Add a light or bright yellow coloring to the belt buckle.

ADDING CORD LEGS

Step 5: Cut two 3" lengths of twine or cord. Using a hot glue gun secure the cords first to Santa's boots on the back side of the chipboard. Hot glue the tops of the twine to the backside of Santa.

EMBELLISHMENTS

Step 6: Optional. You can create a second Santa chipboard burning that is reversed from the first. This second Santa burning can be hot glued to the back side of the first to make your Santa reversible.

Step 6: A small bit of ribbon and a little brass bell can be added through the hole in Santa's hat to hang him on your tree, Christmas wreath or to secure him as a package tag.

Santa Bear uses white for the areas around the eyes, the paw pads, and the bear's tummy area. Soft beige, sienna brown, and burnt sienna add shading to the bear's fur. Use medium brown at the bottom of his face, under his chin and along the sides of his belly area. Bright orange, and bright red create the coloring for his Santa hat with dark red or dark purple as the shading color. Use white for the center area of the had and hat ball fur with soft beige as the shading tone. Pale green, bright green and dark green add the tones for his vest with bright yellow for the buttons. A light coating of bright orange to the cheek areas of your Santa Bear's face completes the coloring
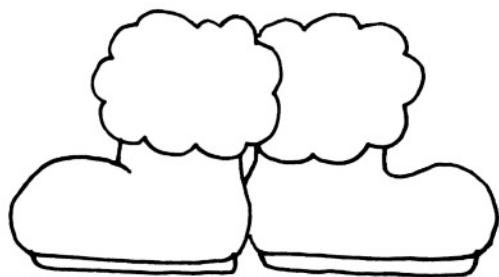
Visit Lora S Irish's pattern website, ArtDesignsStudio.com for more great Holiday patterns and designs that can be used with this project.
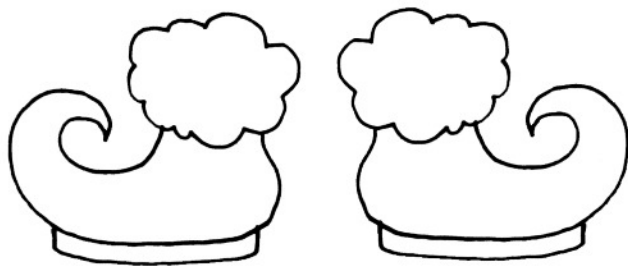
To discover more line art patterns and detailed drawings to use with your next pyrography project visit us at Art Designs Studio, Lora S. Irish's online pattern site and her free project blog at LSIrish.com.

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