



# INSTRUCTIONS FOR DAMASK/ALLOVER PATTERN STENCILING – PAGE 1

**These instructions will take you step-by-step through your stenciling project.  
Please read them all before you start your project!**

## HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL NEED

1. Stencil(s)
2. Sample board (poster board, cardboard etc)
3. Latex or acrylic paints, including some basecoat paint
4. Dense foam roller with rounded ends, stencil brushes
5. Paint tray or a large styrofoam plate
6. Sea sponge or utility sponge for background faux finish
7. Low tack painter's tape, Spray adhesive (optional)
8. Cutting Edge Stencil level
9. Paper towels or rag, cleaning tools & liquid soap
10. Chip brush
11. Step ladder (optional)



## GETTING STARTED

Very important: Work out your technique and color combinations on a sample board first. It is always a good idea to make a sample. Use a wall in the garage, a piece of cardboard, or even an old pizza box as your sample surface. Make sure you like your color combinations and are comfortable with your stenciling technique before hitting the real wall!

Make sure your walls are clean, dust free and in good condition. Any cracks or chips should be repaired: filled, primed and painted prior to stenciling. All base coats should be fully dried for at least 24 hours prior to stenciling. You can stencil over latex house paint, faux finishes, plaster textures, wood, furniture, paper, fabric and even some wallpaper.

First mask out the baseboards and ceilings (or ceiling crown molding) using low tack 2" painter's tape. We love using Scotch Blue 2" painters tape.

You can now proceed to stenciling. The pattern can be applied over a regular flat house paint. However, we find that simple faux finishes best compliment the allover/damask patterns.



To create a simple mottled sponged background, you'll need 2 (or 3) flat latex paint colors and a sponge. Use a sea sponge or a utility sponge with similar texture. Pluck off the edges of the utility sponge to break the straight lines. Stir your paints well. Here we used Benjamin Moore 1069 and Navajo White. Apply both colors to the sponge with a chip brush as shown. Sponge the wall rotating your wrist with each dab. This helps to disguise the sponge shapes and to blend the two colors together. To lighten the finish, add more white paint to your sponge, and to darken add more darker color. Keep blending the colors on the wall until the desired mottled look is achieved. A hint: latex paint always dries a bit darker.



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Work in small sections and keep sponging until all walls are done. For edges and corners use a chip brush with both colors on it. Simply stipple and dab with the brush to blend the colors. Since you will be adding a pattern on top of your faux background, don't worry if your finish looks less than perfect or a bit dramatic. Your eye will later go to the pattern and all those imperfections in the sponging will not be as noticeable. In fact, if your background is too even, it is less desirable since it will look more like flat paint under the stenciled pattern rather than a faux finish. Let your sponged background dry fully before proceeding to the next step. You can lightly sand off any rough spots using fine 220 sandpaper.



### DAMASK STENCILING



It is smart to start with the least visually “important” wall, like the corner above a door. This gives you an opportunity to work out your technique in a less conspicuous area. By the time you reach a focal point wall, you'll be so comfortable with your technique you'll feel like a pro!

Position your damask stencil at the top left corner of the wall and secure it with 4-6 pieces of low tack masking tape. Do not use regular white masking tape as it is way too sticky for most painted surfaces and will likely pull off the base paint when you remove your stencil. You can also use a spray adhesive to achieve even cleaner edges. (More about adhesives later.)



Using our innovative clip-on Stencil Level (pat.pend.) check that your pattern position is level. Correct your positioning if necessary. Our clip-on level is light weight and can stay on the stencil during the entire project and will help you to correctly position each imprint. It clips to either the top or the bottom of the stencil. You can also use a plumb-bob, traditional bubble level or a laser level.



Now pour some acrylic or latex paint onto a foam plate or into a paint tray. You don't need much, about 2-3 tablespoons of paint is enough to start with. We used Benjamin Moore Aura 1069. Get your dense foam roller (or stencil brush) ready.

Load your foam roller by rolling it over the paint a few times until it absorbs most or all of it. Use only dense foam rollers with rounded edges. These are available on our website.

Now blot off the excess paint on a folded paper towel by rolling it back and forth a couple times. There should be no visible paint on the roller surface. It should look almost dry. Remember, it's better to have less paint on your roller, than too much paint.





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When you need to take a break from stenciling in the middle of the project, just cover your paint tray with plastic wrap, and tightly wrap a piece of plastic or foil around the roller to prevent the paint from drying out.

Roll the stencil with your roller using light to medium pressure. Excessive pressure may cause paint bleeding under the stencil. Be careful not to roll over the outside edges of the stencil! We design most of our stencils with at least a 1” frame to give you some rolling room. Strategically placing blue masking tape on the narrowest edges can help prevent “roll-overs”.



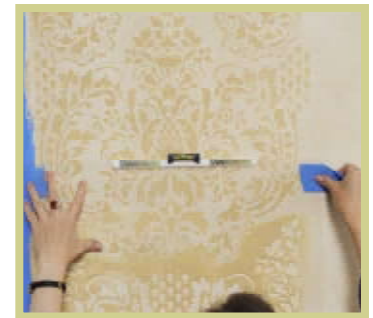
You can easily check how you’re doing by carefully un-taping and lifting one corner of the stencil and taking a peek. Do you like what you see? Is it enough pressure or can it use a little more paint? If it’s too pale, just put the stencil back and roll it a couple more times back and forth, slightly adding more pressure. When stenciling lighter colors over darker colors, you may need 2 coats to achieve good coverage. Let the 1st coat dry for a couple of minutes and then roll the stencil again.



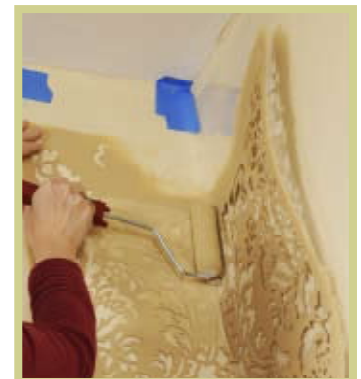
When you are done with your first print, un-tape and reposition the stencil right below the finished print. Use the parts of the design as your registration marks and make sure the elements of the previous print and the stencil line up. Next tape the stencil in place, check the level and continue stenciling.



When all walls are done, you want to fill the gaps in the pattern at the ceiling line. These gaps naturally form with some damask patterns. We often use a special stencil designed just for that. You can fill those gaps with your large stencil too, but it’s much easier with the separate Top part stencil.



**Corners:** First, don’t be intimidated. Corners are no big deal if you follow our instructions. For best results, tape and stencil one wall at a time. Secure half of the stencil in place leaving the other half unattached. Roll it straight into the corner ( or use your stencil brush), then carefully un-tape the finished half while holding the stencil in place with your hands. Now secure other half with tape and roll that half into the corner. Now you can remove the stencil. Don’t worry about filling every little bit of design in the corner crease. The eye fills these gaps and makes it look completed even if there are some unstenciled areas left. A few more corner tips: Taping the stencil to both walls at once usually does not produce a good result. Using spray adhesive may help with holding a large stencil in place when working on corners.





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### TIPS, TRICKS AND OTHER NOTES

**Mistakes:** Usually it's enough to just wipe off a fresh mistake with a wet cloth, baby wipe or moist q-tip. It is always a good idea to have some basecoat paint at hand in case you need to correct bigger mistakes. In this case, just re-roll or re-sponge your basecoat over a dry mistake. It may take 2 coats to cover. Let it dry completely and now you're ready to re-stencil the area.

**About spray adhesives:** Yes, you can use them with our stencils, but we personally don't like them. The pros: The stencil sticks to the wall very securely without any tape, and the seepage will be minimal, even with a sweeping brush motion or some pressure on your roller. That means cleaner crisper edges which is great. Adhesive can come in very handy with large stencils or ceiling stencils. The cons: Sometimes particles of adhesive transfer to the wall and leave a sticky residue. This can happen if you've sprayed too much adhesive and didn't let it dry a little bit before putting the stencil on the wall. The fumes are also unhealthy for you and your family. Lastly, the stencil will end up sticky, making clean-up and storage a bit challenging. In our 20+ years of stenciling we find that blue tape is all you need to secure your stencil. Our stencils are made of a thick, sturdy plastic that will cling to the wall and make stenciling easy and fun.

If you decide to go with adhesive, lightly mist (not drench!) the stencil with a well-shaken can of spray adhesive (preferably outside and far away from other objects). Let it dry for a minute, and then place the stencil on a ceiling or wall. It's good for 1-3 placements, then it will need to be re-misted. We prefer Elmer's spray adhesive. It has just the right tack. Clean-up tip: Spray the stencil with Simple Green to help to remove adhesive residue.

### CLEANING, STORAGE, REPAIRS

**Cleaning and Storage:** The stencil will eventually accumulate a thick layer of paint after many repeats, so it will have to be cleaned. You can let it dry completely and simply peel off the paint skin, or you can give it a brief soaking in a tray or tub of water and then wash off the paint. Best cleaning method we have found is to place the stencil on a flat surface like a large baking tray, and scrub it with a dish cleaning brush under running water. The paint comes right off and the stencil doesn't get entangled or damaged this way. Please don't let pieces of paint go down the drain. It's bad for your plumbing and for the environment! Always insert a mesh strainer into the drain hole and then shake out the paint pieces into a trash can.

After the stencil is clean, place it on paper towels to dry, and pat it with a roll of paper towels to speed up the drying process. For a large project it may be smart to purchase 2 or even 3 stencils to save time on cleaning. Store your stencils flat, in large drawers if you have them, or under the bed interlaced with paper. Alternatively, you can hang them clipped to a clothes hanger, but don't store them rolled, unless it's the only option.

**Repairs:** If you accidentally break one of the "bridges" in the design while stenciling or cleaning, you can easily fix it by attaching small pieces of clear packing tape on both sides of the break. When you're ready to **re-decorate**, lightly sand your walls and simply roll 2 coats of basecoat paint over your stenciling and it's gone.

