

# Basics: Direct-To-Paper

If you read directions for stamped projects, you may run across the term “*Direct-To-Paper*”, sometimes abbreviated to “*DTP*”. As a new stamper, you may wonder what in the world this might mean.

Direct-To-Paper was popularized years ago by the folks at Magenta ([www.magentastyle.com](http://www.magentastyle.com)). It simply refers to applying ink from an inkpad by patting or rubbing the inkpad right onto the paper. In other words, you are skipping the rubber stamp and simply applying color with the inkpad.

Magenta’s technique originally used Clearsnap pigment inkpads, but it can be done with any inkpad. Pigment inks work particularly well because they tend to stay wet longer than dye-based inkpads, giving you a little more time to work with and blend the color on the paper. Clearsnap’s small “*Cat’s Eye*” pigment inkpads are a nice size to work with when doing Direct-To-Paper and so are often used with this technique. (But you don’t have to limit yourself; a wet dye-based inkpad like Ranger’s Distress

inks ([www.rangerink.com](http://www.rangerink.com)) can be very effective for this technique as well.)

Clearsnap ([www.clearsnap.com](http://www.clearsnap.com)) has really run with this technique and has made doing Direct-To-Paper using Cat’s Eye inkpads even easier with their Cat’s Eye Adapter Set. The set includes a handle and adapters (below) that let you easily attach the handle to Cat’s Eye inkpads.

Clearsnap also offers foam tips for their Stylus handles that serve as an intermediary between the pad and paper; you ink the foam tip on the inkpad and then apply the ink to the paper by rubbing or patting the Stylus’ foam tip on the paper. Although this is also often referred to as Direct-To-Paper, because it is still applying ink without using a rubber stamp, it is ever so slightly less direct. The result however is about the same.

When rubbing an inkpad across paper, it works best if the inkpad is well-inked and not dried out. A drier inkpad will not transfer as much ink and may also be damaged when the foam portion of the pad is pulled across the paper





surface; sometimes the foam can come off the inkpad. Applying ink with a foam stylus tip or a sponge is an alternative method that avoids this potential problem.

Direct-To-Paper can be done very lightly for very subtle ink applications or with very strong bold sweeps of color. It is often used to add color around the edges of a card or card layer or to create an all-over background effect or to apply color to card embellishments.

Play around with your inkpads on different papers to see how you like it. Keep in mind that cut, crumbled or folded edges often will accept more ink than smoother paper areas. Try short or long sweeping movements or patting motions. Blend or don't blend the color. Also experiment with holding your inkpads at different angles. Try using one color or several that work well together. Have fun!

Nancie Waterman, Editor VSN

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