

Wood Pen Blank Decal Application

By Les R. Elm © 2013

This method is how I apply Testors Clear Waterslide decals to wood pen blanks.

Materials:

- Testors Clear Decal Paper 5.5" X 8.5"
- White Colored Play-Doh
- MINWAX WBOM Clear Gloss Polyurethane
- Krylon Crystal Clear Acrylic Coating #41303
- Extra Fine Steel Wool
- 400 Grit Sandpaper
- Tack Cloth



Testors Decal Paper



White Colored Play-Doh



MINWAX WBOM Clear Gloss



Krylon Crystal Clear Acrylic Coating #41303

1. Preparing Wood Pen Blank:

- Overturn the wooden blank by 0.001 inch
- Sand 400 grit
- Buff with Extra Fine Steel Wool
- Clean blank with a Tack Cloth
- Apply 2 coats of MINWAX WBOM Clear Gloss Polyurethane using the "Dipping Method" sanding between 1st and 2nd coat

2. Making the Water Slide Decal:

- Using Microsoft Word or Excel click insert picture and size the image to fit the pen blank
- Print a test image on plain paper and cut out to check for correct size
- Insert the decal paper into paper tray and print
- Set aside to let the ink dry for 1-2 hours
- Apply 2 coats of Krylon Crystal Clear Acrylic Coating #41303 letting it dry 1-2 hours between coats and let dry over night

3. Applying the Decal:

- Place a piece of dowel into one end of the blank and install in a 1/2" drill chuck mounted in the lathe headstock
- Cut as close as possible to the outline of the image
- Place the decal in a small container of luke warm water for no more than 5 seconds
- Carefully position and slide the decal off the backing paper and onto the pen blank
- Once in position use a small piece of blue shop towel to blot off excess moisture and remove and air bubbles under the decal
- Set the blank aside and let decal dry 3-4 hours

4. Applying the Finish:

- Using the "Dipping Method", apply 2 coats letting dry 1 hour between coats.
- Reverse the blank and apply another 2 coats letting dry 1 hour between coats
- After 4 coats the decal should be completely covered and should not be able to feel the edges of the decal
- Rub the blank down with extra fine steel wool and clean the blank with a tack cloth
- Reverse the blank, apply 2 more coats letting dry 1 hour between coats, sand very lightly between coats with 400 grit sand paper cleaning with tack cloth between coats
- Reverse the blank, apply 1 more coat letting dry 1 hour, sand very lightly with 400 grit sand paper and clean with tack cloth
- Apply the final coat and let dry for a minimum of 24 to 48 hours to cure and harden
- Clean up the blank ends and clean out any Play-Doh from inside the tube ends prior to installation of pen components

Finishing a Wood Pen Blank Using the Dipping Method:

- Fill the tall plastic container with enough MINWAX to cover the blank when dipped
- Insert a wooden dowel into one end of the blank
- Plug the opposite end of the blank with a small piece of Play-Doh

Using the Dipping Method:



Wooden Dowel Inserted Into Blank End



Play-Doh



Play-Doh Plug in Opposite Blank End

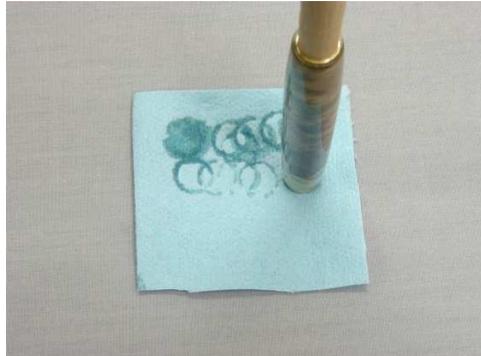
- Lay out a folded piece of blue shop towel
- Holding the dowel, dip the blank into the container of MINWAX to cover the full length of the blank



Dipping Blank Into MINWAX

- Remove the blank from the MINWAX, hold over the container and let some of the excess MINWAX run off the end of the blank.
- Place the end of the blank onto the folded blue shop towel to “Wick Off” the MINWAX as it runs down to the end of the blank.
- Continue to move the blank end to dry areas to all allow the MINWAX to “Wick Off” the end of the blank.

Using the Dipping Method:



Wicking MINWAX From Blank End

- Once there is no more MINWAX “Wicking” onto the blue shop towel, hang vertically to dry for minimum of 1 hour depending on ambient temperature and humidity.
- After the blank has dried, rub down the blank lengthwise with extra fine steel wool and clean with tack cloth.
- Reverse the blank and apply another coat rubbing down the blank with extra fine steel wool and clean with a tack cloth
- Continue applying as many coats as wanted by reversing and rubbing down the blank with extra fine steel wool and cleaning with a tack cloth between coats
- After apply the final coat and let dry for a minimum of 24 to 48 hours to cure and harden
- Clean up the blank ends and clean out any Play-Doh from inside the tube ends prior to installation of pen components

