

## PLAYGROUND STENCIL PAINTING INSTRUCTIONS

### *Advance Preparation*

1. Choose your location. Choose a smooth asphalt or concrete surface. Measure to make sure your designs will fit. Avoid areas near heavy dirt and sand. Leave enough space between stencil designs and other playground equipment to allow children to move safely.
2. Choose your painting day. Check the weather and choose a day that should be dry, not too windy and not extremely hot or cold.
3. Prepare surface. Clean surface to remove rocks, dirt and other debris. Power washing is recommended.
4. Collect supplies needed.
  - **Paint-** Ask your paint store to recommend the best paint for your surface. Special asphalt or curb marking paint is normally used. Bright primary colors and white stand out the most.
  - **Paintbrushes-** 1 to 3 inch brushes. Do not use expensive brushes for this project.
  - **Paint cups-** Save disposable plastic containers for mixing.
  - **Paint station-** Tarp, old sheet or cardboard. All paint should be poured and mixed at this station to contain spills.
  - **Thick masking tape-** to tape down stencils.
  - **Chalk-** to outline stencils or draw free-hand designs.
  - **Weights-** Rocks, bricks, etc. to hold down stencils on windy days.
  - **Clean up supplies-** Old rags and paper towels. Water or paint thinner depending on the kind of paint used.

### *Paint Day*

1. Lay stencils out on surface, making sure all pieces are put together in the right order. Use masking tape to hold pieces together.
2. Plan colors for each part of the design. Simple is better. Too many colors can be overwhelming.
3. Two methods for painting:
  - a. The **preferred method** is to draw outline of stencils with chalk, then remove stencils and paint within the chalk lines. This keeps the stencils clean and there is less risk of them blowing away. This method also results in smoother lines.
  - b. Secure stencils with tape and weights, then paint along the stencil. Check often to make sure the paint is not bleeding past the stencil outline. This method can result in smeared edges.

Use a 1 or 2 inch brush to paint the outline of the shape first. Then fill in shape using the same brush or a 3 inch brush. Paint at least 2 thin coats and allow to dry between coats. If the paint goes on too thick, it may peel later.

4. Allow paint to dry for 24 hours before use.
5. Remove masking tape and wipe down stencils with a wet rag to remove excess paint. Do not use paint thinner on stencils.
6. Make sure stencils are dry before placing back in the bag.

### **Maintenance**

1. Sweep or hose down the playground regularly to minimize dirt and debris, which wears down the paint more quickly.
2. Save the extra paint and touch up on an annual basis or as needed.

***Design Tip***

*Be creative and paint lines and curves to make tracks for children to follow.*

*Or cut your own stencil designs out of cardboard!*