

## Cyanotype process

### Part 1. Coating the paper

Assemble supplies (part one of list)

Have a dimly lit place to work and places to dry the paper

Protect surfaces

Prepare the solutions according to the directions on the bottles. This can be done ahead of the next step.

Pour equal parts of solution A and B into a container and stir a bit. For example, a tablespoon of each might do a few sheets of 8 x 10" paper. Start with a small amount because the solution is only active for a few hours once you have combined the 2 parts.

Wet the brush and wipe off excess water.

Some trial and error is involved next. Try putting 1/2 teaspoon of solution onto an 8 x 10" sheet of paper. Spread it evenly with your brush, across and up and down.

You could just dip the brush, but that can result in having too much fluid on the paper, which could form unattractive puddle marks as it dries.

A smooth even coat is desirable. Coating edge to edge is one option. Leaving brush marks along any edge or edges can be attractive.

Often the paper will curl as the wet side expands then flatten as it dries, especially in very dry air.

Dry flat or by hanging in a dark place.

Paper can be stacked once it is dry.

## Part 2. Making the Cyanotype Print

Assemble supplies.

Get your developing/rinsing solutions ready.

Or use a sink or hose, depending on your situation.

1st tray: tap water with a splash of vinegar added if water is quite alkaline/hard.

2nd tray: tap water with a teaspoon per liter of hydrogen peroxide added.

3rd tray: tap water.

You might want to label the trays or pans with their contents and how long to leave the paper in them.

Work in a dimly lit space, preferably without UV light. (Or you could try working very quickly until the art is in the light box or the sun).

Place the negative or objects on the dry treated paper on the plexiglass. Square it up and place the good unmarked sheet of plexiglass on top, so you have a 4-layer sandwich. Clip it together. The negative likes to slide around until you get the clips on, so it's nice to have a little edge that you can trim from the paper afterward.

Place the light box over the plexiglass and turn on the light. Lights vary. They can take anywhere from 4 minutes to 20, maybe longer. Sunlight is likely to take 10-20 minutes or longer.

UV light meters are available but expensive. Experimenting is cheaper. Once you know how much time your light and your paper need, that should stay consistent. Fabric and some kinds of paper, especially synthetic, can take longer to expose.

Put gloves on while exposing the print.

Turn off the light (use a power bar if it doesn't have a switch) and the timer. Lift off the light box and remove the clips from the plexiglass. Set aside the negative and place the print into the first tray for 5 minutes, agitating occasionally.

Place into second tray until the blue deepens, just a few moments. This step is optional but useful, as you will immediately be able to see the finished colour/value. Otherwise the colour will deepen by itself in a few hours to a day.

Place in 3rd tray for at least 5 minutes.

Or the above steps can be replaced simply by rinsing under running water, probably for 10 minutes (not a process I do, but useful for a large group or large prints made outdoors).

Dry on a flat surface or hang to dry. I like to blot the paper a bit with newsprint or blotting paper.

If the prints are wrinkled, they can be placed between 2 sheets of copy paper or newsprint while a bit humid and put under weights, e.g. heavy books, or clamped between pieces of plywood.

Instructions provided by: Carol Bromley Meeres, Visual Artist