

Let's Explore - Printing with a Gelli Plate June 2024

Bring along a commercial plate or make one using a recipe below.

If you don't know about printing with a gelli plate, read about how to get started in 'The basics of gel printing with Einat Kessler' <https://einatkessler.com/basics-gelli-printing/> or watch Einat Kessler demonstrate on YouTube [here](#).

What to bring

If you attended our Sunday session on 'Exploring different ways of making printing blocks and stencils', bring what you made along!

- Gelli plate
- Stencils
- Masks
- Printing blocks
- Acrylic paints - any brand
- A4 White paper - Cartridge, light card or mixed media paper. Even photocopier paper is fine.
Soft rubber brayer - any size
- Plastic mat to protect the table
- Apron
- Baking paper
- Masking tape
- Rags
- If you'd like to print on fabric, bring pale coloured fabric and if you intend to wash your fabric, acrylic fabric paints.

Optional items to bring

- Orange bag
- Onion bag
- Bubble wrap
- Baby oil
- Rubber bands
- Baby wipes or water wipes
- Foam card to make impressions with a ball point pen
- Perm comb or similar for scraping paint on the plate
- Paper dollies
- Leaves or other vegetation
- Other materials that can leave an impression, keys, feathers, etc, but nothing sharp that could damage your plate.
- Your lunch (or you can purchase nearby). Milk, tea, coffee provided.

Gelatine Plate Recipe – Courtesy of Sally Westcott

The plates can be made in any shape you choose (square, rectangular or even round). Your imagination is the only limiting factor. Take away containers are perfect for making small plates. My favourite size is made in a kitty litter tray.

Method:

- Place the mould on a level surface and measure how much water it takes to fill the container to ½" to ¾" deep. This will determine how many cups gelatine you have to make.
- **2 tablespoons powdered gelatine for each cup of water (40 grams gelatine to 250ml water).**
- Line your mould with cling wrap. This makes it easier to remove the slab from the mould when it is set.
- Bring half of the total amount of water to a boil. Pour the other half of the **cold water** into a bowl, sprinkle the measured gelatine powder onto the cold water and stir to dissolve. Once the gelatine has dissolved add the boiling water. Stir until completely dissolved.
- Skim the foam and bubbles off the top and pour into your level container. Skim the bubbles off the gelatine again once you have poured it into the mould. To do this, gently drag newspaper over the top of the gelatine and guide the bubbles to the edge.
- Let gelatine harden and then chill in the refrigerator for at least 12 hours before you want to use it. Keep the plate wrapped in plastic, in the refrigerator between printing sessions and it will keep for quite some time.

Jenny Blake's Recipes

A. Gelatine Plate that will not be permanent

A Gelatine Plate for a 12" x 9" (30cm x 23cm) giving a 1" (2.5cm) thick plate.
12 tablespoons gelatine to 6 cups of water.

Method:

- Put half the cold water in the bowl and sprinkled the gelatine over the surface.
- Use a hand held whisk to mix it well then add remaining water (this may be done with the second 3 cups of water as boiling or adding the 3 cups as cold water and microwaving the mixture until it is CLEAR). My method was to zap the mixture 3 times for 1 minute and stir well; stirring after each zap and then a final 40 seconds zap. **Important not to boil. Everyone's microwave can be different.**
- Pour into your desired tin remembering that the base will be the side you print on so must be smooth.
- Skim the bubbles off the top with a piece of newspaper. Drag it gently over the top to guide the bubbles to the edges.
- Let gelatine slab harden by refrigerating for 12 hours.
- The plate can be stored in the refrigerator between printing times if well wrapped in plastic.
- It lasts about 10 days until it breaks up and gets mouldy.

B. Permanent Gelatine Plate

A Gelatine Plate for a 12" x 9" (30cm x 23cm) giving a 1" (2.5cm) thickness.

This recipe uses 6 cups of fluid made up in the following quantities:

- 12 tablespoons gelatine
- 3 cups cold water
- 1.5 cups alcohol
- 1.5 cups glycerine

Method:

- Put the cold water in a microwave bowl and sprinkled the gelatine over the surface.
 - Use a hand held whisk to mix it well.
 - Add the alcohol (fumes, so please wear a mask) and whisk.
 - Finally add the glycerine and whisk well.
 - Put in the microwave and zap it 3 times; 1 minute zaps and stirring well after each zap
 - Final 40 second zap and stir well.
- Important not to boil. Everyone's microwave can be different.**
- Pour into your desired tin remembering that the base will be the side you print on.
 - Pop any bubbles you may have (I had none).
 - Let gelatine slab harden at room temperature for at least 12 hours.
 - This plate can be stored in a container in a dry place.
 - I also added clove oil to the final mix to help with the smell of the Isocol alcohol.