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Coloring
With
ECO-FLō™

tandy Leather Factory

**A Practical
Guide For Using
Eco-Flo™ Dyes, Stains,
Antiques, Finishes
Plus Techniques & Special Effects**

By Tony & Kay Laier

Coloring

With Eco-Flo™

By Tony & Kay Laier

**A Practical Guide
for Eco-Flo Products,
Techniques and Special Effects**

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Leather
Factory

Ft. Worth, TX 76140
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INTRODUCTION

ECO-FLO™

EARTH FRIENDLY, LOW V.O.C. PRODUCTS FOR LEATHER

In response to the overwhelming concerns about the damage being caused to our environment and Earth's ozone by harmful levels of "volatile organic compounds" (V.O.C.), Tandy Leather Factory has developed the Eco-Flo™ Line.

"As a leather artist, designer and teacher, my interests focus on the usage of the Eco-Flo™ products. Most leatherworking dyes, stains, antiques, finishes and adhesives originated in solvent based formulas when environmental issues were not yet a concern. Leather coloring techniques used worldwide over the decades became second nature to most leather workers. Using different formulas does take practice and attention must be made to varying techniques in order to achieve the desired effects. To help with the transition from solvent to water based products, this book is designed to offer tips and techniques to achieve many effects. I hope you will enjoy reading the book and experimenting with the techniques while knowing that you are helping our environment."

Tony Laier - Director of Research and Product Development, Tandy Leather Factory

HOW TO START

B efore you begin applying color or a finish to your project, it is important to set up your workspace properly for best results. Preparing your surroundings and leather beforehand will help you achieve the desired finished look of your project.

THE WORKSPACE

1 *Use a clean, flat, sturdy work surface. Remove all unnecessary obstacles, tools and supplies not needed.*

2 *Be sure you have lots of light: Combining natural and artificial light is best. Daylight fluorescent (overhead, clip-on, table lamps or swing arm) high intensity lights work well. The more light the better for color work.*

3 *Be sure your workspace is well ventilated (exhaust fan, oscillating fan, open windows, etc.).*

4 *Setup your workspace so that everything you will need to color your project is within reach. This includes supplies for clean-up: rags, paper towels, plastic bags, trash can.*

5 *Choose a chair that puts you in a comfortable position over your project.*

6 *Useful items to have handy: Different sized sponges, paper towels, practice leather pieces, pallet, brushes & rack, sheep wool pieces, daubers, cloth rags, water bowl, eye dropper, squeeze bottles, note paper & pencil, etc.*
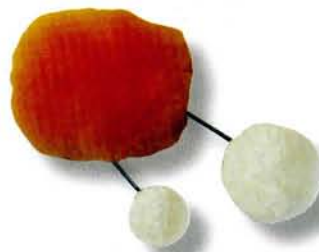
LEATHER PREPARATION

Be sure your leather is as clean as possible. When stamping or carving your project, avoid resting your hands directly on the leather. This transfers skin oils into the leather which could cause splotching when dye is applied.

Leather should be completely dry before applying color or finish. If your leather has been mounted on a stiffener (card board, etc.) for tooling, leave it on the board through coloring and final finish.
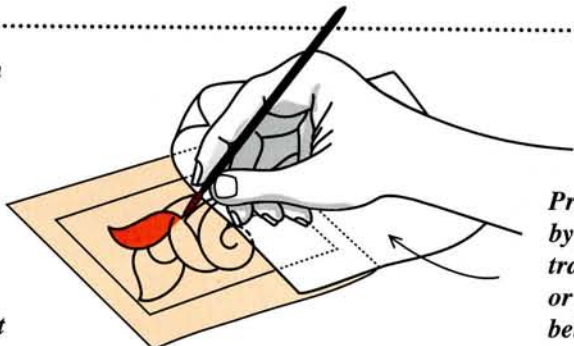
Protect the leather by placing a piece of tracing film, paper, or paper towel between your hand and the leather.

CHOOSE THE ECO-FLO PRODUCT (Best Suited for Your Project) ....

Eco- Flo™ products offer a wide selection of color choices. Some penetrate the leather more than others. Some offer stronger colors than others. All can be combined for special effects. All clean up with soap and water. The next sections will show a sampling of effects achievable using these products along with recommended applicators and techniques.

LEATHER DYES: *Transparent colors formulated to penetrate the surface of natural veg-tanned tooling leather. Can be thinned with water. Colors can be mixed together for additional hue options. Apply with brush, dauber, or aerosol sprayer. Let dry completely after application and buff between coats to remove excess color pigment from surface. Repeat for desired hue. Seal with a top finish.*

COAL BLACK	LIGHT MAHOGANY	TIMBER BROWN	EMERALD GREEN
DARK COCO BROWN	DARK MAHOGANY	RANGE TAN	FOREST GREEN
BISON BROWN	CRANBERRY RED	CANYON TAN	DEEP VIOLET
JAVA BROWN	SCARLET	EVENING BLUE	SUNSHINE YELLOW

HI-LITE COLOR STAINS: *Lighter and more transparent than Leather Dyes, Hi-Lite Stains accent cuts and impressions. Can be applied over natural or pre-dyed leather. Apply one or more coats with a slightly damp sponge, cloth or sheep wool. Let dry. Buff between coats. Can be diluted with water and mixed together for more color options. Seal with a top finish.*

BRIAR BROWN	GOLDENROD YELLOW	SMOKE BLACK	COFFEE BROWN
CHESTNUT TAN	GREEN TEA	PERSIMMON RED	GOLD FROST
SADDLE TAN	DUSTY ROSE PINK	SKY BLUE	SILVER FROST
RAISIN MAHOGANY	THISTLE PURPLE		

GEL ANTIQUES: *A thick, easy to use antique for veg-tanned leather. Apply a liberal amount on surface, rubbing in a circular motion until an even color is achieved. Remove excess immediately with a soft cloth or sheep wool. Seal with top finish.*

BLACK	TAN
DARK BROWN	SADDLE TAN
MEDIUM BROWN	MAHOGANY

ALL-IN-ONE STAIN & FINISH: *A color and finish combined for speed. Great for kids. Apply to leather with sheep wool or a soft cloth in a circular motion. Remove excess immediately with clean sheep wool or cloth. Only one coat is recommended. Allow to dry completely and then buff. Additional top finish is optional.*

MIDNIGHT BLACK	DESERT TAN	LT. MOCHA BROWN	GRAPE PURPLE
FUDGE BROWN	CHERRY CHOCOLATE	PRAIRIE TAN	CACTUS GREEN
ACORN BROWN	MARINER BLUE	PRIMROSE RED	CHERRY RED

COVA COLORS®: *Acrylic paints, opaque at full strength or dilute with water for a more translucent wash. Apply with brush or sponge. Allow to dry between coats. A finish is not necessary, unless another product color will be applied over the Cova Colors. Then it is recommended to seal with a top finish.*

BLACK	RED	LIGHT BLUE	LIME GREEN
DARK BROWN	YELLOW	ROYAL BLUE	PURPLE
MEDIUM BROWN	WHITE	LIGHT PINK	GOLD
LIGHT BROWN	ORANGE	DARK PINK	SILVER
KELLY GREEN	TURQUOISE		

Always Consider Product Compatibility ....

APPLICATORS & EFFECTS

Y ou've decided on a project to make. Now, do you want to add color? Look at the next pages for all the possibilities you can create using different Eco-Flo™ dyes, stains and antiques plus the use of different applicators and techniques. Once you have decided on a "look" for your project and the product you want to use, go to the next section for how to do the technique to achieve these effects.

Eco-Flo™ Offers Hundreds of Visual Effects Using a Variety of Applicators . . . These Are Just a Few

BRUSHES ....

GENERAL RULE: *"The better the brush, the better the results."*
Most traditional techniques of coloring on tooled leather can be done with a good quality #3 or #4 Round Red Sable brush. The head should be approximately 1/8" in diameter by 5/8" long with a good snap or spring and a gradual taper to a fine sharp point. A #1 Round Sable is also good to have at hand for very fine detail work. For special effects and backgrounds, the options are limitless.

BACKGROUNDING
A #1, #3 or #4 Round Red Sable brush works well for detail work and for background dyeing in very small, tight spaces using Eco-Flo dyes and stains. Also used for resists. See pages 16, 21, 24 - 27 for techniques & tips.

DETAIL WORK
A #1, #3 or #4 Round Red Sable brush works well for detail work using Eco-Flo dyes, stains, acrylics and resists. Have different sizes available for different spaces to color. See pages 26 & 29 for techniques.

SHADING & BLENDING
A #3 or #4 Round Red Sable brush works well for most shading on undyed leather or to add depth to dyed pieces. Shading works best with Eco-Flo Leather Dyes and Hi-Lite Color Stain. For more information on Shading, see pages 22-27 & 29.

VEINING & ENHANCING

This technique combines the use of small & large soft head brushes with sponges and rags to blend edges of multi-colors to enhance the natural grain or "age" the appearance of natural or pre-dyed leather. For technique information, see page 19.

DRAGGING

Wide, flat head brushes and two or more different colors of the same or different products are used to create this dragged effect, often seen on frames and leather furniture. The technique can also be achieved with other applicators. See pages 10, 19 & 20 for more.

MASKING, BLENDING & STIPPLING

Use a large, round headed brush as a "blender" to add texture and stipple with the tip to mask blemishes in leather. Works well with Antique Gels for an aging effect. See pages 17, 21, 31 & 35 for techniques and special effects.

TIPS About Brushes:

WATER BASED COLOR DYES AND STAINS CAN BE CLEANED OUT OF BRUSHES. HOWEVER, IT IS SAFER TO HAVE SEPARATE BRUSHES FOR EACH COLOR CATEGORY: browns, reds, greens, yellows, blues and black. Color code the ends of the brush handles with electrical tape or paint that matches the color category. No matter how well a brush is cleaned, some dye color will always remain in the brush ferrule. Dye that remains hidden in the ferrule will eventually migrate down and ruin your coloring project.

BEFORE USING NEW BRUSHES, clean thoroughly. Practice using the brushes on scrap leather. Dip brush tip into dye (only 3/4 of the bristle length, but never up to or over the ferrule). Practice using varied amounts of dye and pressure. "Loaded" means the brush is full of dye. Normally, it's not a good idea to over-load a brush except when flooding a background surface.

CLEANING AND CARING FOR BRUSHES: To clean a brush, first swirl the brush through a container of clean water or pull the head across stacked paper towels while dripping more water directly on the bristles. This will remove most of the dye without harming the bristles.

Then gently wash brush head in warm soapy water (mild hand or dish soap), pat brush dry on paper towels and reform the tip to a point by rolling tip in the crease of your palm.

THE TEMPTATION IS ALWAYS TO SWIRL A BRUSH IN A GLASS OF WATER AND LEAVE THE BRUSH IN THE WATER. This harms the bristles, bending them at an angle and ultimately causing them to break off. Always store brushes head (bristles) up standing in a container or in a brush rack. HINT: Before storing your brushes, apply a drop of hand lotion in the palm of your hand and reform the tip in the lotion. This reconditions the bristles. Properly cared for, good quality brushes will last for a very long time.
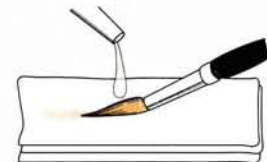
SPONGES ....

Natural, synthetic, cellulose, large, small, stiff, soft, open large cells, small dense cells, on sticks, square shaped, round and free formed sponges can produce smooth, textured and special effect designs.

TIP:

Edge dyeing requires a small, applicator that will hold a lot of dye. This "home-made" applicator made with a sponge held by a clothes pin works great! Wool daubers (reformed) work very well. Some store bought sponge brushes will also work and can be trimmed to a desired shape.
For more on Edge Dyeing, see page 15.

All Eco-Flo Products can be applied with sponges, depending on the effect desired. For general application, a damp sponge is most recommended for Hi-Lite Color Stain.

As for special effects, a wide variety of all shapes and sizes of sponges can be used with all Eco-Flo dyes, stains and acrylic colors. Experiment using different sponges and products with the techniques shown in the next section to accent your projects.
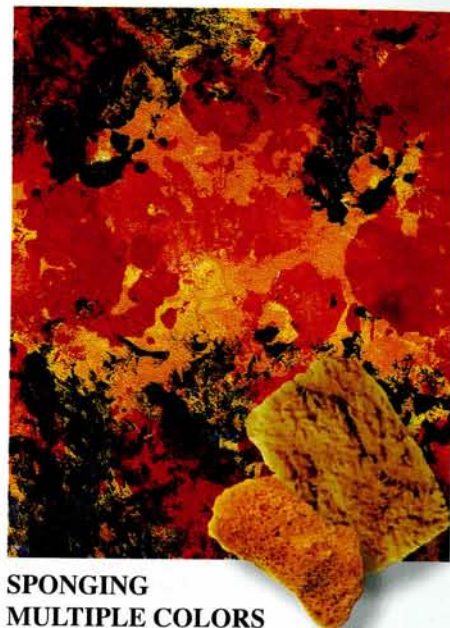
SPONGING MULTIPLE COLORS
Sponge a base color, then have fun adding different colors, same or different products for effect. See techniques on pages 19 & 20.
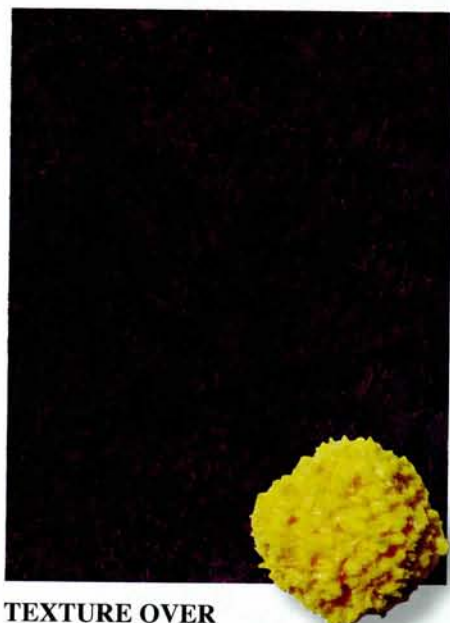
TEXTURE OVER SMOOTH BACKGROUNDS
A variety of sponges can be used to create exciting top textures over solid dyed backgrounds using the same or different products. For more about this technique, see pages 19 & 20.

SPONGING SMOOTH & TOOLED SURFACES
Overall coloring tooled areas can be done well using sponges and select products. For more hints, see Hi-Lite Color Stains on page 17.

DRAGGING SPONGES
Add stripes or swirls over a pre-dyed or natural leather backgrounds with fine celled sponges and sponge brushes (on sticks). For techniques using sponges, see pages 19 & 20.

CLOTH, RAGS AND BLOCKS ....

Cloth and rags are normally used for removing excess dye & stain. However, there are more creative uses for these cotton products. Use as shown below for special effects and wrap over blocks for block dyeing.

CLOTH, RAGS, CANVAS & GAUZE
Apply a heavy coat of Hi-Lite Stain to a pre-dyed or natural leather surface and blot with different fabrics for special effects. See page 20.

BLOCK DYEING
Apply color to just the high points of a stamped or tooled design. See page 28 for Block Dyeing Techniques.

BLOCK DYEING
Apply color to select areas, such as borders, edges, etc. See page 28 for more Block Dyeing Techniques.

How to Make a Block for Block Dyeing

When doing Block Dyeing, it is a good idea to have one separate block for each color of stain or dye to be used. Store in zip-lock bags.

1 *Select a hand sized piece of wood, approximately 3/4" thick x 2-1/2" wide x 4" long. Be sure it is clean. Use a clean strip of white cotton tee-shirt cut wider than the block and long enough to wrap around the block 6 or more times.*

2 *Start at one end of cloth and wrap it around block pulling cloth tight with each turn. Cloth edges will be stapled to ends of block, so trim off all but 1/4" of excess fabric that extends beyond the ends.*
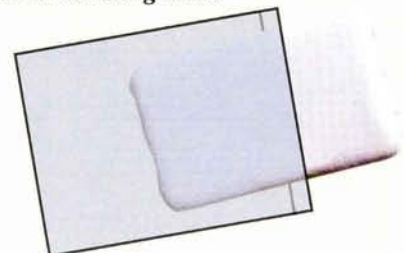
3 *Overlap and tuck-in the edges of cloth on both ends and use a staple gun with 1/2" staples to secure cloth to ends of wood and along edge of cloth on one side.*

TIP:

Block Dyeing can be messy, so be sure to wear plastic gloves and have extra paper towels next to your project.

It is a good idea to have a clean zip lock plastic bag for each block when the block is not being used.

Avoid the temptation to rest the blocks on top of the zip locks between uses. Have a separate piece of non-absorbent waxed paper, tracing film or plates close by to rest the block on between coats.
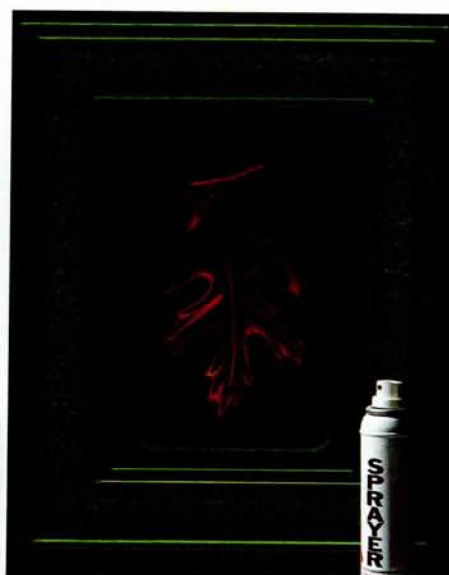
SPRAYERS ....

The safest way to apply an even coat of dye or top finish to large spaces is with a sprayer.

AEROSOL SPRAYER
Spray an overall color on a project then re-spray with a darker color around edges. See page 21 for more.

AEROSOL SPRAYER
This sample shows a frame sprayed with an overall base coat color, then antiqued. See page 21 for more.

TIP: Depth

For additional depth, try spraying on a second or third coat of a darker or different color just on selected areas or along edges.

If you have an artist air-brush, the same techniques can be used. The air-brush will allow more detail to be applied than an aerosol sprayer.

All types of spraying take practice before attempting on a final project.

Tooling by Tony Laier - Coloring by Philip Smith (Steel Strike Leather Products, Inc.)

TIP: How to Clean a Sprayer
Remove dye bottle. Then attach sprayer to bottle of water and spray until clean. Sprayer may also be disassembled into component parts, cleaned with water and reassembled.

How to Use a Sprayer:

1 *Have a separate sprayer unit & bottle for each color to be used. Be sure you have plenty of pre-mixed dye before starting. Fill bottle with dye. Attach sprayer.*

2 *Place project in a spray shield made from cardboard. Position cardboard on a sturdy table covered with paper in a well ventilated area. Prop up project on pieces of cardboard or sticks to raise it up off paper. This will prevent dye from pooling along bottom edge.*

WALL
TAPE
PROPS
PAPER
ON TABLE
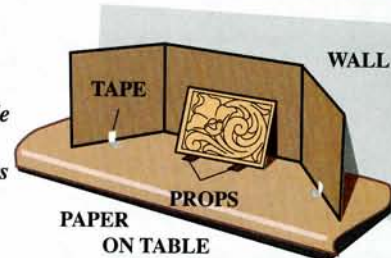
3 *Test sprayer on brown paper off to one side of project to assure even spraying and that color is correct.*

TEST HERE

4 *Begin spraying off the project on one side. Move across project spraying off project on the other side.*

5 *Continue back and forth until project is covered. Maintain a uniform distance from the project while spraying. Spray light coats until desired color is achieved. Allow to dry.*

6 *Give project a quarter turn and re-spray if necessary. Allow to dry and buff with sheep wool or soft cloth to remove excess dye. Apply a top finish.*

STAMPS, STENCILS & OBJECTS ....

Excellent applicators for adding accents to dyed, stained, antiqued, natural or suede leather.
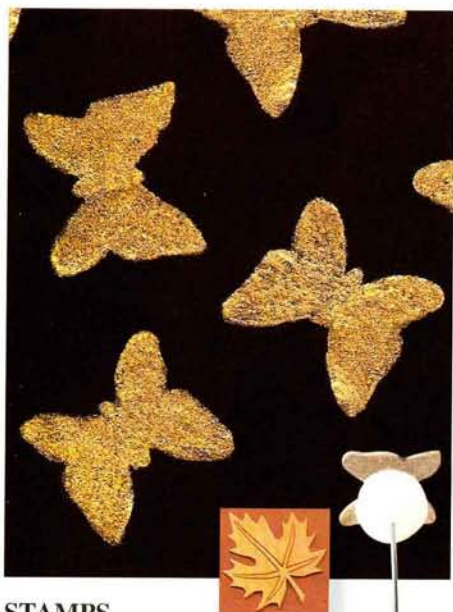
STAMPS
Add designs on pre-dyed leather or suede with stamps. For how to make leather stamps, see page 30.

STENCILS
Add designs over textured or pre-dyed leather with a variety of Tandy Leather Factory stencils. Trace with a stylus and paint with a brush or transfer with other applicators. See page 31.

OBJECTS AS STAMPS & STENCILS
Use sponges, brushes or daubers to transfer different natural objects to leather. Or apply color directly on object and transfer to leather. For more see page 31.

COMBS ....
Make a comb from scrap leather or use a manufactured craft comb.

COMBING
Create a pattern over natural or solid base coats for effect. Best suited for Hi-Lite Color stains and Cova Colors. See page 19 for more technique ideas.

TIP: Avoid Rub-Off

When applying heavy dye or stain pigment to the surface of your project using stamps, stencil, combs or other applicators, the following steps should be followed to avoid "rub-off":

1 *Let the dye or stain completely dry. This may require many hours if the pigment is thick.*

2 *Test the corner of the dyed area for dryness before continuing. This can be done by gently blotting (not rubbing) a corner of the surface that has been dyed with a clean, dry cloth or paper towel.*

3 *When the project is dry, apply several light coats of Super Shene Spray top finish. Using other applicators such as a sponge or sheep wool could smear the dye.*

4 *Let first coat of top finish completely dry; then apply more light coats. If the project will be worn or exposed to outdoor use, apply as many coats as necessary.*

SHEEP WOOL ....
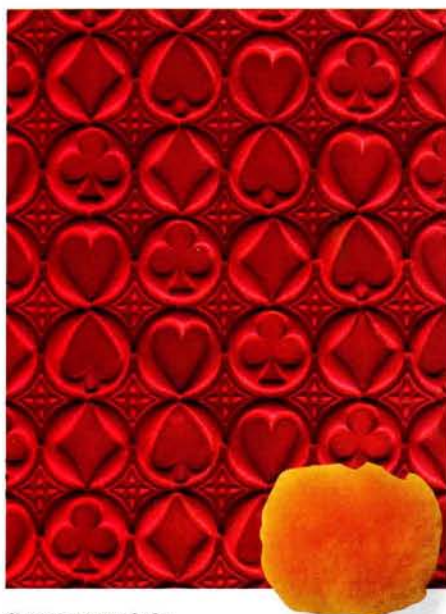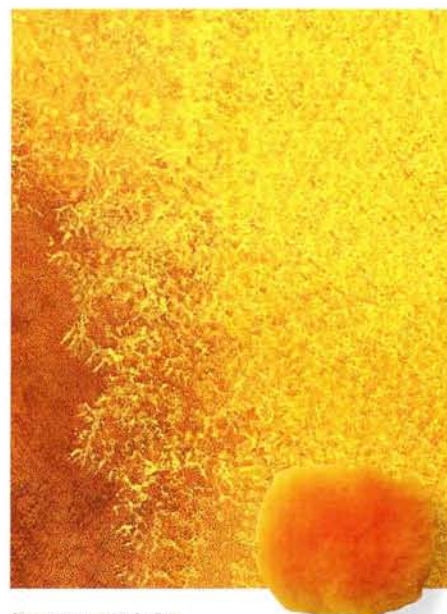
SHEEP WOOL
Works well to apply All-In-One Stain and Finish. Be sure to have several pieces: for application, removing excess stain and buffing. Use clean pieces often to avoid blotching stain. See page 18.

SHEEP WOOL
Hi-Lite Color Stain can be applied with Sheep wool over background dyed toolings. See pages. 17, 18 & 20.

SHEEP WOOL
Different effects (smooth to ruff) can be created using sheep wool with Eco-Flo products. For more see page 20.
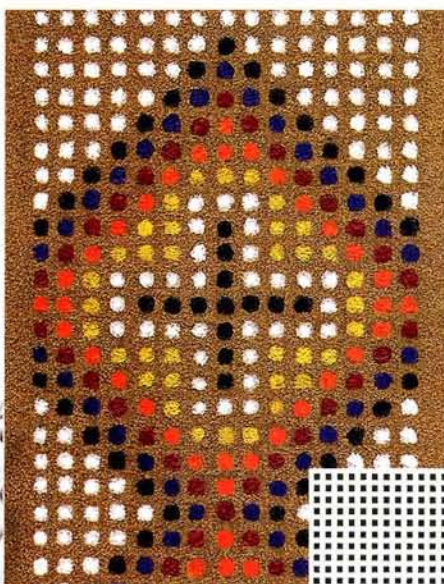
TIP: *Have lots of pre-cut pieces of sheep wool handy.*

CREATIVE APPLICATORS & TOOLS FOR EFFECTS ....

ROCKS & CHAINS
"Age" a project using rocks, chains, gravel, etc. For more on this technique, see page 31.

NEEDLEWORK MESH
Use needlework mesh with Cova Colors to create faux bead work designs and patterns. See page 31 for more ideas and options.
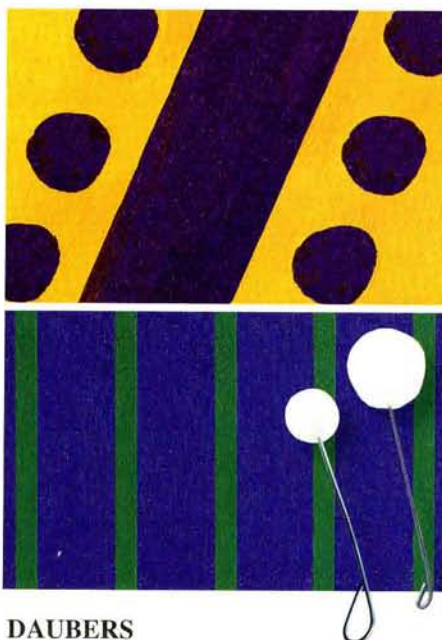
YOUR FINGERS
Fun for kids of all ages. Create designs using Cova Colors and Hi-Lite Color Stains. For more ideas and techniques, see page 31.

DAUBERS ....
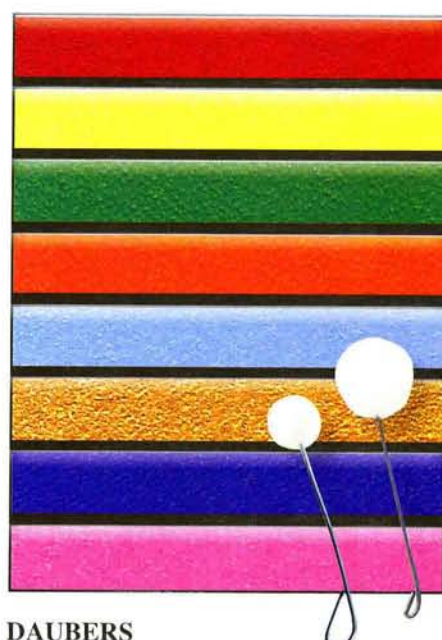
DAUBERS

On small projects, apply stains on pre-dyed or natural leather with daubers. Using daubers on larger works may cause streaking. See page 20.

DAUBERS

Have fun creating with daubers: Stripes, zigzags, polka-dots, swirls and more. For straight lines, use painter's masking tape. See more techniques on page 20.
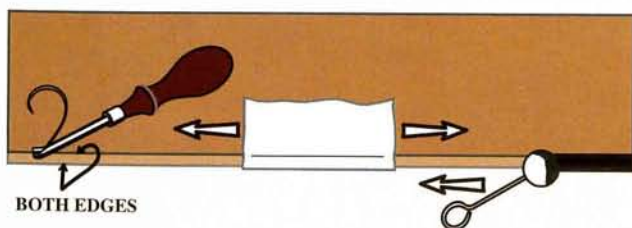
DAUBERS

Daubers (reformed as shown below) work well for edge dyeing with different Eco-Flo products: Leather Dyes page 20, Cova Colors page 18 also Gum Tragacanth page 37.

TIP: Edge Dyeing

For a more professional look for your project, prepare edges prior to application of edge dyes or finish.

1 *Round off square cut edges with an edge beveler or bissonnette sized for the thickness of the leather.*

2 *Use a sponge to lightly dampen the beveled edge with water or Gum Tragacanth. NOTE: Gum Tragacanth acts as a light resist or block. For best results, apply after project has been antiqued or stained.*

3 *Rub edge briskly with an edge slicker, bone folder or piece of natural coarse canvas to compress fibers and burnish edges. If some fibers on the edge refuse to lay down, remove them by rubbing edge with a piece of very fine grit sand paper. Then repeat Steps 2 & 3.*

4 *Apply your choice of edge dye or finish using one of the applicators described in this section.*
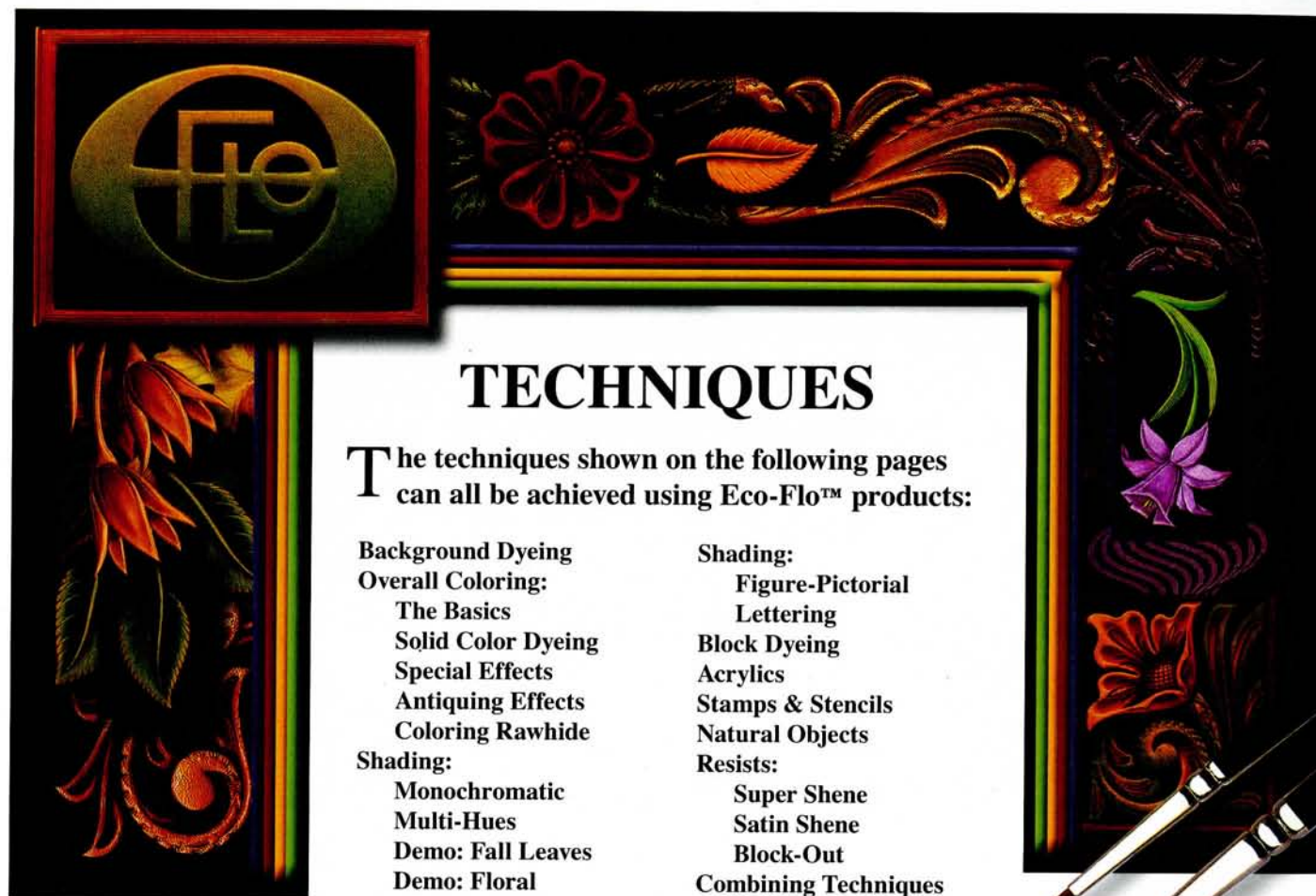
BOTH EDGES

Re-forming a Wool Dauber for Edge Treatment Dyeing:

CAUTION: THIS PROCEDURE MUST BE DONE OUTSIDE WITH THE GREATEST SAFETY, CARE & CAUTION.
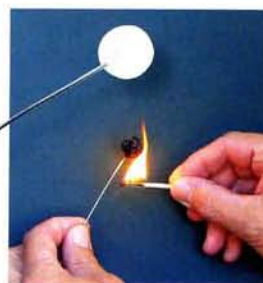
1 *Select a small wool dauber (the better size for edge treatments). NOTE: Use only real wool daubers, not synthetic.*

2 *Carefully hold wool dauber over an open flame (match, candle, lighter, propane torch, etc). Turn dauber slowly through the flame until well charred. (Think marshmallow over a camp fire.)*

3 *Allow to cool. Crumble off loose charred residue. Repeat if necessary until dauber becomes a small, tight, fuzz free ball. If the fuzz returns after repeated use and washings, pass dauber again over a flame quickly to remove the fuzz.*

TECHNIQUES

The techniques shown on the following pages can all be achieved using Eco-Flo™ products:

Background Dyeing
Overall Coloring:
    The Basics
    Solid Color Dyeing
    Special Effects
    Antiquing Effects
    Coloring Rawhide
Shading:
    Monochromatic
    Multi-Hues
    Demo: Fall Leaves
    Demo: Floral

Shading:
    Figure-Pictorial
    Lettering
Block Dyeing
Acrylics
Stamps & Stencils
Natural Objects
Resists:
    Super Shene
    Satin Shene
    Block-Out
Combining Techniques

BACKGROUND DYEING

By definition, background dyeing is "Coloring the background behind a tooled design separate from the rest of the piece". A #4 Sable brush is recommended for large areas and a #1 for tight spaces. Other sizes may work better for you, so practice on pieces of scrap leather until you can control the movement of the brush. Backgrounded areas may require two or more coats for complete and even coverage.

INCORRECT: *Starting in a small space or too close to an edge will risk having dye "bleed". Using a brush too large will also threaten ruining your project.*

CORRECT: *Always begin in the center of an open space. Then work towards edges and into corners. To dye close to edges or in small spaces, place brush near edge or space and let dye work up into space.*

TIP: *After dipping brush in dye (no more than 3/4 up on brush head), touch tip on a paper towel to remove excess dye before applying dye to your project. Too much dye can run and "bleed" into cuts and impressions. Reform the brush point on a piece of scrap leather. Hold brush straight up to avoid accidentally touching an edge.*

# OVERALL COLORING (The Basics) ....

LEATHER DYES: To do "overall" (large space) dyeing, select the applicator best suited for the space to be dyed. Aerosol sprayers work best for large spaces, daubers and brushes for smaller spaces. Be sure to have a sufficient quantity of dye on hand to cover the entire area. Dyes may vary slightly in shade, so consider combining more than one bottle to create a large enough batch needed to complete the job without color variance. Here are application techniques for applying the dye:

USING A DAUBER:
Dip dauber in dye and begin in a corner moving quickly in a continuous circular motion, overlapping the previous stroke. Keep dauber full of dye, resuming circular movement over-lapping previous strokes.

When the 1st coat is dry, you may see light and dark spots. Go over the entire project again in the opposite direction with the same procedure. If necessary, dye a third time or more until proper coverage is achieved. When dry, buff to remove any excess dye off surface and to achieve a sheen.
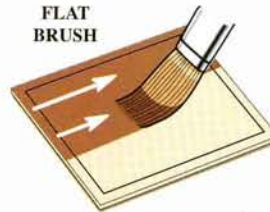
FLAT
BRUSH

ROUND
BRUSH

USING BRUSHES:
When dyeing with a FLAT brush, use cross and diagonal strokes on 1st, 2nd and 3rd applications for a more solid, even dye coverage. When using a ROUND brush, move quickly in a circular motion so each stroke slightly overlaps the previous stroke. When more dye is needed, dip, then resume circular movement overlapping previous stroke. When dry, buff to remove excess dye off surface and for a sheen.

OVERALL COLORING (Solid Color Dyeing) ....

HI-LITE COLOR STAINS: Sample shown was background dyed using Leather Dye, then Hi-Lite Color Stain was applied following these steps:

1   *Shake Hi-Lite Color Stain bottle well. Transfer a liberal amount of stain to a slightly damp sponge, soft cloth or sheep wool (never directly onto leather). Apply by rubbing quickly in a circular motion until color is even across project and all impressions are full.*

2   *Remove excess stain immediately with a clean, slightly damp sponge, soft cloth or sheep wool. Multiple coats may be applied for darker shades. Allow to dry completely between coats, then buff to a mellow gloss.*

3   *Apply a light coat or two of Super Shene, Satin Shene or Carnauba Creme for final seal.*

Select areas were first background dyed with a brush, then Hi-Lite Color Stained with a damp sponge.

GEL ANTIQUE was applied with sheep wool on this sample. HINT: This design and technique would work well as a filigreed design over suede.

ANTIQUE GELS: A variety of colors are available and all can be mixed to achieve even more hues. Only one coat is recommended following these steps:

1   *Apply a liberal amount of antique to a dry, soft cloth or sheep wool (never directly onto the leather). Work into leather, rubbing briskly in a circular motion until surface has an overall, even color.*

2   *Remove excess antique immediately with a clean, soft cloth or sheep wool. Continue rubbing until surface achieves a mellow gloss.*

3   *Allow to dry completely, then apply Super Shene, Satin Shene or Carnauba Creme for final seal.*

ABOUT THIS SAMPLE: After completed frame pieces were attached to medium density fiberboard (wood base) with contact cement (Leather Weld will also work), corner pieces were dyed with a brush. Then Gel Antique and a top finish were applied.

OVERALL COLORING (Solid Coloring & Accents) ....

ALL-IN-ONE STAIN & FINISH: The sample at left shows a stamped design and the application of one coat of All-In-One Stain & Finish with Cova Color accents.

1   *Shake bottle well. Transfer a liberal (heavy) amount to a dry, soft cloth or sheep wool (never directly onto the leather). Apply quickly, rubbing in a circular motion until color is even and all cuts and impressions are full.*

2   *Remove excess with a clean, soft cloth or sheep wool. Allow to dry completely, then buff to a mellow gloss.*

OPTIONAL: Even though All-In-One contains a finish, an extra seal of top finish (Super Shene, Stain Shene or Carnauba Creme) may be applied if project will be heavily used or when products are combined.

TIP: *Applying An Overall Color Over A Background Dyed Project*

Before applying an overall color on a project that has been background dyed, first use a brush to apply a solid coat of Satin Shene over just the background dyed areas. Allow to completely dry. This will avoid rub-off when the overall color is applied.

COVA COLORS: These 18 color options can blossom into hundreds of colors by mixing them together and diluting them with water. They also work well in combination with other Eco-Flo dyes and stains.

1   *Shake bottle well. For best results, apply Cova Color with good quality artist brushes or a sponge brush. Remember the edges. Even on laced projects, a colorful border and edge treatment is fun (see TIP below).*

2   *More than one coat of Cova Color may be applied if needed. Allow to dry completely between coats. Clean brushes immediately after use with soap and warm water.*

HINT: For brighter colors, first apply white Cova Color to area. Let dry, then apply desired top color.
OPTIONAL: Even though Cova Colors are acrylic and don't need a top finish, an extra seal can be applied. If white Cova Color has been used, it will turn yellow when some top finishes are applied. After top finish is dry, reapply white Cova Color over desired area.

Cova Colors
used as washes,
mixed colors
and full strength

Doggie colored with Cova Colors, resisted with Super Shene, then All-In-One was applied over the entire project.

TIP: *Make Colorful Long Lasting Edge Dressings*

Add colorful edges to your projects by making edge dressings mixing any Cova Color acrylic paint with Super Shene top finish (5 parts of color to 1 part Super Shene top finish). All edges, even those to be laced, can be accented with color. Prepare edges as shown on page 15 and then follow the instructions on page 29. Be sure to pre-mix enough color to finish the entire project. Keep paint in an air-tight container to prevent it from drying out. Once dry, acrylic paint cannot be re-liquefied.

OVERALL COLORING (Special Effects) ....

Use rags, sponges, brushes, blocks, or a sprayer to apply base top colors to surface. Blend edges with large soft brushes or sheep wool. Add veins and accents with brushes, feathers or other creative applicators (even your fingers). All Eco-Flo Products work well.

VEINING & ENHANCING: This technique enhances the look of leather by using veining and blending to add more highs, lows and to mask blemishes.
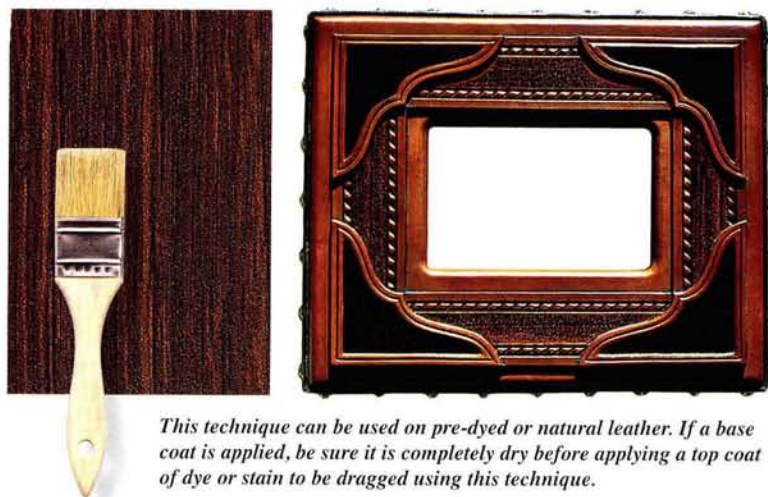
1 *Pour a small amount of dye into a glass bowl. Dilute with desired amount of water. Apply in diagonal, varying strokes over natural or pre-dyed surface. Reapply same or different colors overlapping previous strokes to create darker areas. Varying light & dark areas are wanted.*

2 *While dye is still wet, use a softening brush to blend edges of color together for effect.*

3 *You can then add more veins if desired. The natural markings on the leather will supply some veins, but you can add more for balance and emphasis where desired. Use a small brush or tip of a feather dipped in color.*

4 *When project is completely dry, apply several light coats of Super Shene Spray top finish.*

This technique can be used on pre-dyed or natural leather. If a base coat is applied, be sure it is completely dry before applying a top coat of dye or stain to be dragged using this technique.

DRAGGING: A technique that offers a variety of effects, can antique (age) or even mask scarred leather.
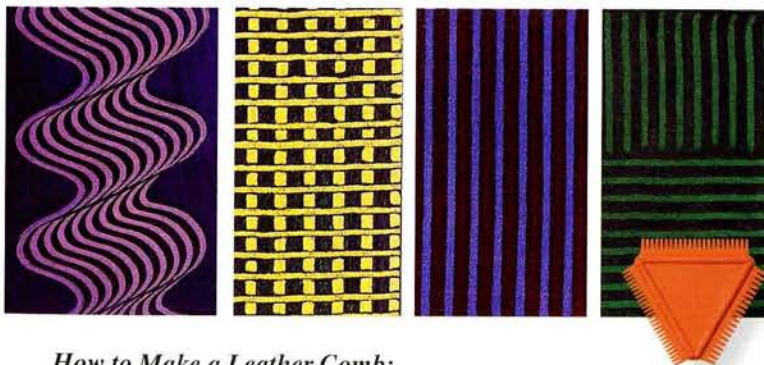
1 *Pour dye or stain into a glass bowl. Using a wide flat brush or sponge, spread a heavy coat of dye on leather surface. Work quickly keeping dye wet. Hint: Hi-Lite Color Stains stay liquid longer than other products.*

2 *Drag the side of a stiff brush over the surface creating stripes. If desired, use the head of the brush to dab and blend some of the strokes.*

OPTION: Use a sponge to apply the color in strokes or creative swirls where desired. Leave stroke markings and stripes for effect.
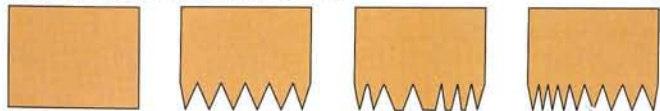
3 *Heavy pigments left on the surface will require more time to dry. When project is completely dry, apply several light coats of Super Shene Spray top finish.*

*How to Make a Leather Comb:*

1 *Cut a rectangular piece of scrap veg- tanned leather or heavy cardboard.*

2 *Cut sharp or blunt teeth at regular or irregular intervals with a craft knife.*

COMBING: This technique works well with Hi-Lite Color Stains over base coats of Hi-Lite Color Stain, Leather Dye, natural or pre-dyed leather. Use a reusable rubber comb or make one (see below). Practice with different amounts of dye and strokes for desired look.

1 *Option: Apply a base coat color. Let completely dry. When dry, apply a second coat (different color) over entire surface. Work quickly keeping dye or stain wet.*

2 *Using hand made comb or craft comb, drag comb over surface creating stripes. If desired, turn project and drag going a different direction to create a plaid or other pattern. (Option: Create waves by snaking the comb over the surface. Alternate the direction for patterns.)*

3 *Heavy pigments left on the surface will require a long time to dry and be subject to cracking if the leather is bent. When completely dry, apply several light coats of Super Shene Spray top finish.*

OVERALL COLORING (Special Effects & Accents) ....
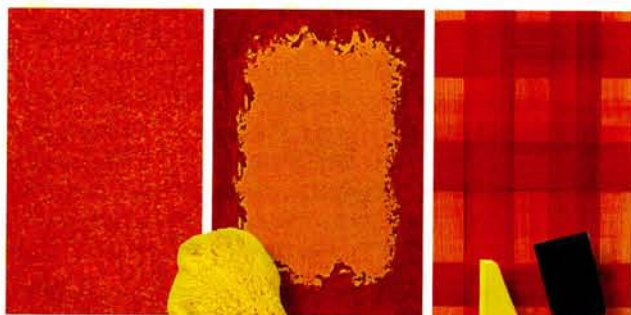
SPONGING:

1 *Sample 1 shows a liberal amount of color sponged over a pre-dyed base color.*

2 *Sample 2 shows a second color sponged around the edge of a pre-dyed base color.*

3 *Sample 3 shows multiple colors sponged to create a plaid. Stripes were dried between applications.*

4 *Dry then seal with several light coats of Super Shene Spray.*

SHEEP WOOL:

1 *Left sample shows two Hi-Lite colors dabbed on with sheep wool while both were wet on natural veg-tanned leather.*

2 *Right sample shows stain applied with sheep wool for a base coat, dried, then Cova Color dabbed on with a wool dauber.*

3 *Flower shows combining applicators: brush for petals and leaves and wool dauber for center.*

4 *Allow to dry completely. Spray with coats of Super Shene.*
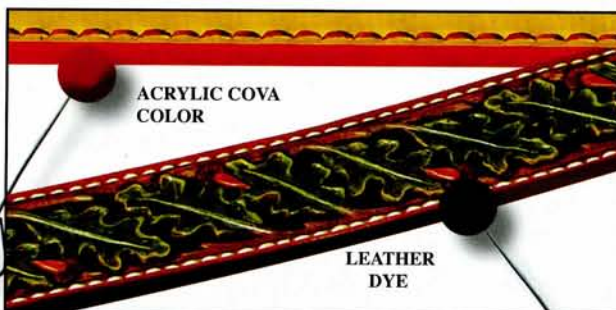
ACRYLIC COVA COLOR

LEATHER DYE

CLOTH, GAUZE & RAGS:

1 *Sample 1 shows a liberal amount of Hi-Lite stain on leather surface still wet being blotted with rag for effect. Roll the rag for a pattern or leave loose for more of a texture effect.*

2 *Sample 2 shows a tooled piece coated with a Gel Antique stain, then ragged to remove stain from selected areas only.*

3 *Projects are allowed to dry completely, then sealed with several coats of Super Shene Spray top finish.*

DAUBERS (For Edge Dyeing):

1 *Prep edges for dyeing and make a compact dauber as described on page 15 before starting.*

2 *Apply Leather Dye to edge using desired applicator. See pages 10, 15 & 29 for applicator options & Cova Color edge dyeing. HINT: Hold top of project away from you to avoid going over the edge onto front with the dauber full of dye.*

3 *Allow edges to dry completely before use.*

COLORING RAWHIDE LACE USING ECO-FLO LEATHER DYES:

1 *Mix a Leather Dye color or combination of colors with water creating a color or wash. Always use glass bowls (not plastic or metal). Mix enough of the desired color to stain all rawhide lace for project.*

2 *Soak rawhide lace in wash for approximately 1 hour or until desired color is achieved. Be sure lace is submerged. Weight down in color mix with a stick or rock if necessary. When color is right, remove lace, rinse well in clean water. Change water often until water is clear. HINT: For varied hues of same color, remove part of lace at different times.*

3 *Buff or blot lace on clean rags or paper towels to remove as much excess water as possible.*

4 *Let completely dry, then spray with a very light coat of Super Shene Spray to seal in the color.*

Thanks to Kurt Murry-Cameron

OVERALL COLORING (Solid Coloring with Leather Dyes & Gel Antiques) ....

THE BASE COAT ANTIQUING TECHNIQUE involves using different colors of Eco-Flo Leather Dyes together with different colors of Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Color Stain to produce an almost limitless combination of deep, vibrant colors on vegetable tanned leather. This technique brings out carved, stamped and tooled designs, as well as highlights seams, edges of appliques and overlays. Different colors can be applied to desired areas for accents.
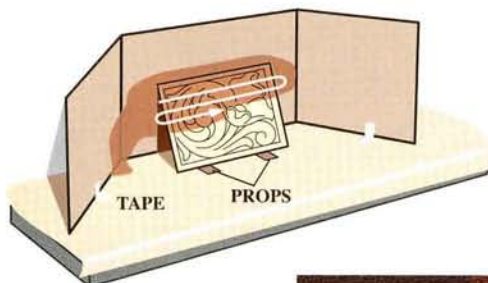
Colorful Leather Dyes can be mixed together or diluted for even more color choices.

1 *First background dye behind select tooled areas for depth. Allow to dry completely. (See Background Dyeing Technique on page 16.) Use a good quality brush.*

2 *Apply an overall base coating leather dye using an aerosol sprayer or air brush. The more even the base coat the better. Option: Add shading around figures and edges so that some areas are a darker color than the base coat color to emphasize and add interest to the design. Allow dye to dry completely. Buff with a clean soft cloth or piece of sheep wool to remove any pigment from the surface.*

3 *Apply a liberal coat of Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Stain. (For best results, use a darker color of Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Stain than the dye color used for the original base coat.) Be sure Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Stain gets into all impressions and cuts.*

4 *Before Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Stain dries, remove excess with a clean piece of sheep wool and buff to a soft luster. Allow to dry completely. Then apply a top finish of your choice. NOTE: See Tip below for fixing noticeable blemishes or accidental drops of dye.*

TIP: Aerosol Sprayers

Sprayers may be attached directly to 4 oz. bottles of Leather Dye by first trimming off 1/2" of the plastic siphon tube. Have a separate sprayer unit for each color to be used. Be sure you have plenty of pre-mixed dye.

TAPE   PROPS

SPRAYER

Gel Antiques can be used individually or mixed together to create more rich colors to be applied over dyes or stains.

TIP: Masking, Blending & Stippling

For an "aged look", use a large round brush to work and blend colors in select spaces on your project. If a drop of dye falls on your project, use this brush technique to blend the drop. Use the tip to stipple colors to disguise blemishes.

SHADING (Monochromatic - Using Brushes) ....

MONOCHROME COLORING is coloring with one color or various shades of that one color. This technique involves beginning with a light shade of one color and adding darker shades of the same color to create a 3-D effect of roundness and depth on an object. The samples below show how effective the Monochrome Coloring technique can be using just three shades of one (brown) color. Drawings on the left show where different shades are used. For more on the dyeing techniques used on this page, see page 23.

1A *FIRST AREA TO BE COLORED: Use a very diluted mix of timber brown Leather Dye with 3/4 water.*

1B *FIRST COAT: Acts as a base coat, defining details, stems, leaves, shadow areas and high lights.*

2A *SECOND AREA TO BE COLORED: Use about 1/3 dye mixed with 2/3 water to create a stronger diluted mix.*

2B *SECOND COAT: Used to strengthen shade of detail, stems, leaves and shadow areas.*
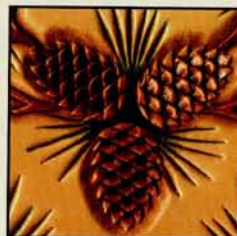
3A *THIRD AREA TO BE COLORED: Use full strength dye.*

3B *THIRD COAT: Used to define darkest areas of shadows.*

TIP: *The Monochromatic Coloring Technique works on all forms of subject matter: figure & pictorial carvings, florals, borders, and on objects within projects using other colors, such as pine cones.*

SHADING (Multi-Hues - Using Brushes) ....

WET BRUSHING is a shading technique applying full strength or diluted hues of dyes with a heavily loaded brush to obtain the most even full cover of dye tones. This technique is most commonly used for background coloring as seen here and in Step 1 on the next page. It is also used when base coats are applied to projects in preparation for other techniques.

SHADING WITH DILUTED HUES uses 2 or more (normally 3) progressively darker strengths of one or more dye colors to create shapes and shadows. This type of coloring almost always follows the old water color rule "work light to dark". Lighter and darker shades of Eco-Flo dyes and stains are created by diluting with varied amounts of water. NOTE: Refer to Monochrome Coloring on page 22 for a different application of this technique.

1/4 WATER WITH
3/4 SUNSHINE YELLOW
LEATHER DYE

1/2 WATER &
1/2 EMERALD
GREEN
LEATHER DYE

1/4 WATER &
3/4 EMERALD
GREEN
LEATHER DYE

FULL STRENGTH
EMERALD GREEN
LEATHER DYE

DRY BRUSH SHADING is shading with full strength or diluted hues using a brush containing very little dye. To do this technique, dip tip of brush into dye, then stroke brush on a paper towel or scrap piece of leather to remove most of the dye while forming the tip of the brush into a fan shape. The fan shaped tip of the brush is then stroked lightly over the leather allowing only a very small amount of dye to penetrate into the most raised areas of the leather adding color to those areas.

DRY BRUSH SHADING can be used for highlighting or "bringing out" accents and detail in desired areas on tooled figure and pictorial carvings. The example to the right shows a dry brushed deer and foliage detail.

SHADING (Light Direction) ....

LIGHT DIRECTION: Establish the direction of light you want to depict on your colored piece before starting. Where light would hit the design should be colored the lightest or with diluted hues. Areas receiving no light should be darker. Color these shades and shadows with stronger mixes of dye or full strength.

LIGHT SOURCE (DIRECTION)
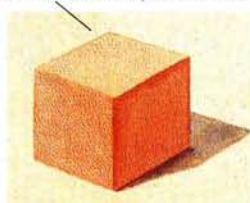
Select the side of a cube you want the light to hit and shade the others for depth. Add a shadow, if desired for depth.

LIGHT SOURCE (DIRECTION)
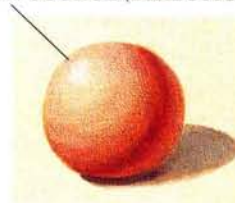
Select the spot on a sphere where you want the light to hit and shade around, away from the light for depth using darker hues of color. Add a shadow, if desired, for depth.

TIP: *Be sure to keep notes recording the product colors you use on your projects, how you achieved the desired hues (dilutions), the number of coats of antique and top finishes applied and techniques used in order to duplicate the same look at a later time on other projects.*

SHADING (Fall Leaf Demo) ....

The leaf on this page was colored using Eco-Flo Leather Dyes. You may require more or less than the six steps shown depending on your choice of colors and hues. You can't go wrong coloring Fall leaves. Every color combination can be found in nature. See page 23 for Techniques used on this page and on pages 25 & 26.

TIPS:

1 *Optional: This demo as well as the one on the facing page, starts with dyeing the background dark first, then adding colorful hues on the tooled design. The background can be dyed last if preferred. A dyed background always pops the design out visually, highlighting the other colors and covering mistakes (overflows). I prefer to let the colors grow on top of the background, rather than wait until the end. It can be done either way - your choice. Try it both ways and see which you prefer.*

2 *Always use clean water to mix diluted color hues.*

3 *A good quality brush is highly recommended for detail dyeing.*

1 FULL STRENGTH   **2** FULL STRENGTH

Background dye using full strength coco brown. Then apply full strength sunshine yellow over leaf.

3

| 3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE | 1/3 WATER 2/3 DYE | FULL STRENGTH |
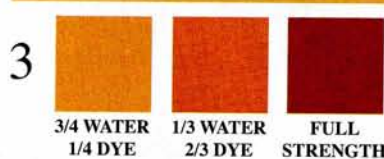
Apply diluted hues of canyon tan & water over random areas. Create shadows & depth with full strength dye.

4

| 3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE | 1/3 WATER 2/3 DYE | FULL STRENGTH |

Apply diluted hues of forest green & water over random areas. Create shadows & depth with full strength dye.

5

| 3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE | FULL STRENGTH |

Apply diluted hue of coco brown and water over acorn cap and twig. Create shadows & depth with full strength dye.

6

| 3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE | 2/3 WATER 1/3 DYE | FULL STRENGTH |

Apply diluted hues of scarlet & water over random areas. Create shadows & depth with full strength dye.

SHADING (Floral Demo) ....

The floral on this page was colored using Eco-Flo Leather Dyes. Traditional floral carving consists of stylized leaves and flowers. Even though leaves are normally green (flowers can be most any color), don't let this stop you from using colors not normally common to leaves and flowers.

TIPS:

1 *Mix your desired color hues in enough quantity to complete your project and keep account of how much water & full strength color you use to create the hues.*

2 *Use a good quality brush for background and detail coloring.*

3 *Have paper towels and scrap leather close by. HINT: After dipping brush in dye, touch tip lightly to scrap leather or paper towel to remove excess dye overload from brush.*

4 *Light direction: To create depth with shading, establish a direction of light on your tooled piece. Use diluted dyes for light areas and darker (full strength) for shadows.*
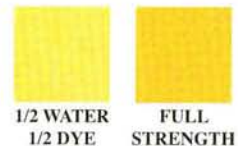
1
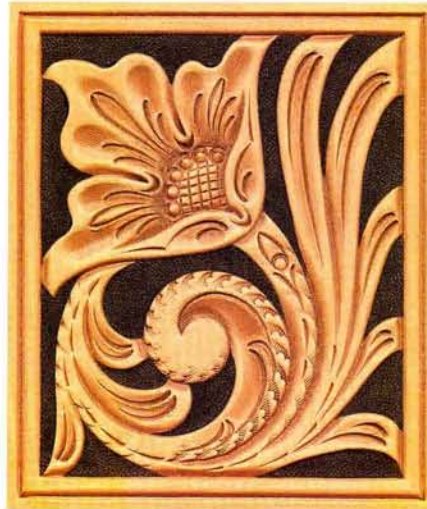
FULL
STRENGTH

Background dye using full strength coco brown. Areas should receive two or more coats for even coverage.

2

| 1/2 WATER 1/2 DYE | FULL STRENGTH |

Apply diluted mix of sunshine yellow dye and water over tooled design. Create highlights with full strength dye.

3

| 3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE | 1/3 WATER 2/3 DYE | FULL STRENGTH |

Apply diluted mixes of canyon tan dye and water, to build depth. Follow with full strength dye to create shadows.

4

| 3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE | 1/3 WATER 2/3 DYE | FULL STRENGTH |

Apply diluted mixes of forest green dye and water, to build depth. Follow with full strength dye to create shadows.

5

| 3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE | 1/3 WATER 2/3 DYE | FULL STRENGTH |

Build depth with diluted mixes of scarlet dye and water. Shadow with full strength. Brighten colors by adding a top finish.

SHADING (Figure / Pictorial Demo) ....

The Figure and Pictorial design shown on this page was colored using Eco-Flo Leather Dye and Cova Color.
Important: Always be aware of where light is coming into a scene and color accordingly.

TIPS:

When coloring a figure or pictorial scene, it is always advisable to have a plan before starting. Research pictures, photographs or other paintings to decide on the look you want to achieve before starting. Decide where the light will be coming from (see light direction on page 23).

Unlike painting on canvas where a build up of paint is often acceptable, you will not want to over work the dyes on your scene. Leather absorbs only so many applications of dye and grows darker with each stroke. If your colors become too dark, you will loose the life of your painting and some of the quality of the leather. Once you start, you are committed, so have a plan. Then relax - paint it and enjoy!
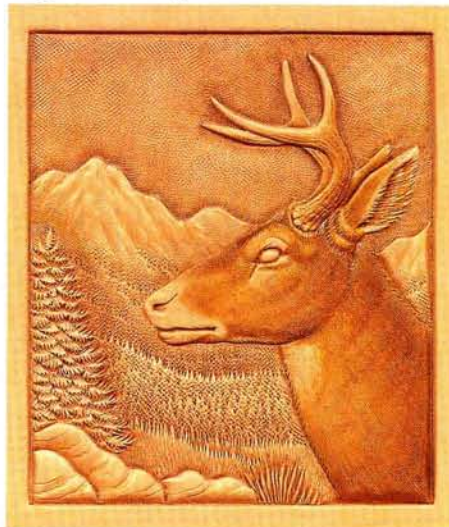
1

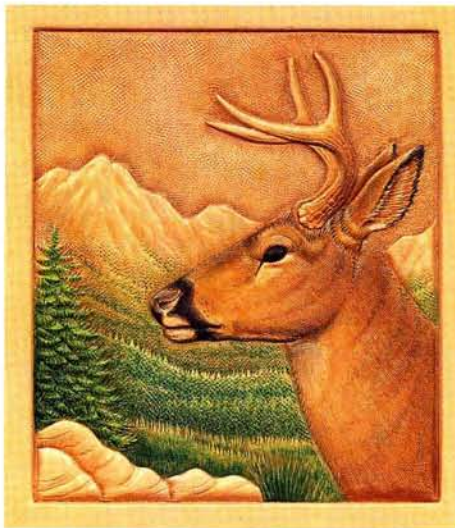| 3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE	1/3 WATER 2/3 DYE	FULL STRENGTH

Apply base coat of lightest diluted hue of timber brown to deer as shown. Begin to create muscle tone depth and shadows with darker and full strength hues.

2
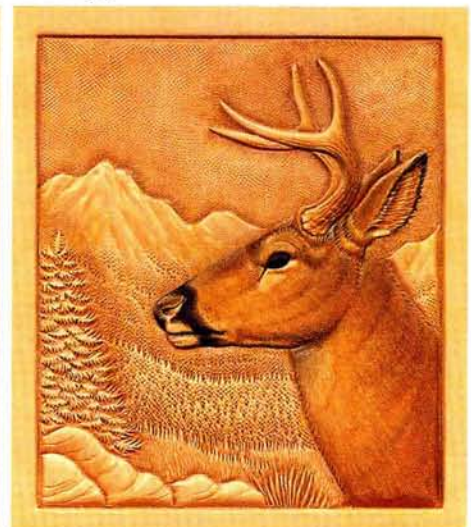
1/2 WATER 1/2 DYE	FULL STRENGTH

Define markings, shadows and create more depth with lighter hue of bison brown. Darken markings and color in eye with full strength.
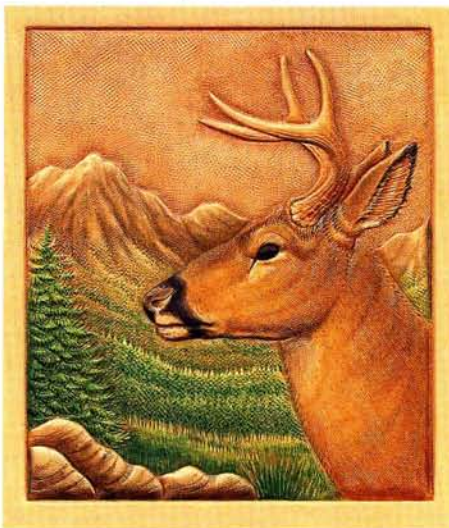
3 (A) (B)

3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE	1/3 WATER 2/3 DYE	FULL STRENGTH

Apply lightest hues of (A) forest and (B) emerald green over tree, grass and forest. Create shadows and add depth with darker & full strength hues.
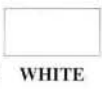
4

3/4 WATER 1/4 DYE	FULL STRENGTH

Apply lightest hue of dark coco brown to mountains and rocks creating ridges on mountains and shadows on mountains & rocks. Lock in shadows with full strength.

5

ROYAL BLUE & WHITE	WHITE

Apply a mix of white & blue Cova Color to sky. Use white to create snow and deer accents. Work from light (mix with water) to full strength color.

6 *When dry, apply Satin Shene.*

SHADING (Lettering & More) ....

Add striking color to lettering using Eco-Flo Leather Dyes applied with small detail Red Sable brushes. Pre-mix enough of each hue (diluted with varied amounts of water) to complete the project. For precaution, mix more than you believe you will need.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE on scrap leather before applying this technique on your project.

1   *First apply color to background area using dark coco brown Leather Dye (see background dyeing on page 16).*

2   *Second, add full strength sunshine yellow to initials and border using Wet Brush Technique on page 23.*

3   *Start shading using a mix of 1/4 canyon tan to 3/4 water. Work from the bottom of the initial, fading to the top. Use the Dry Brush Technique explained on page 23.*

4   *Add a darker mix of 2/3 canyon tan to 1/3 water. Again work from the bottom of the initials to the top. Fade the dye out half way up. Work one letter at a time and keep the levels of fading the same on all letters.*

5   *Switch to full strength canyon tan and repeat as explained in Step 4. but fade out 1/4 way up the initials.*

6   *For additional color, accent the border with a diluted forest green mix 1/2 color to 1/2 water.*

7   *FINAL FINISH: It is always advisable to apply a final finish over dyed projects. Because of the delicacy of the shading technique, it is recommended to use a finish with a sprayer. This will avoid smearing or rubbing-off color. For heavy use (belts, handbags, etc.), apply several coats of finish (Super Shene or Satin Shene), allowing each to completely dry between applications.*

TIP: *The Eco-Flo design shown at left and monograms at right were all colored using this same Shading Technique.*
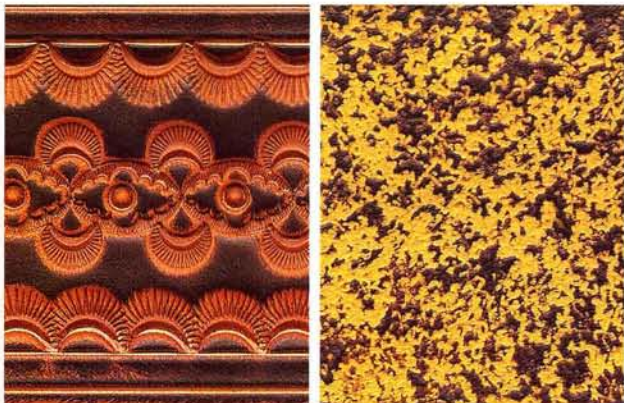
BLOCK DYEING ....

BLOCK DYEING is a method for applying dye only to high areas of a piece of leather by rubbing with a cloth wrapped block of wood (or other hard sturdy material). Apply dye directly to the block then blot off excess on a folded paper towel or cloth before use. See page 11 for How to Make a Block for Block Dyeing.

OVER A DESIGN OR GRAIN TO BRING OUT HIGH POINTS AND NATURAL MARKINGS:

1 *Shows Block-Dyeing using scarlet red Leather Dye over a geometric stamped design.*

2 *Shows Block-Dyeing using dark coco brown Leather Dye over a heavy grained leather to highlight the grain.*

REMOVE STAIN: *Use a clean block, slightly dampened with water to remove stain or antique (All-In-One Stain shown) from high areas of stamped or tooled design for a better contrast.*

1 *Shows stained basket stamped design BEFORE.*

2 *Shows same stained design AFTER rubbing with a clean slightly damp block.*

OVER A BASE COLOR ON A CARVED DESIGN:

1 *Shows dark coco brown Leather Dye block dyed over a ranger tan dyed stamped and carved design.*

2 *Shows bison brown Leather Dye block dyed over a sunshine yellow dyed background stamped area.*

AROUND EDGES *TO FRAME-OUT A PROJECT:*

1 *Apply dye to block. Blot off excess.*

2 *Tilt block and rub around edge of project. Placing edge of project to be dyed on the edge of a worktable allows block to be tilted to a proper angle for better control and coverage.*

Thanks to Paul Burnett

TIP Solid Color Block-Dyeing:

A block may also be used to apply a solid color to a project. Apply a large amount of dye to the block. Do not blot. Rub onto project until surface starts to shine. Apply a lot of pressure. Apply more dye until desired depth of color is achieved. This method works very well with the color black.

ACRYLICS (Cova Color®) ....

COVA COLORS are opaque at full strength or dilute with water for a more translucent wash. They can be applied with brushes, daubers, sponges and other applicators for special effects.

PICTORIAL WORK: *To color a sky, dampen leather first to extend the time acrylics can be worked before drying. Begin at top using a dark blue-white mix. Blend in more white to lighten sky as it approaches the mountain tops. Add in wispy clouds last using straight white thinned with water to form a wash.*

TIP: *#1 & #4*
Round Red Sable brushes work well for detail and allow for controlled dye placement. Experiment & select the sizes best for you.

USING WHITE ACRYLIC COVA COLOR PAINT: *White is a strong pigment and should be planned well before placing.*
1   *Sample above left shows daisies painted with heavy, solid white to bring out the flower petals strong vibrance.*
2   *Sample above center shows flowers first painted in solid white, dried, then over painted for brighter, clearer colors.*
3   *Sample above right shows a deer with white applied sparingly to accent just the deer hair features.*

When using any acrylics, it is important to keep the paint liquid (workable but not too wet). Pour paint onto a palette rather than work from the bottle. Then add drops of water as needed. Also remember acrylics act as resists when stains are applied over them.

COLORFUL EDGE DRESSINGS: *(Prepare edges as on page 15.)*
1   *Mix any Cova Color with Super Shene (5 parts of color to 1 part Super Shene top finish). Mix enough to do entire project at one time.*
2   *Apply color mix to edges with compact or burnt dauber (see page 15).*
3   *Allow to dry completely, then apply Super Shene over edge for a seal*

Thanks to Charlie Davenport

COLORFUL CHOICES: *18 Cova Colors to select from and all can be mixed together for hundreds of choices.*

COMBINING PRODUCTS

Sample below shows acrylic Cova Colors used full strength and diluted plus gold and silver frosts for effect.

1 *Dragon was colored using Leather Dye, Hi-Lite Stain and Cova Colors.*

2 *Background was colored using diluted and full strength Cova Colors.*

STAMPS

There are limitless leather stamp options that can easily be made. Tooled designs cut-out and cemented on wood blocks and leather shapes on daubers are described below. Commercially sold rubber stamps and even some Craftool® steel stamps can be used with Cova Color acrylics to create accents, borders and designs.

LEATHER STAMP

This sample was created with a tooled leather stamp shown at left.

RUBBER STAMP

THE BASICS:

1 *Prepare leather surface: Apply an overall color background or textured design (see pages 9-15), use suede, or pre-dyed leather.*

2 *Pour dye onto a plate or palette. Use hand-made leather stamps or commercially sold rubber stamps.*

3 *Dip face of stamp in dye being sure to cover all of face. Touch face lightly to a paper towel or scrap leather. For better control, use a brush to apply and remove excess dye from face, then press on leather surface.*
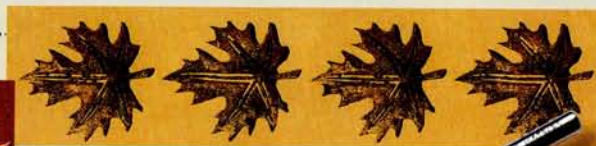
4 *When project is completely dry, seal with Super Shene Spray as top finish. Avoid using other applicators for applying a top finish. They could cause heavy pigments to smear. A top finish is not needed if stamping on suede.*

These suede samples show Cova Color applied with stamps made with leather shapes glued on daubers. The flowers are made by using a Craftool stamp.

How to Make a Stamp Using a Handmade Tooled Design:

1 *Tool a design on veg-tan leather. Keep tooled levels as even as possible so desired design will imprint clearly and fully.*

2 *Cut-out design to be imprinted for easier stamping and control with a craft knife.*

3 *Contact cement leather piece onto a block of wood for easy handling during imprinting. (See adhesives on page 37.)*

How to Make a Stamp Using a Dauber and a Leather Shape:

1 *Select a leather shape (available in a variety of designs from Tandy Leather Factory).*

2 *Depending on the size of the shape, use a small or large wool dauber or a block of wood (see above).*

3 *Apply Leathercraft Cement on dauber tip and on back of shape. Adhere together.*

NATURAL OBJECTS & STENCILS ....

ROCKS & CHAINS FOR AN "AGED" ANTIQUED LOOK

1 *After you finish tooling your piece and while leather is still damp, take a hand sized rock and pound around the design. Or, for more random impressions, whip the piece with a chain or rope.*

2 *Let the piece completely dry, then apply Gel Antique with a damp sponge or sheep wool in a circular motion. Rub stain down into all cuts and impressions. Work quickly while antique is wet.*

HINT: Use varied sized brushes to help blend areas where too much stain collects.

3 *Using a clean piece of sheep wool, remove as much antique as desired for the effect you want.*

4 *Apply a final seal with Super Shene Spray top finish.*

Panels courtesy Steel Strike Leather Products, Inc.

Select a rock that fits your hand and has a variety of edges for effects.

STENCILS, MESH & OTHER OBJECTS

Hundreds of designs can be stenciled, imprinted or screened using templates, mesh and natural objects with Cova Colors and Hi-Lite Color Stains.

1 *Select suede, pre-dyed leather or apply an overall color background to veg-tanned leather. Allow to dry completely.*

2 *Place stencil, mesh or natural object in position. Using a dauber, sponge or brush, transfer design where desired using Cova Color or Hi-Lite Stain. Note: If designs are close, let each dry before adding the next to avoid smears. HINT: When using mesh, mark dots through mesh using a small brush & white Cova Color. Let dry, then add more color.*
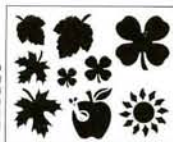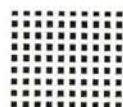
HINT: Some objects, such as leaves, can be used as stamps transferring unique designs directly to the surface.

3 *When project is completely dry, seal with several light coats of Super Shene Spray top finish. If working on suede, a top finish is not necessary.*
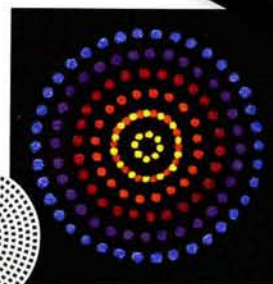
TIP: *Transferring Designs*

For detailed stencil transfers, use small round brushes. For even more detail, outline with a stylus, then paint with a brush. Be sure to clean stencil edges often to avoid unwanted double images.

NATURAL OBJECTS - "HANDS"

Remember when you first started painting. The first applicators you used were your hands.

1 *Although Eco-Flo products are water based, they will still discolor your skin. Most will wash off with soap and water, but plastic gloves are recommended.*

2 *First prepare background for your "hands-on" project by selecting a technique for either a smooth or textured color (see pages 9-15).*

3 *Recommended for imprinting are Hi-Lite Color Stain or Cova Colors. Shake bottle well, pour onto a plate, dip hand and apply to surface. After dry seal with Super Shene spray top finish. Have fun! OPTION: Outline hand on surface using a colored pen. Then fill in with Cova Color using a brush.*

ABOUT THIS PERSONALIZED CD PHOTO ALBUM SAMPLE:

1 A base color of Hi-Lite Color Stain was applied with a damp sponge and dried.
2 Cova Color was used for the hand print.
3 Edges were colored with Cova Color & Super Shene Edge Dressing described on page 29.
4 Lettering painted with a brush and Cova Color.

COMBINING ECO-FLO PRODUCTS (Acrylics, Antiques & Stains) ....

This page shows a few of many different techniques using Eco-Flo Acrylic Cova Color combined with Hi-Lite Color Stains and Gel Antiques.

ANTIQUES & STAIN TO TONE DOWN COLORS: Stain or antique may be applied over a design painted with Cova Color to tone down overly bright colors, at the same time accentuating cut lines and impressions. NOTE: It is advisable to seal the color white with an acrylic top finish to prevent the antique or stain from turning the white Cova Color yellow.

1 *Shows a design colored with Cova Color before a coat of Hi-Lite Color Stain was applied. Gel Antique may also be used. Apply the Cova carefully. (Any that goes off of the design will show when the antique or stain is applied.)*

2 *Shows the same Cova colored design after a coat of coffee brown Hi-Lite Color Stain was applied. If brighter colors are desired, apply a top coat finish (Super Shene, Satin Shene or Block-Out) over the Cova Color before applying the stain.*

ADDING HIGH-LIGHTS TO ACRYLICS WITH STAINS & DYES: Leather dyes or stains may be applied over Cova Color with a brush, sponge or cloth to add decorative highlights.

1 *Shows deep violet Leather Dye applied over a white Cova Color painted flower. Apply dye with a brush using light strokes and allow to dry completely before adding a top coat finish, preferably Super Shene Spray. Notice how the white shows through the translucent dye adding brightness to the color.*

2 *Shows the same technique used in sample 1 except that dusty rose pink and persimmon red Hi-Lite Color Stains were used instead of Leather Dye. A top coat of Super Shene Spray was used instead of a brushed or sponged on top coat to keep from pulling up the dye or stain.*

ACRYLIC AS A RESIST: Antique or Hi-Lite Color Stain may be used over Cova Color as an easy way to bring out and clean up a design.

1 *Shows a design colored with Cova Color. (Only the high spots need to be colored.)*

2 *Shows same design after black Gel Antique was applied. Gel Antique cleans up and pops out Cova colored design.*

RESIST DYEING (The Basics) ....

Most Eco-Flo top finishes, when applied to natural or dyed leather, will resist or block the penetration of antiques and stains. Some will resist or block more than others depending on what base formula was used, not only in the top finish, but also in the antique or stain. For instance, different acrylic top finishes will resist more or less depending on how much acrylic they contain. Super Shene, which contains a lot of acrylic, will resist more than Satin Shene, which contains less.

RESISTING NATURAL (UNDYED) LEATHER:

1 *This example shows a resist of Super Shene applied with a brush to a design on natural leather. Apply two coats for best results allowing first to dry before applying second. After second application dried, a coat of briar brown Hi-Lite Color Stain was applied.*

2 *This example shows the same design resisted with Satin Shene. Notice: The darker color on the design caused by the lesser resisting power of the light acrylic based Satin Shene. To complete, add a light coating of any top coat finish.*

RESISTING DYED LEATHER:

An antique or stain applied over a resist of Super Shene, Satin Shene, Block-Out or other top finish can be used with great effect to tone down the bright colors of Eco-Flo Leather Dye and make cuts and impressions stand out.

1 *This example shows a resist of Super Shene applied with a brush to a design on natural leather colored with Leather Dye.*

2 *This example shows coffee brown Hi-Lite Color Stain applied over resisted design. Notice how the bright colors are toned down and all cuts and impressions are emphasized.*

TIP: To emphasize select areas, use two or more coats of a resist before applying a stain or antique.

RESIST DYEING (Combined With Other Techniques) ....

TWO AND THREE TONE RESIST: Applying top coat finishes with different degrees of resist on a design before adding a coat of antique or stain will create a 2 and 3 tone effect.

1 *Super Shene and Satin Shene have been brushed on to selected area of the design before a coat of Hi-Lite Color Stain was added.*

2 *This is the same design as sample 1 except the background has been dyed before the resist and stain were applied. This creates yet another tone, adding even more contrast.*

TIPS: *Helpful Uses of Resists*

1 **RESISTING NATURAL LEATHER:**
Be very careful when applying the resist. Any overflow onto other areas will resist any dyes, stains or antiques applied later. If the resist accidentally flows onto an area not desired to be resisted, immediately blot the area with water on a small sponge, dauber or clean brush. Re-wet and blot several times to remove the resist before it dries. After resisting is finished and dried, apply desired overall stain or antique.

2 **LOCKING IN BACKGROUND COLORS WITH A RESIST:**
When background dyeing, this opens up the possibility for "bleed" when an overall dye or stain is applied over the piece to accent the tooled design. To avoid this possible disaster, resist the dyed background using a brush and Super Shene. If heavy dark pigment is used on background, apply several coats of Super Shene or other top finish, allowing each coat to dry completely between applications.

3 **RESISTING FOR SPECIAL EFFECTS:**
When natural leather and special effects are both desired on a piece that is to be stained or antiqued, first resist the areas to be left natural as explained on page 33. After the resist is dry, and the stain or antique has been applied and is dry, come back and add accents of color or special effects to the natural areas. Using Hi-Lite Color Stain applied with a brush offers a wide variety of special effects, such as the Gold & Silver Frost shown here. Adding a wash of Cova Color to some areas of the natural leather offers just at hint of color to accent the design.

4 **RESISTING TO KEEP TRUE COLORS:**
When combining products such as applying a stain over a pre-colored design using Cova Colors, sometimes the lighter Cova Colors (such as white) will take on the color of the stain. To avoid this, resist the areas painted with Cova Color using a brush and Super Shene or other top finish. Allow to dry, then apply an overall stain.
HINT: If white Cova Color still takes on the color of the stain, reapply the white over the stain where accents are desired. Resists can be applied before or over all Eco-Flo dyes, stains, antiques and acrylics.

OOPS!

OOPS!

COLOR ACCENTS

OOPS!   **CORRECT**

RESIST DYEING (Sheridan Style With A Top Finish Resist) ....

This coloring technique involves applying several different products in a prescribed sequence to create rich color with a lot of definition to cuts and impressions.

1   *Optional: After all tooling is completed and leather is dry, add a very light coat of Tandy Neatsfoot Oil overall and allow to penetrate overnight. This helps replenish oils lost in the casing and tooling processes.*

2   *Apply at least two coats of Block-Out Resist Finish overall to act as a resist. Allow to dry between coats. Make sure Block-Out gets in all cuts and impressions.*

3   *Apply a very liberal coat of Hi-Lite Color Stain with sheep wool (a mix of 1/2 chestnut tan to 1/2 raisin mahogany shown or create a color of your own). Work Hi-Lite down into background areas, all cuts and impressions.*

4   *Remove excess with clean pieces of sheep wool or slightly damp sponges. Use long straight strokes (not circular) to keep as much Hi-Lite Color Stain down in cuts and impression as possible. Buff when dry with a clean piece of sheep wool. Then apply a light coat of Block-Out or other top finish to complete.*

TIP: Batik Resist Dyeing on Leather

Batik is a very old resist dyeing technique which is a slow process of dyeing using beeswax or a mix of beeswax and paraffin (candle wax) to create resisted designs on fabric or leather, then dyed. Additional layers of wax can be applied along with more dye colors to create intricate design possibilities. Suggested proportions for the wax mixture normally range from 30% to 40% beeswax plus 60% or 70% paraffin. However, all depends on the effect you are seeking: Beeswax is a "solid" more controllable resist while paraffin cracks more, opening up for dye penetration and less controlled design options.

It has been said that doing wax batik (a very slow process) allows the artist to "slow down" and relax - letting the wax lead the artist into directions probably not taken deliberately. So if you are looking for a very creative look for your piece, then try Batiking with hot wax. However, since this technique requires specialized heating units for the wax, a variety of applicators for hot wax, and severe fire safety precautions, a detailed step by step instruction is not offered in this book.

TOP FINISHES

PREPARE YOUR WORKSPACE:

1 *Clear away all unnecessary supplies (dyes, cloths, applicators, wool pieces) that may contain residue that could get onto your finished project.*
2 *Have a dish of water available for dampening sponges or cloths.*
3 *Have all possible applicators handy and ready to use.*
4 *Have paper towels and a trash can with a plastic liner.*

APPLYING A TOP FINISH: *Be sure leather is as clean as possible. Top finishes are not recommended for suedes. Test different applicator use over various techniques on scrap leather.*

1 *Shake bottle of finish well before each use.*
2 *Apply first light even coat with a slightly damp sponge. Work in a circular motion, rubbing finish into all cuts and impressions.*
3 *Allow first coat to dry completely.*
4 *Apply second or more additional coats drying between coats.*
5 *Some finishes should be buffed after they are dry - some not. Always read directions for use before applying the finish.*

TIP: Sprayers

Most top finishes may be applied with an air brush, aerosol or commercial sprayer. Thicker top finishes should be thinned with water before use.

1 *Always begin and end spraying off of the project to prevent spots of heavy build-up.*

2 *Spray on light coats allowing each to dry before applying another.*

SUPER SHENE®: *A durable, water repellent, flexible, acrylic based top finish for veg-tanned leather. Buffs to a high gloss. May be used as a more complete resist. Not for use on suedes.*

SUPER SHENE®SPRAY: *For the BEST results when applying a top finish, Super Shene Spray is the recommended finish. Colors are less likely to smear, and application is the easiest. HINT: When using techniques that leave pigment on the surface of the leather, such as texturing with different applicators, combing, dragging, block dyeing, antiquing, etc., it is best to apply several light coats of Super Shene Spray. Always allow each coat to dry completely before applying the next.*

SATIN SHENE®: *A durable, water repellent, acrylic non-glossy satin top finish for veg-tanned leather. May be buffed for a brighter satin finish. One coat will act as a partial resist, allowing some penetration of color into leather.*

BLOCK OUT RESIST FINISH: *A durable, flexible acrylic resist or water repellent top finish for veg-tanned leather. As a resist, Block Out will block most stain and antique colors but will allow some color to penetrate and highlight cuts and impressions.*

CARNAUBA CREME: *A water based, blended wax conditioner and finish for natural or dyed, new or aged veg-tanned leather. Recommended for use on smooth leather. Buffs to a bright luster.*

SUPER SHENE® High gloss finish	**SUPER SHENE® SPRAY** High gloss finish - turns natural leather slightly darker	**SATIN SHENE®** Low gloss finish	**BLOCK OUT RESIST** Medium gloss finish - turns natural leather slightly darker	**CARNAUBA CREME** Wax - low shene

TIP: How to Make Eyes Look Real

1 *Apply Leather Dye, Hi-Lite Stain or Cova Color with a small brush in order to have as much control as possible.*

2 *Allow to dry completely, then instead of adding a "white dot" to look like light reflection, simply apply Super Shene to the eye only. This will catch the light and make the eye look natural.*

AGENTS (Burnishers & Accelerants) ....

GUM TRAGACANTH (Burnishing Agent): *A natural gum based edge slicking and burnish compound for use on natural or colored veg-tanned leather. Produces a professional looking, smooth, shiny burnished edge. Use caution when applying on leather that is to be colored, as it may resist or block penetration of some color.*

EASY CARVE CONCENTRATE (Accelerant Agent): *A leather prep agent, casing concentrate for use on veg-tanned leather. Mixes with water and can be applied to leather with sponge or sprayer. Reduces swivel knife drag, helps leather accept, then retain, proper water content which increases tooling time, sets up surface for crisper tool impressions and pronounced burnishing, pre-treats leather for molding and does not effect the way leather accepts color or finishes.*
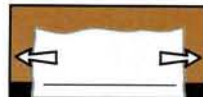
How to Use Gum Tragacanth Agent:
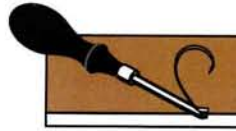
1 *Shake well before each use. For best results, round off leather edges with an edge beveler.*
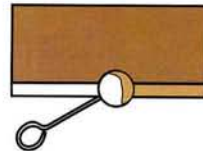
2 *Apply a thin coat of Gum Tragacanth to beveled edge with a small wool dauber, cloth or slightly damp sponge.*

3 *Rub edge very briskly with edge slicker, bone folder or piece of canvas. As agent dries and heats up due to friction caused by rubbing, treated edge will darken and shine. Repeat for desired burnish.*

ADHESIVES ....

TANNERS BOND® WATER-BASED CONTACT CEMENT: *A non-flammable, non-toxic, low VOC water-based glue for leather, wood, fabric, paper and most materials. Comes with brush in lid. USE: 1) Clean and ruff up areas to be joined if necessary. 2) Apply an even coat to both surfaces. 3) Allow to dry a minimum of 5 to 10 minutes or until all glossy areas have dulled. 4) Press parts firmly together.*

TANNERS BOND® LEATHERCRAFT CEMENT: *A polymer, water-based glue for leather, wood, fabric, paper and other material. Provides a fast setting, strong, flexible bond that dries clear. USE: 1) Spread a thin layer of cement on both surfaces to be bonded. 2) Press both surfaces together while still wet. 3) Keep pressure on until cement dries.*

LEATHER WELD: *Easy to use, high strength bonding for leather, cloth, cardboard and paper projects. USE: 1) Make sure surfaces to be joined are clean and dry. Spread a thin, even layer of Leather Weld on one or both surfaces. 2) Adhere together while still wet. 3) Apply pressure to joined surface until dried.*

TANNERS BOND® CRAFTSMAN RUBBER CEMENT: *Quick dry rubber cement holds firm, yet allows repositioning. Excellent for temporary bonding of leather, rubber, fabric and paper during tooling or lacing. Use in well ventilated area. USE: 1) Ruff up areas to be joined if necessary (usually applies to non-porous surfaces). 2) Apply an even coat to both surfaces. 3) Allow to dry a minimum of 5 minutes or until all glossy areas have dulled. 4) Press parts firmly together.*

TANNERS BOND® CRAFTSMAN CONTACT CEMENT: *All purpose cement. Holds quickly and permanently. Use in well ventilated area. USE: 1) Clean and ruff up areas to be joined if necessary. 2) Apply an even coat to both surfaces. 3) Allow to dry a minimum of 5 to 10 minutes or until all glossy areas have dulled. 4) Press parts firmly together.*

TANNERS BOND® CRAFTSMAN THINNER: *A thinner for Tanners Bond Contact Cement and Rubber Cement. Use in well ventilated area. Can also be used for cleaning brushes, removing cement spots, separating unfinished pieces cemented with similar contact cements.*

How to Make Leather Mache` Handles

1 *Collect small bits of leather such as lace ends, skivings or edge bevelings. Chop bits up to a fine mix.*

2 *Add Leather Weld or Leathercraft Cement to the bit mix until mix reaches the consistency of clay.*

3 *Mold the mix into a desired shape, in this case around the rough sanded handle of a scalpel. Work quickly before mix starts to setup. Protect hands with rubber gloves moistened with water.*

4 *Allow to dry completely.*

5 *Rough shape with a sharp knife. Then finish with coarse to light sandpaper and slick with canvas or a bone folder.*

Knife Handle Shown Made By Peter Main

6 *Apply a top coat finish to complete.*

OOPS . . . TROUBLESHOOTING

Problems can occur for so many reasons. Compatibility of products is always the first step in trying to reason out why something has happened (see page 39). Here are some examples of some OOPS issues, possible causes and solutions:

OOPS: *"My veg-tan leather project was colored with All-In-One (Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Color Stain) and it's very splotchy looking"* ~

POSSIBLE CAUSES:

1 "Corrected leather": Tanneries sometimes sand the surface of leather to remove blemishes so the leather will look good. If this process is not done evenly over the entire surface of the skin, it can cause splotches (dark, uneven areas) to appear when color is applied. Unfortunately, most "corrected leather" cannot normally be seen by the eye.

2 "Natural range markings": barbed wire, bug bites, scratches and different parts of the body will affect the porous nature of leather. These are natural characteristics of leather, just as wood has some porous and some hard veins or spots that will not take antique or stains.

3 The All-In-One (Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Stain) may have been applied unevenly.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

1 If the All-In-One, Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Stain is still damp and no top finish has been applied, use a damp sponge or cloth to remove as much color as possible and allow to dry. Then apply a darker color of All-In-One, Gel Antique or Hi-Lite Stain. Remember the old saying "If all else fails, dye it black".

2 If blemishes are noticed before color is applied, coat leather with a light resist such as Satin Shene. After Satin Shene dries, apply color. The light resist will help to even out the way leather accepts color making blemishes less noticeable.

OOPS: *"My veg-tan leather has a metallic green cast after dark coco brown Leather Dye was applied"* ~

POSSIBLE CAUSE: Some metallic based pigments remaining on the leather's surface refract light causing the green cast.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION: Buff to remove surface pigment. Then apply a top finish. The green cast will disappear.

TIP: *Leather, like wood, is a natural product with some hidden grains and marks that don't show until a dye or stain is applied. On wood, these markings are often considered "beautiful". On leather, most folks don't like them to show. If your project leather surprises you with unexpected markings, try some of the following techniques before discarding your leather:*

ADD TEXTURE OR ACCENTS *with different applicators: (see pages 9-15):*

ADD SHADING *with brushes, sheep wool, blocks, sprayers (see pages 22-28):*

ADD ANTIQUE *(pgs. 12, 17, 19 & 21):*

ADD MORE MARKINGS:
Many leather furniture manufacturers pound leather with rocks & chains, then add a variety of color hues to achieve an antiqued "aged" look. See page 31 for more.

OOPS: *"The edges of my veg-tan leather project dyed with bison brown Leather Dye turned green"* ~

POSSIBLE CAUSE: In this case, dye is reacting to tannits in the leather. This along with different pigments being trapped at different levels in the leather can cause the edges to look a different color than what was applied to the surface.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION: Apply an edge coat like Cova Color mixed with Super Shene (see page 29 for step-by-step instructions for mixing and applying) or straight dye.

COMPATIBILITY

Always test compatibility of products before applying them to your leather piece. While most water based products are compatible, the order in which they are used can alter their final visual effect. (See TIP below.)

CODES

A = YES - but finish may pick up some color.

B = YES - but be sure to remove excess ANTIQUE from surface before applying a finish.
    Allow antique to dry completely or finish may streak, crack and flake off.

C = CAUTION: Finish may act as a partial resist if used BEFORE dye is applied.

* D = NO - do not use on items that will be bent or flexed. YES - may be used on items that will
    NOT be bent or flexed.

* NOTE: Edge dressings should normally be applied after top finishes. Care should be taken to keep finish off slicked (burnished) edges. If finish gets on edge, sand edge with a very fine grit sandpaper. Then re-slick (burnish) edge and apply edge dressing.

DYES, STAINS, ANTIQUES:	FINISHES:						
	SUPER SHENE	SATIN SHENE	BLOCK-OUT Resist & Top Coat	CARNAUBA CREME	ALL-IN-ONE Stain & Top Finish	EASY CARVE Agent	GUM TRAGACANTH Burnish Agent
ALL-IN-ONE	A, D	A	~	~	~	A	A, C
LEATHER DYE	A, C	A, C	A, C	A, C	~	A	A, C
GEL ANTIQUE	A, B, C	A, B, C	A, D	A, B	~	A	A, C
HI-LITE COLOR	A, C	A, C	A, C	D	~	A	A, C
COVA COLORS	A	A	A	A	~	A	A, C

tandy
Leather Factory

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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