

## JULIA'S TOP TIPS FOR STENCILING COOKIES

Whether you are using royal icing or airbrushing, here are my top tips for failproof stenciling:

1. Start with a smoothly iced cookie; make sure icing is thoroughly dry.
2. Place stencil flush on cookie and secure it using weights or a stencil frame. If any areas of the stencil remain lifted, press down with a skewer while stenciling.
3. If airbrushing, use a low air pressure setting; point nozzle directly down over stencil. Apply coloring gradually to avoid “flooding”.
4. If using royal icing, make sure it is thick. Apply with a spreader tool or spatula in as few strokes as possible. Clean tool as needed.
5. For layered designs, apply icing as the final step.
6. To clean stencils, gently wash in warm, soapy water. Lay flat and pat dry.

For project ideas and detailed how-to videos, visit

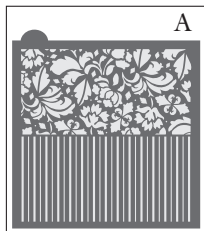
<http://www.confectioncouturestencils.com/pages/video-tutorials>.

## CREATING LAYERED LOOKS WITH

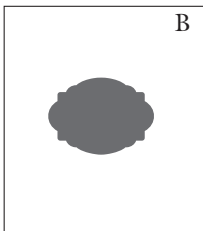
### *Prettier Plaques™*

All sets in my Prettier Plaque™ series contain four stencils and one masking piece, and have been thoughtfully designed to make message plaques prettier than ever. Thanks to the masking piece, backgrounds no longer have to overlap text areas. Plus, all sets fit the most popular 3- to 4-inch plaque cutters, allowing backgrounds to display beautifully!

The instructions below explain how I typically create a fully layered look, but feel free to improvise. Each stencil can be used on its own or with others in the set. Messages and frames can be mixed and matched with backgrounds in other sets. And all stencils work well with both royal icing and airbrushing.



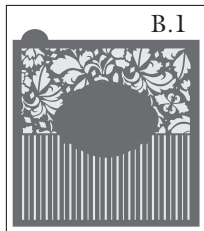
A



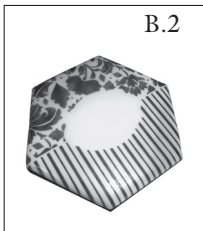
B

#### STEP 1:

Start with a smoothly iced cookie. The flatter the icing, the flatter the stencil will sit on it. To avoid cracking or denting the icing, let it dry completely. Set the background stencil (A) on the cookie, and make sure it sits flush against the icing by using a stencil frame and/or small weights to hold it in place. Place the masking piece (B) on top of the background, where you want your message to go (see Step 3), and weigh it down. If any stencil areas remain lifted, press them down with a scribe tool or skewer while stenciling.

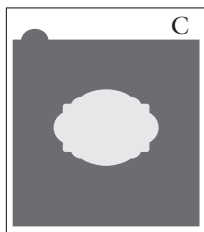


B.1

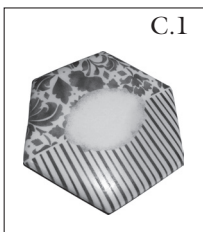


B.2

Airbrush the exposed background (B.1). To avoid underspray, use a low-pressure setting, point the airbrush nozzle straight down over the stencil openings, and apply coloring gradually. For fine details, spray about 1 to 2 inches away. At this stage, you can use one or more airbrush colors, or mask off parts of the background with other stencils, paper, or tape. Remove both background stencil and masking piece, and your cookie should look like B.2.



C



C.1

#### STEP 2:

(Optional shading to create shading around the message.) Center the shading stencil (C) over the empty space created in the last step, and weigh it down. Airbrush lightly around the edge of the stencil, avoiding the center area. You can also use a soft brush to apply luster or petal dust around the edge. Remove the stencil, and your cookie should look like C.1.



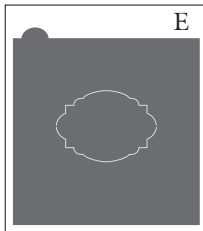
D



D.1

### STEP 3:

Center the message stencil (D) in the empty space created in Step 1, weigh it down, and airbrush over it. Remove the stencil, and your cookie should look like D.1.



E



E.1

### STEP 4:

Center the frame stencil (E) around the message, and weigh it down. Airbrush or, for more dimension, use royal icing.\* To minimize underflow when stenciling with royal icing, use thick icing. Apply it with a spreader tool or small offset spatula in as few strokes as possible. Clean the tool as needed between strokes. Remove the stencil, and your cookie should look like E.1.

*\*Note: If you'd prefer to stencil either the background or message with royal icing, that's possible too! Just remember to stencil with royal icing as a last step, so that stencils used in previous steps always sit flush against the icing surface. For example, to use royal icing with the message stencil, simply airbrush with the frame stencil in Step 3, and apply royal icing to the message stencil in Step 4.*

When done, gently wash stencils in warm, soapy water. Lay flat between towels, and pat dry with an up-and-down motion. Do not wipe side to side to avoid damaging finer areas.



For more project ideas and detailed how-to videos, visit <http://confectioncouturestencils.com/pages/video-tutorials>. I'd love to see what you create with my stencils, so please share your projects at <http://facebook.com/confectioncouturestencils>. Your feedback and questions are always welcome too at [service@confectioncouturestencils.com](mailto:service@confectioncouturestencils.com).

Happy stenciling!

*Julia*