

PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS

“TRICK-OR-TREAT” TOTE

SUPPLIES NEEDED

“Light for my Path” stencil

13-1/2” x 13-1/2” white or natural canvas tote (usually about \$4 currently)

*1-oz. bottle orange fabric paint (usually about \$1.50 to \$2 currently)

Small pair of scissors with fine point (or exacto knife)

Wax paper or other barrier material, about 12”x12”

Piece of dry sponge, about 1-1/2” square

Styrofoam tray or plastic lid

Masking tape

Cotton swabs

Rubbing alcohol

* “Dimensional” paint is acceptable. Would be used for flat coat of paint, rather than applied thickly for dimension. “Neon” or “glow-in-the-dark” paint would be very good. If you use glow-in-the-dark paint, you will need to expose the finished tote to bright light for about 10 minutes in order to make the paint glow for a while.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Sometimes fabric items must be washed before painting them, without using fabric softener. The labeling on the tote I purchased said it was ready to paint. If the tote has wrinkles, iron them out.
2. Print out a copy of the stencil. Print it on cardstock to make a more sturdy stencil, especially if you plan to use it for more than one tote. Printer paper will become soggy and curl up after the stencil is used once.
3. Cut apart the stencil on the dotted lines to make it easier to cut out the letters.
4. Cut out the letters of the stencil. It requires a little time and patience. You may want to listen to some music watch a familiar favorite movie (familiar so you won’t need to watch the screen to know what’s going on). If using a small, pointed pair of scissors, make it easier by first poking a hole in the middle of the letter with one of the sharp tips. Cut through the middle of the letter the long way, splitting off and cutting to each corner before you reach the extremities. Then do the exact trimming needed. If you’re good with an exacto knife, you may be able to cut out the letters with that. The first line is the most difficult, since the letters are a little smaller.
5. Place a piece of wax paper or other barrier inside the tote to prevent paint from leaching onto the other side of the tote.
6. Protect your work surface with newspaper or other protection.
7. Tape the stencil onto the tote with masking tape, with the sections meeting together.
8. Squeeze some paint onto a foam tray or plastic lid.

9. Have some cotton swabs and a little cup with a small amount of rubbing alcohol nearby. If you should get a little smudge of paint outside the lines, you may be able to fix it. Dab it with a dry swab first to remove excess paint, then try to remove the rest with a swab dampened with rubbing alcohol. No guarantees. In the worst case scenario, you could try to get paint to match exactly the color of the tote and paint over your mistake with a little brush. It would probably show a little. Being careful in the first place is the best bet.
10. Holding the stencil flat against the fabric with one hand, dunk the piece of dry sponge in the paint and apply the paint onto the letter openings with the other hand. Be careful to put only small daubs on the sponge and apply cautiously to prevent paint from leaching under the stencil. (You may want to cut a small circle out of a piece of paper to use as a “practice stencil” and place it on a doubled paper towel. Then you can practice applying the paint.)
11. When finished applying the paint on the tote, remove the stencil.
12. I have painted T-shirts quite a few times and haven’t really had trouble with the paint washing out. I always read the paint bottle. It usually just says to let the paint dry for at least 4 hours and that you shouldn’t wash the item painted for at least 72 hours. I was surprised to discover that several sources online recommended that you heat set fabric paint. This must be done after it is completely dry. They didn’t recommend it for dimensional paint, but I’m assuming they meant if you are applying it thickly to create dimension. If you decide to do heat setting, be sure to do it in a very well ventilated area. The paint fumes can be harmful. There are three ways to do it:
 - a. You can dry iron it at the highest temperature allowed for the fabric, with a pressing cloth over it. Go back and forth for 2 to 5 minutes (probably the longer time for fabrics requiring low temperatures and the shorter time for fabrics that allow high temperatures). This way sounds like the most work to me.
 - b. You can put the item in the dryer at the highest setting allowed for the fabric for 1/2 hour. Since my tote is supposed to be hand washed and hung up to dry, this may not be a good option for mine.
 - c. You can use a blow dryer. That sounds like the easiest option to me. Set the dryer on low heat and go back and forth, holding the dryer 1 to 2 feet away from the fabric. Be sure your blow dryer doesn’t overheat. There was no recommendation for the amount of time. Maybe 2 minutes or so?

If you are making bags for more than one person in the same family, you may want to mark names inside the top facings of the totes. That will avoid fights over whose candy is whose.