



# Simple Trompe L'oeil: Using Stencils and Faux Finishes

*Mary MacCarthy*

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Trompe l'oeil paint effects are among the most stunning and effective decorative treatments for walls, furniture and objects. The daunting idea of creating such breathtaking effects however, can be easy with the wealth of simple techniques and ideas provided here.

Decorative artist Mary MacCarthy explains the necessary stenciling techniques:

- tracing and cutting stencils
- using templates
- mixing paints and making glazes and varnishes
- painting with stencils
- using different brushstrokes to create shading and perspective
- creating the basic shapes of vases, plates and panels.

Through a series of 20 projects, she shows how easy it is to create extraordinary visual effects by using templates and repeating patterns and motifs, rather than trying to paint freehand. Faux finishes are equally simple to create and the combinations of stonework or woodgrain with stenciled motifs are stunning. Using ragging, dragging, stippling, and more, Mary MacCarthy progresses from simple mural painting to wood marquetry.

There are step-by-step instructions and photographs for a Delft tile backsplash, an Etruscan firescreen, a bamboo-effect sidetable; a marbled fireplace, chinoiserie plates, an alphabet block headboard, a scagliola work inlaid tabletop, Dado panels, and a picket-fence frieze that would be perfect for a hall or sunroom.

Template designs are provided and all the projects are accompanied by illustrative photography, comprehensive step-by-step instructions, hints and style idea sidebars and material lists. **Simple Trompe L'Oeil** is as easy to use as it is beautiful and inspiring.

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