

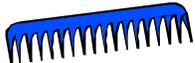
## PAPER MARBLING

Written by: Lisa Flick, Historian of Rockingham Historic Site

Paper marbling is a very old art that began in Eastern Asia centuries ago. It became popular in Europe and then in America in the 18th century, often found on the lining papers of book covers. Special guilds of craftsmen carefully guarded the secret to making the designs, but eventually someone made it the process public in the 19th century. This method is much simpler and easy to do from home.



### Supplies:

- ★ rectangular/square container or pan, at least 1" larger on each side than paper you will be using & at least 2" deep
- ★ liquid laundry starch 
- ★ assorted acrylic (craft) paints (mixed - 3 parts water to 1 part paint)
- ★ container for paint mixtures (a small muffin tin works well) 
- ★ eye droppers, 1 or 2 for each paint color 
- ★ assorted combs, toothpicks, chopsticks, whisk, etc. 
- ★ paper (printer paper works fine, but heavier paper is better)
- ★ newspaper, paper towels 

### Directions:

1. Cover work surface with tablecloth (vinyl or plastic) or newspaper.
2. Fill pan with 1-1 ½ " of starch.
3. Onto liquid surface, drop variety of paint, covering area size of paper. Be sparing; it can spread and a little goes a long way. If it sinks, you need to add more water to your paint mixture.
4. Leave as is, comb colors together, swirl using toothpick or chopstick, or blow on surface to create pattern.

5. If you have several people doing this activity, you can have each person write their name in pencil on the back of the paper first.
6. Holding opposite corners of paper, make “U” shape. Let bottom of “U” touch water first, then gently let ends go (avoiding creating air pockets).
7. Wait a few seconds, then, taking hold of opposite corners of paper, gently lift horizontally from liquid, letting drip.
8. You can “wipe” side of chopstick down length of paper to lightly scrape off excess liquid to help it dry faster, but it may lessen color somewhat.
9. Lay on paper towel and/or newspaper, face-up, to dry.
10. Paper may curl in drying—can be ironed on low setting between wax paper to make it lay flat.

