

Turning Paper Into Metal

by
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Do you love the look of metal charms but hate the bulk they add to your projects? Maybe the bulk doesn't bother you but the cost of buying all those theme-specific charms makes you want to cry! Well, keep reading. I have written a tutorial that will teach you how to use your electronic die cutting machine to make your own faux metal charms. Please note: I did try to take photos of the charms I made but they don't do justice to my images. The charms look very realistic in real life. Also, I used my alphabet charm letter file for the examples.

Supplies:

Embossing Heat Gun

Any color of pigment based ink pad or embossing ink pad

Clear embossing powder or any metallic embossing powder (silver, gold, copper)

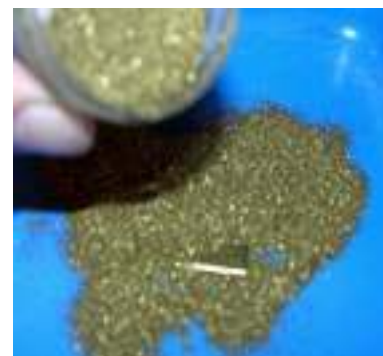
Cut dies you want to make look like metal. (Don't forget my freebie charm file included in this newsletter!)

Large scrap of cardstock

Paper piercing tool, tweezers, multipurpose tool, anything with a sharp point

A tray or piece of copy paper to dump your embossing powder onto

1. Cover the entire front surface of your die cut with your ink pad. I usually place the die cut on my scrap piece of cardstock and stamp on top of the die cut.
2. Place the inked die cut face up on your tray or copy paper. Dump the embossing powder over the front surface of your die cut. See the photo to the right.
3. Carefully remove the die cut from the embossing powder. This is a little tricky. You want to remove the excess powder but you can't touch the front of the die cut or you'll remove all the powder. Sometimes tweezers help for this. Practice makes perfect! I still manage to get that powder everywhere on my work surface! You can reuse the embossing powder. So, dump it into the bottle again when you are finished.
4. Now place your die cut on the surface of your scrap cardstock. Do not place this on rubber mats or any table surface as the heat gun gets very hot and will damage many surfaces! You'll need two free hands for the next step.
5. Place your paper piercing tool on top of your die cut to hold it in place while you are using the heat gun. See photo to the right. This is very important...if you don't find something to hold your shape in place it will blow away!



6. Plug in your heat gun and hold it directly above your die cut so the nozzle points downward directly on top of the die cut. See photo to the right. Remember to hold your die cut in place as recommended in step 5. Turn on the heat gun and watch the embossing powder melt. It won't take long, only a few seconds. Don't hold the heat gun over your die cut too long or it will burn!
7. Let the die cut cool for a minute or so. Repeat all the steps starting again with inking the die cut. You will do this as many times as you want until you get the desired look. I usually do it 4 times. The more layers of embossing powder, the thicker your paper will become.



That's all there is to it! You can do this! The results are amazing. It's also a great way to use up patterned cardstock scraps. It doesn't matter what color your base paper is. If you use clear embossing powder the ink color will show through the powder. I would not use thin paper as it is too thin to hold all those layers of embossing powder.



Above are the end results of my project. Wow! That gold one really does look like metal! If the jagged edges bother you, then just file them off with an emery board or sandpaper. I personally think it looks more realistic with the rough edges.

1. This is the original die cut image I started out with before embossing.
2. This is done with a tinted embossing ink pad and gold embossing powder.
3. This is done with a silver pigment ink pad and clear embossing powder.

As you can see, depending on what color ink and powder you use, the results will vary. I'd really like to see a copper version but I just didn't have the supplies to do one. I'd love to see any creations you make with this tutorial. Just email me at shellysart@verizon.net.

Happy Embossing!

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