

National Symbols Coasters Kit

You are recommended to read all the instructions before starting.

Introduction

Welcome to the National Symbols Coaster kit from QJS Marquetry. In addition to the materials provided you will need a sharp craft knife, a metal straight-edge or ruler, masking tape (clear sticky tape will do) and some PVA wood glue. For finishing your coaster inserts you might want to use some medium grade abrasive paper and a coat or two of clear lacquer or varnish.

The pack includes a range of veneer suitable for making all six of the designs provided, though there are only four coasters in the set.



Getting Started

The designs range from fairly simple (Shamrock, Daffodil & Leek) to the particularly tricky Dragon. The instructions assume you have worked through the practice design and are familiar with the "window method" for marquetry. See: <http://qjsmarquetry.co.uk/downloads/instructions-window-method.pdf>

Background

Some larger sheets of veneer are provided and these are for use as the background to your designs. Leave the pieces at the size provided and make your designs central within the area. The designs included are printed at the size of the visible window of the coasters, but you should make each insert to at least the size of the red line, and trim back to the red line once complete. Check the grain direction of each piece, you will probably want to use the same grain direction for all your pictures.

Shamrock

This is the simplest of the designs. Start with the stalk, then work round the petals. It will be easiest to have the grain direction running along the length of the stalk and into the centre of the petals. Use the shaded areas of veneer to give definition and curvature to the petals.



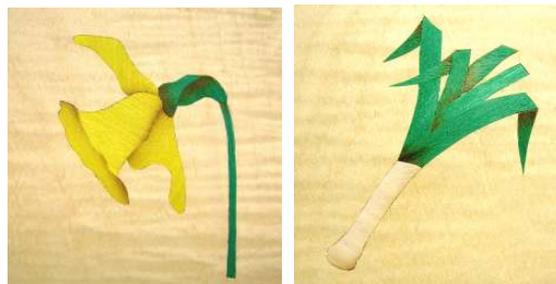
We made our original shamrock "square" within the coaster, but you may prefer to set it diagonally – your choice!



Leek and Daffodil

These are also fairly simple designs. Use the shaded parts of the veneers to give definition between the separate leaves and a little bit of "dirt" at the root end of the leek and between the petals of the daffodil.

The leek is best positioned diagonally across your coaster, but the daffodil could be placed "square on" or diagonally.



Thistle

This appears to be much more complicated, but in fact most pieces are straightforward to cut – there's just quite a lot of them!

The thistle is best placed diagonally across your coaster.

You can start with the leaves or the purple tuft – we chose to start with the tuft.



Cut in individual "spears", starting with the ones "furthest away". It's not necessary to copy the design exactly. Use slightly shaded areas of veneer for these spears, with the shading heavier towards the base of the spears. This allows later spears, using less heavily shaded or unshaded veneer to stand out.



We next cut in the bulb of the flower, using a corner of veneer so that we had a shaded veneer edge near the top and some shading to one side of the bulb. Then we moved onto the leaves, starting from the outer points and working down towards the stem

Once the leaves are complete you could stop at that point, but we wanted to put in the small bracts to make the bulb more "prickly". These look tricky but are quite simple. However they are a little too small to cut using the "window" method. It's easier to cut the opening and then cut the insert veneer judging its size and shape "by eye". Even if you get one or two that don't fit and have to be discarded the wastage is minimal.

Tudor Rose

This is a little more challenging, and needs accurate cutting and careful use of the shaded veneers for best effect.





Start with the outer leaves. First trim a straight edge to one of the long-grain shaded edges of green veneer and a similar trimmed edge of unshaded green. Tape the two pieces together.



Each leaf can then be cut in as a single piece, taking care to position the joint between the shaded and unshaded veneers down the centre. Make sure each leaf is long enough to reach to the bottom of the space between the red petals.



Next cut in the outer red sections, using unshaded areas of the red veneer. Make the pieces big enough to include the inner curl by the leaves.



Once the unshaded red sections are in place cut in the inner section using the shaded long-grain edges of red veneer. Make sure the pieces reach down to the area where the white veneer will go. Try to get the amount of shading even between each section so the rose is nice and symmetrical.



Once the red petals are complete cut in the inner leaves – again using the joined veneer technique and then cut in the white petals in the same way we did for the red – first with unshaded veneer for the outer curl of the petals and then shaded veneer for the inner sections..

Finally cut in the central red circle and inner yellow dot.

Dragon

Ready for a challenge? – Here we go!

There are lots of small pieces and as the entire beast is made in red veneer you need to use the shading carefully to get the best effect.

You can start almost anywhere with this picture. We cut in the tail and the back ear first. It's often useful to move around your picture, letting the glue dry in one area while you're working somewhere else. Use masking tape to support your work.



The curl in the tail needs careful thought. Here, we've inserted the point of the tail and one piece of wing and cut the recess for the next section. Notice we've cut out the whole section and will fill that with a single piece of red. We were careful to retain the piece of background that was removed, so we could cut the correct central section back in to create the tail curl.



Here we've added some more pieces. Notice the shaded edges used to make the ribs of the wing and the separate shaded pieces making up the segments of the leg.

We found it easier to cut in the crest section of the neck first and then add the shaded individual parts for the front of the neck later.



More pieces added, including the "chains" of shaded pieces making up the scaly sections of neck, legs and stomach.

The back feet were cut in by first inserting the furthestmost toe (the top one on the left side of each foot), then the middle toe and finally the whole foot with back and front toe. Care was taken to use little areas of shading to give separation between toes, etc.



The claws look tricky but are not too difficult. Cut out a small triangular recess, then trim a small section of black veneer with approximately the correct angle at the point. Push the point into the recess and "snip off" the claw with your knife.

Secure the claws with tape and glue in as normal.



One of the last pieces we cut in was the head and cheek. Check back to the completed picture to see how we used shading at the back of the head. Having the grain direction horizontal will make adding the eye easier. The eye is just like one of the smaller "prickles" from the thistle – you can use black for the eye or, for a slightly softer effect, use a piece of shaded red.

Finishing Off

For a quick result you can simply leave your work taped on the back, trim to size and fit into the coasters. However a more durable method is as follows.

Trim each finished design to size (80 x 80 mm) ensuring the motif is central. Keep tape on the front, but remove any tape from the back. Peel the back off one of the vinyl squares and stick the film to the back of the marquetry. Press on really well and trim to size.

Varnishing or lacquering will bring out the colours of the veneers. Remove any tape from the front of the work. Sand lightly using a medium grade abrasive sheet (something around 150-250 grit). Take care when sanding – hold the insert down flat on the table and sand gently from the centre to the outside. Sanding the other way it is easy to catch the edge and damage your work. Brush or

vacuum off any dust and give the inserts a thin coat of clear lacquer or varnish (follow the manufacturer's instructions). The marquetry may curl a little, but should relax.

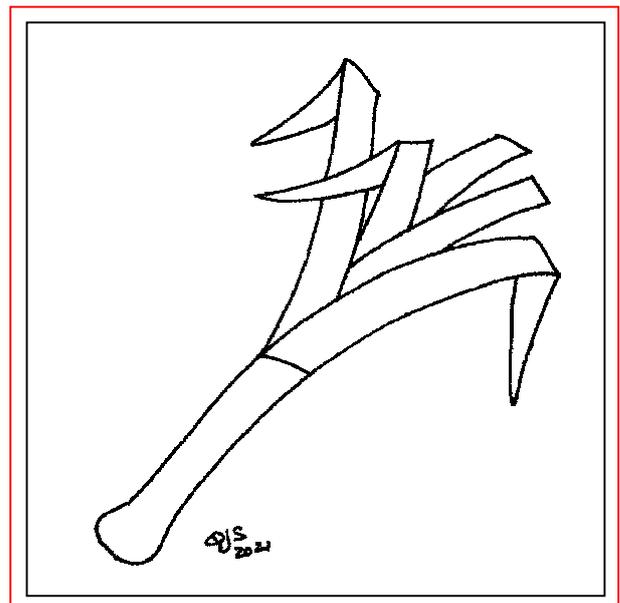
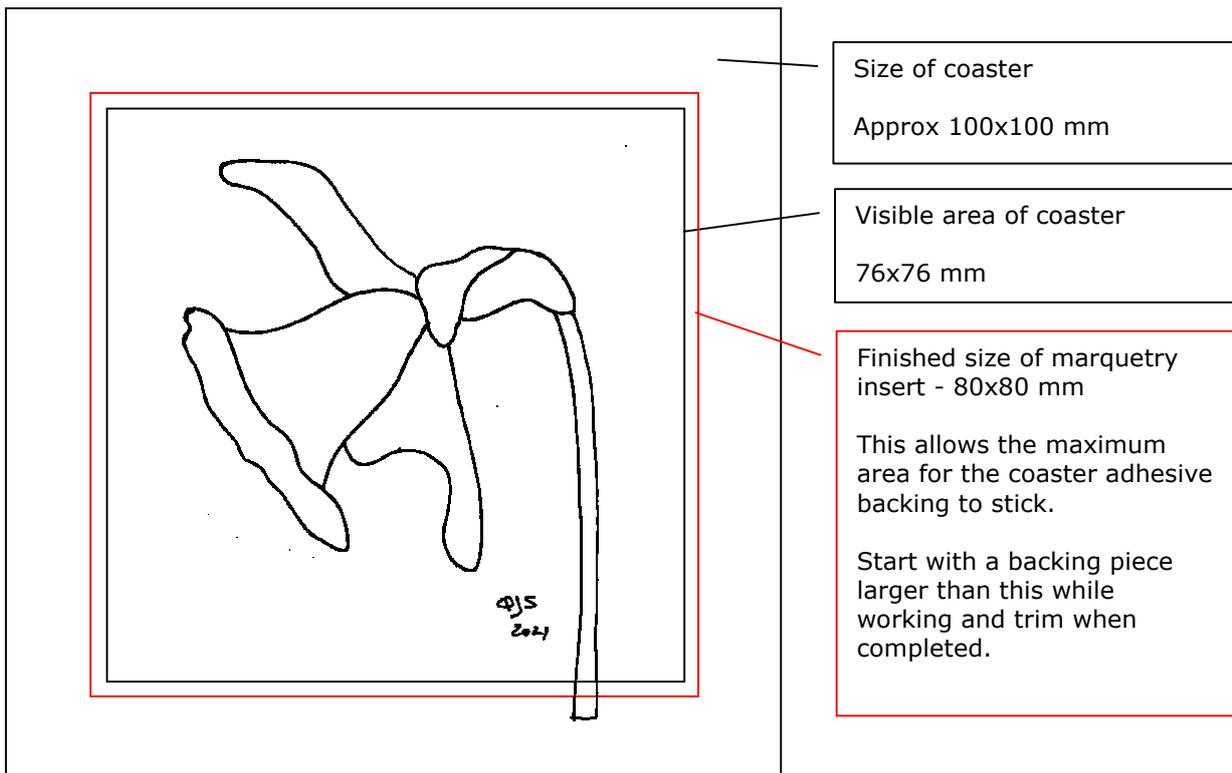
Once the varnish has dried fit the insert to its coaster, ensuring the outer edges of the foam backing are well pressed down. There is a short video (30 seconds) from the supplier showing how to insert a photo into one of the coasters at: <https://youtu.be/EWtwWRyEuXk> - we think you need to press down the foam edges more firmly than shown in the video.

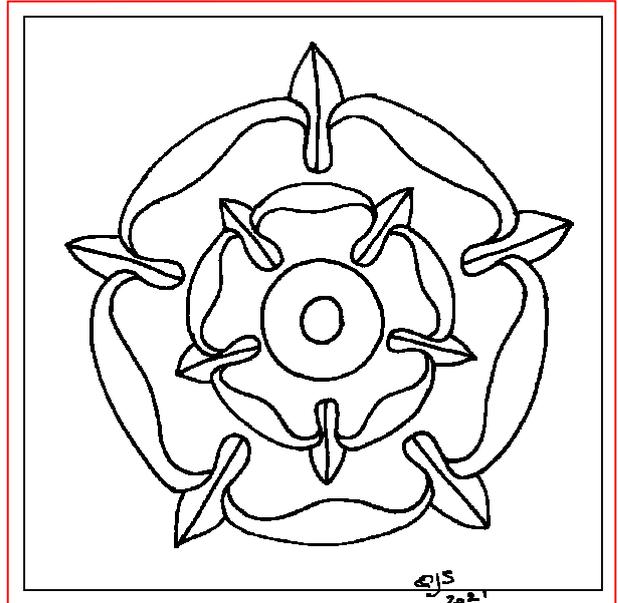
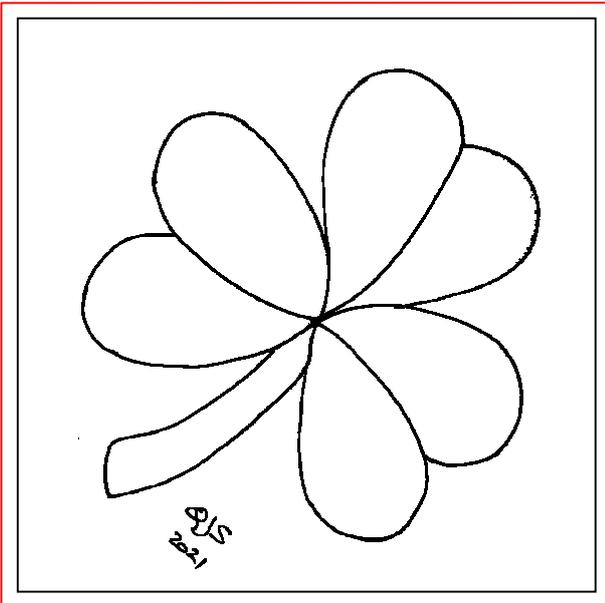
Enjoy your coasters!

For more help and information about marquetry please contact:

QJS Marquetry
www.qjsmarquetry.co.uk

The Marquetry Society
www.marquetry.org





Packing list

- Instructions
- Background pieces x 6
- Sand-shaded dyed veneers
- Practice exercise
- Coasters x 4
- Carbon paper
- Adhesive vinyl backing
- Marquetry Society leaflet