

# Creating stamps with Stampmaker Essential from Photocentric

<http://www.photocentricusa.com/>

by Kelly Fehr

Creating stamps with this process is super easy, very fast and generally reliable.



COST FOR ENTIRE KIT: **Price: \$159.99**

Helpful videos: <http://www.photocentricusa.com/videos.php>

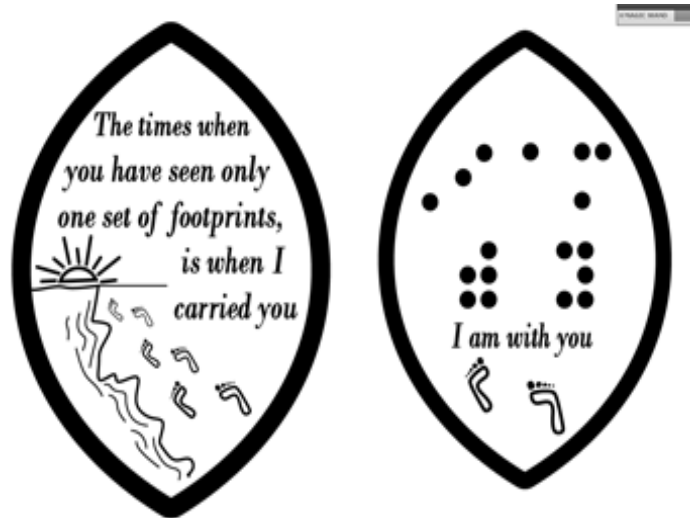
## Step 1- Creating black and white art

The first step in the process is to create good black and white art. Provided in the kit is software to help you with this. I use my CAD software to create vector art. This step is NOT necessary to create good stamps but is helpful if you create one of a kind stamps with your own artwork.

*Definition of Vector art is: Art made up of paths which are defined by points, lines and curves and represented by mathematical equations. Vector art can be scaled to any size and retain its sharpness and detail at no loss in quality.*



**Step 2-** The next step is to take your vector lines into Illustrator. This is where I define area to be black or white, the line thickness or filled with black. This step is particularly important because in your stamp, the black areas will be recessed in the stamp and the white areas will not. Translated into the final pieces, the black areas will be raised and the white not.



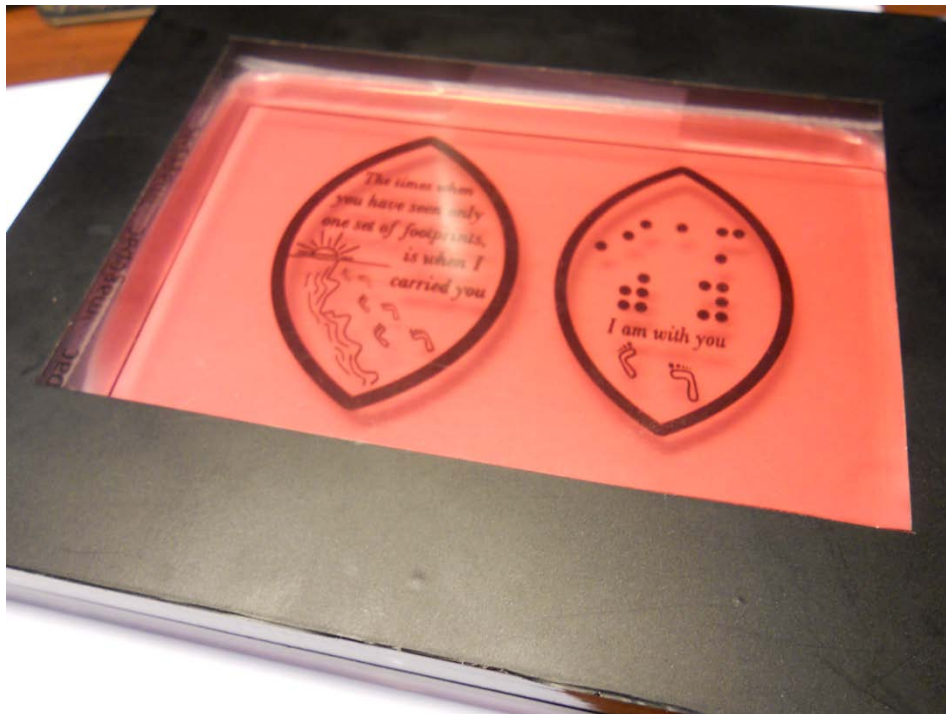
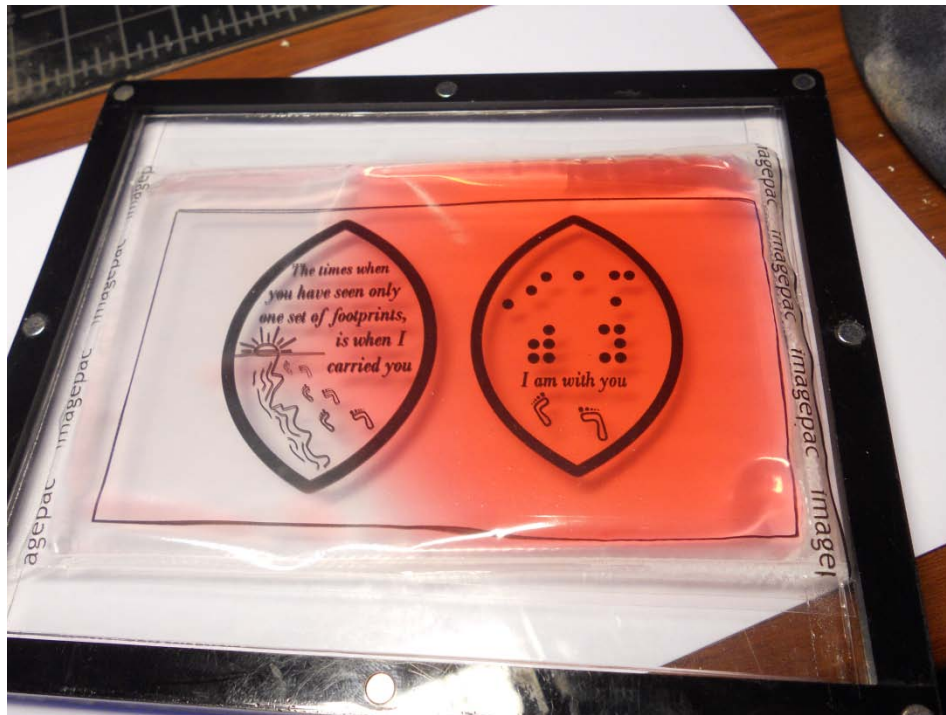
**Step 3-** At this step, I make sure the scale of the artwork is correct, printing it out 1:1 to ensure that it will not be larger than the stamp itself- 4" X 2 3/8 is the size I use almost exclusively. I would suggest, however, if you are just learning what works for you to start off with the smaller sizes (they cost less) until you perfect your process. Please note: what you see here will be what your stamp will look like. I also create an outline to size of the stamp- so I know is my artwork is about to go over the edge.

Alternative option for creating art: If you do not have CAD software and Illustrator- who doesn't, right? You can create your artwork with a Sharpie/black marker etc. Simply draw on white paper what you would like your stamp to be- same principal applies- black is recessed in your stamp, white is not. Scan in the artwork. In your image software, adjust the contrast so the black is as black can be and the white is white. Again, the scale of your artwork needs to be in the same scale as the stamp you use- you can rescale your art in your image software.

**Step 4-** On clear film (I use HP laser jet transparencies) print 2. If you can arrange in your image software that 2 print at the same time to save the film this is ideal in saving the transparencies. Cut them out, leaving a boarder around the artwork. Line up so the 2 pieces of film are lined up PERFECTLY. Tape them together- double check there is no shifting. The reason why I do this is that I have found that 1 layer of film does not fully block the light- 2 does.



**Step 5-** With the acrylic clamp- provided in the kit- place the film face side up (if you have text, you should be able to read it correctly). Place the stamp pack right side up- again, you should be able to read the 'Imagepac' logo on the edges of the stamp. Place the top of the clamp on- the magnets should hold the 2 sides together- but press the 2 sides together so the gel of the image pack is evenly distributed.



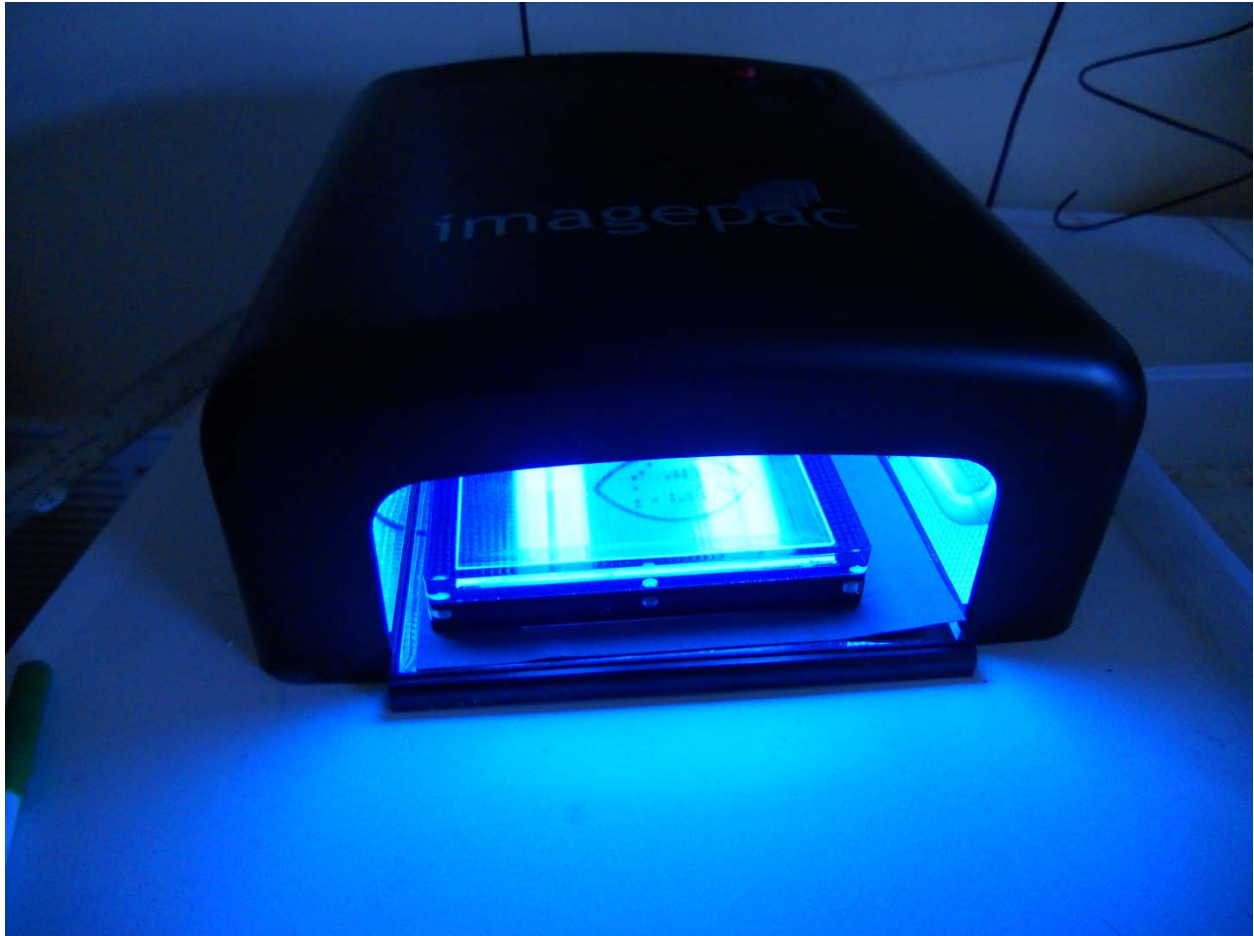


~this modification works for me after trial and error~

The image box comes with 4 UV bulbs- 2 on the sides, 2 on the top. I was finding the lights were 'over curing' the packs so I only use the top 2 lights. Further, the bottom of the tray of the kit is mirrored and I cover that so the UV light does not bounce around and cure too fast. Please feel free to experiment to find what works for you- this work well for me.



**Step 6-** Flip the assembled clamp for that the film side is face up. Your text or image should read BACKWARDS. If you can imagine, the light needs to shine down and the film should prevent the light from hitting your stamp- so film, then image pack. Turn on your UV light, place the whole clamped assembly in the box for **1 minute**. At the end of that 1 minute, flip the clamp over for and place it back in for **5 seconds**. Turn off light and remove clamp.



**Step 7-** Take out the cured stamp. With a pair of scissors or an Xacto knife, cut the boarder off- no plastic flange should remain. There are 2 distinct sides to this stamp- one side contains a semi-rigid piece of plastic, the other is thinner. SLOWLY remove the thinner side and discard.

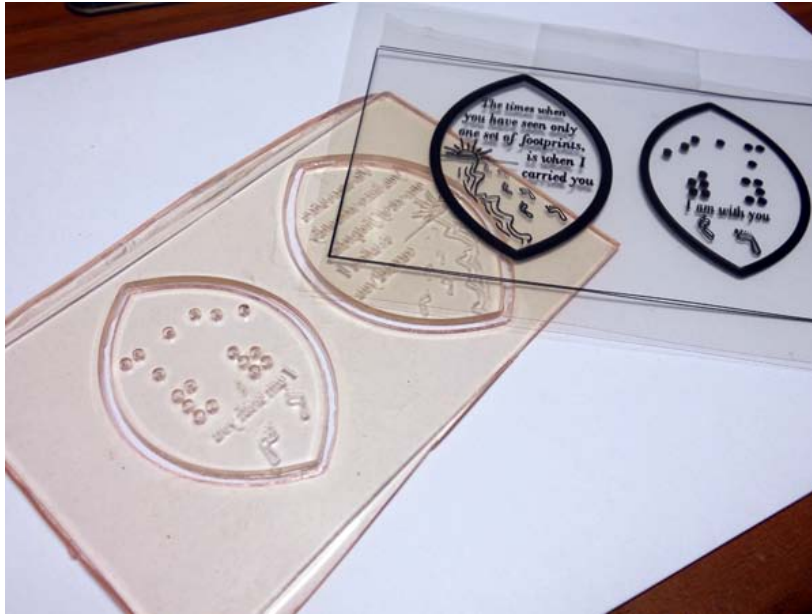




**Step 8-** With the cleanout brush provided, under running water and dish soap, scrub out the uncured gel. Take the time to make sure all uncured gel is removed- the better you clean this out- the better the end result will be.

**Step 9-** In the tray provided, add water (water is suggested according to manufacturer direction but I have found this unnecessary) and return under the light for at least 3 minutes. The stamp will go from pink to almost clear.





Before you use the stamp, simply spray it with whatever non-stick spray you use. I use Cooltool's Cool Slip.



\*\*\*Helpful hint- if you desire certain areas to be more bold- like for me the Braille dots taller, I take a pin and pierce a hole to let the air out while the clay will attempt to fill.

I have made a stamp or two in my day... here is my 'stamp' drawer

