

Tips and Tricks for Wall Tangling

Thanks for your interest in learning more about Wall Tangling. Here are a few things I have learnt along the way, but adapt to suit yourself and your big project.

Materials

- Paper: Fabriano Accademia paper roll 10m by 1.5m - weight 120gsm - they do a heavier weight too I believe - but that makes for a heavy piece of paper when it comes to hanging it.
- Pens: Edding 300 permanent markers - they don't go through the paper and so won't transfer on to the wall behind when drawing - I am sure there are other markers on the market - but remember this is not a fine line we are drawing!
- Pencils: I use solid charcoal pencils 8B - these are excellent for big scale shading - I also use solid paper stumps - a large size to do the blending
- Erasers: I have two - a kneadable one - if you get totally carried away you can lift off graphite a bit - and also some Sakura Mono pen erasers - these are not fine but in pen-style format - which is great if you want to change a string line, or neaten up some shading on one side of the line - whatever you think about 'no mistakes', I use an eraser as another tool - to sharpen up a line or the shading, and you can also use them to put decoration in the shaded area too - pretty cool idea in my book!
- If you are drawing directly on to a wall, check your pen and paint/ wallpaper match, work on a discrete corner first, you may also want to get a series of grey pens, rather than graphite to do the shading. I like Tomboys Grey brush pens (a set of only greys).

If you want to test out pens you prefer, I suggest you buy one sheet of Fabriano Accademia paper, most good art shops will sell you a sheet, and test some pens out - there are a few brands who make big rolls of paper in various lengths/ widths, ask at your local art store.

You can of course go with any other pen and paper combination, if you don't have what I have mentioned above, but try out a few combinations of pen to paper, and check for bleeding etc. Also don't go for a really fine pen if you are drawing big, it may take a while.

I generally treat my piece of paper like it is a tile, so will do a border (see blue one below,) perhaps you can tangle within and then do a random string line over the paper in pencil, just like the normal Zentangle Method, to give different sections to work with. You can always add a string line or two, or of course ignore one later. If you like a plan, you can do a wee sketch up of it in mini and plan which tangle where, perhaps you need to plan if you are working on a wall, perhaps around a window or architecture feature etc.

Try drawing on some scrap paper (brown kraft paper/ used shopping bags can be good, to get an idea of the scale to draw tangles.

The thicker pen gives a big line (relatively) so don't draw too small with your tangles. Shade as you go, I know we won't normally do this, but it can feel very repetitive when you are shading a vast wall. I tend to do one tangle, and then shade it and move on to the next one, as this is a big project, you aren't going to get it done in a day, so sometimes it's less daunting to treat each tangle as a separate project.

Fixative is good, if you think you might come back to it, use a workable fixative.

If you want to add colour, check which mediums will work, a high water content medium is not going to work on the Accademia paper, so maybe chalk pencils, inks (these I find just work), or coloured pencils/ chalks/ oil pastels.

Remember not to make it too big you can't finish it, or set aside an area where you can leave it to work away on it. Set yourself a daily or weekly prompt to add a tangle each day/ week. (if you get two done that's a bonus!) If necessary grab your frame/ canvas first to decide on the size of your piece.

Generally it is easier to draw on a table set up, so you can roll the paper up as you complete that part of the sheet of paper, but leaving it mounted on a wall does work too, it's just a little harder to draw for most people - but maybe not you.

If you are inviting a friend to join in, make sure they don't just do one area, different people's tangling styles will show up, best thing is to do one tangle here and one tangle there etc. You may also see a different tangling style come out of you, depending on how tired/ joyful/ calm or happy you are!

Beate Winkler introduced me to the concept of wall tangling when she visited NZ Although way back in Art College a did a 10m x 5m metre mural of different footsteps on a pavement, recording people's different walking patterns, so maybe I was always going to carry on the big format in one way or another, I hope this helps and let me know how you get on!

Happy BIG
Tangling, Ildica

