

NCMA To Go Kit

Pattern Printing

Create intricate repeating patterns inspired by *ndop* display cloth from Cameroon.



Bamum or Bamileke artist, Grasslands region, Cameroon, *Display Cloth* (Ndop), mid-20th century, handwoven cotton, industrial woven cotton, and indigo dye, 92 × 134 in., Gift of Dr. James W. Lankton

Geometric designs repeat in patterns of indigo blue and white across this *ndop* display cloth. Cloths like this one were created for exhibition at royal events and ceremonies in Bamum and Bamileke cultures in Cameroon. Every aspect of the design—from the geometric symbols to the rich blue color—signifies royalty. While historically these cloths were reserved for only the most elite, today they are worn by many to celebrate their culture and show off their style.



How Are *Ndop* Cloths Made?

Ndop cloths are a collaborative effort across a community. First weavers make cotton strips and sew them together to create a wide cloth. Next women artists stitch geometric designs using thread made from raffia, a natural fiber. The cloth is then dyed in indigo; areas under the stitches remain the natural color of the cotton. When dry, the stitches are removed to reveal white patterns against a blue background.

MATERIALS

included in kit

■ Styrofoam printing plate ■ Marker ■ Sponge ■ Paper

not included in kit

□ Scrap paper □ Pencil

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sketch your design on scrap paper.

Here are some things to consider as you plan your design:

- Will your drawing be geometric or tell a story with recognizable images?
- Your design will print as a mirror image, so words or letters will be reversed. Want them to read correctly? Write them in reverse!
- Anywhere you draw will print as white. The other areas will have color.

2. Draw your image by pressing into the printing plate with a pencil.

Remember that you cannot erase the lines you draw into this plate, so work carefully!

3. Color over your printing plate with the marker.

4. Lightly wet the paper with a damp sponge.

5. Print your design.

Place your colored printing plate face down in one corner of the damp paper and rub to transfer the design. You can use your hand or the side of the marker to rub all over the plate to make the image print clearly.

6. Reveal your printed image.

Gently pull the printing plate up to see the vibrant colors underneath!

7. Repeat the printing process to create a pattern that fills the paper.

Your printing plate can be used again and again. Re-ink it by coloring over the plate with markers. Place the plate face down next to the print you just made, rub, pull up, and repeat.

ABOVE LEFT: Young men wearing traditional Bamileke attire during a marriage ceremony, 2018. Photo by Bamiboi / CC BY-SA 4.0