

Image Transfer Solution Locket Tutorial
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Materials Needed:

Image Transfer Solution
Artchix laser printed collage images
Scissors
Pre or hand-cut metal shape, locket, etc. in brass, copper, or sterling silver
Sanding sponge or fine grit sanding paper
Piece of denim or other soft buffing cloth
Standard or toaster oven
Plastic cup
Paint brush



Image Transfer Solution (ITS) is a relatively new liquid medium that allows you to transfer images on to just about any surface, including metal. Your images must be toner-based, laser printed. Inkjet images WILL NOT WORK. ArtChix collage sheets are laser printed, so I decided to experiment and love the results.

When preparing your image I have found that you can burn the edges prior to transfer for an aged, distressed look, or simply clean-cut your images for a clean edge boarder. Bright images work best, as the image will fade a bit during the transfer process. Metal choices are up to you—copper, brass, or sterling silver all work well. At the end of this tutorial I have included photos of other designs I have also created using ITS and ArtChix collage images.

1. Choose your image and metal, cut and shape to fit. You can cut your own copper, brass or silver from sheet, or use pre-cut shapes available at most craft and jewelry supply stores. For this project I used a round brass locket with a flat profile. I hope that the folks at ArtChix will soon offer “mirrored” collage sheets for transfer of images that contain text. Until then, choose images with no text. Make sure the image fits your chosen metal piece well, cut so that a bit of a metal boarder is left around the image. Prepare your metal by sanding lightly with steel wool or a sanding sponge. The ITS will “grab” the metal better if the surface is lightly scratched, and free of all finishes, dirt, oil, etc.
2. Apply the ITS using a brush in an even layer. Cover the entire area, use enough ITS to leave a nice, sort of thick, opaque coating. ITS is water soluble and non-toxic, so you can easily clean your brush when you are finished.
3. Apply your image facedown onto your metal. Be careful to line the image up before you actually press it into the ITS. ITS will “grab” the paper very quickly and you cannot reposition once this happens. Smooth the image down and wipe off any excess ITS that oozes out.
4. Burnish the image lightly to the metal to ensure a good bond with no air bubbles. Be sure to burnish the edges well. Place your piece on a piece of aluminum foil or small baking sheet and place in a 250-275 degree pre-heated oven (I use a toaster oven) image side up. Heat for 35-40 minutes. NOTE: The instructions on the ITS call for a much higher temperature, but ArtChix paper will burn at temps higher than 275 degrees. **YOU DO NOT WANT THIS—YOUR IMAGE WILL BE RUINED.** Keep an eye on the piece as it heats. If you notice the white paper backing darkening, lower the temp right away. You do not want to scorch the paper.
5. Remove the piece from the oven using an oven mitt or tongs (careful, it will be hot!) and place in a cup of water for 10 minutes.

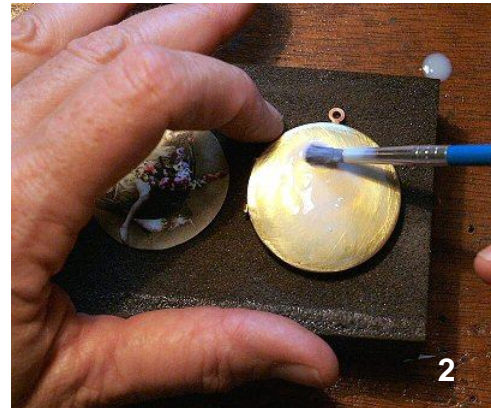
6. Remove the piece from the water and begin rubbing your thumb across the paper in a circular motion. The paper will loosen and start to come off. Continue this until the image is revealed. This process takes some time, so be patient. Continue dunking the image in water and rubbing until you have as much of the white paper backing off as possible. Be careful not to rub too hard, you may remove some of the image at this stage. I like my transferred images to have a rough, organic feel to them so I often leave the imperfections, bumps and lumps. But, that's me!

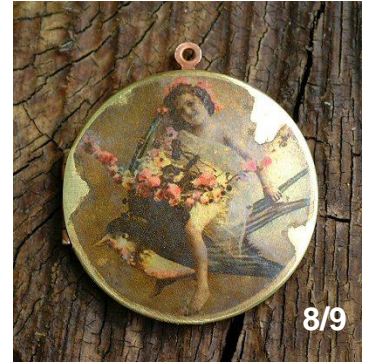
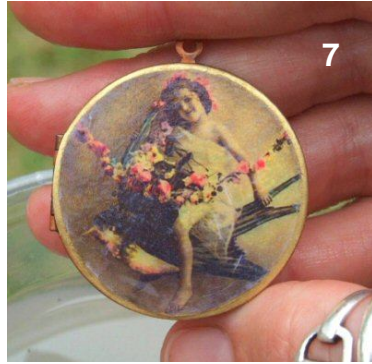
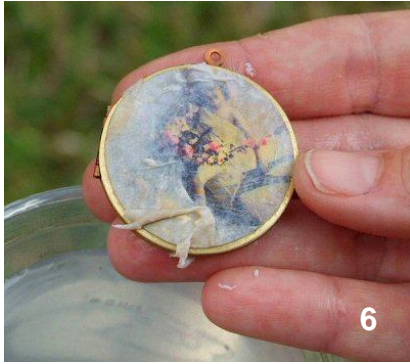
7. Wipe the image off, dunk, continue rubbing until you achieve the look you like. ITS will create a dreamy look. At this point dry the piece and use an ultra fine grit polishing paper (usually blue) and lightly sand the image smooth. Again, be careful not to sand the image off. The image will appear to have a faint, white film—that's okay.

8. Once the piece is smooth and dry, apply 2 coats of clear finish. You will see that the clear sealer will make the white film disappear. I prefer either a spray polyurethane specific to metals, or automotive clear-coat (spray or brush, available at most auto repair shops like AutoZone, etc.).

9. Let this dry completely, then sand smooth again using a sanding sponge or fine grit polishing cloth. For a final buff I rub the metal on a piece of denim (or my shorts, whatever is convenient!). Rub vigorously in a circular motion. This will give your finished design a smooth, even polish, shine and buff. You may use a dremel tool with polishing head at this point, but I prefer to do it by hand to control exactly how much pressure, shine, and buff I am delivering without harming the image. I decided I wanted this locket image to be more distressed, so I carefully sanded off bits of the image at the edge. Viola!!

At this point you are finished—or not. You may wish to further embellish the image by coloring it with mica powders mixed with clear acrylic, layer on text, stamps, etc. Just be sure to finish everything with some sort of clear sealer. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination!





Other ITS/ArtChix designs:

Nona locket – Image on brass inside handmade brass locket

Magda locket – Image on sterling silver inside handmade brass locket

