



# How to Customise Shoes

By TailoredKicks



**Contents**

**Welcome** ..... 3

**Step 1**

*Introduction* ..... 4

**Step 1**

*What You Need* ..... 4

**Step 1**

*Let's Get Started* ..... 5

**Step 2**

*Introduction* ..... 6

**Step 2**

*What You Need* ..... 6

**Step 2**

*Let's Get Started* ..... 7

**Step 2**

*Painting Your Design* ..... 7

**Step 3**

*General Hints and Tips* ..... 8

## **Welcome.**

This guide will tell you everything you need to know about how to customise your very own shoes, it is ideal for beginners and also for the more experienced designer to pick up additional pointers. I will share with you my own hints and tips for customising, including the type of paint to use, what finisher to put on, and how to prep a shoe etc.

This guide will run through each stage of the design giving a step by step approach to customising your own shoes, and hopefully once you've read it you'll be able to customise your own shoes.

## Step 1

### *Introduction*

In order to begin customising your shoes, you must first prep the shoe before hand.

***HINTS AND TIPS: if you are working on canvas or fabricated shoes you do not need to prep the shoes, this stage is only for leather shoes, therefore go to 'Step 2'.***

This first stage of the tutorial will now talk you through exactly what needs to be done so that you can make the most of your designs. The reason why you prep a shoe before customising it is because you need to remove the wax on the shoe in order for the paint to stick and to prevent it from cracking.

## Step 1

### *What You Need*

There are several items that you will need in order to prepare a shoe for customising, below are a list of these items:-

- Acetone (also known as propanone, dimethyl ketone)
- Cotton balls
- Cotton buds (Q-tips)
- Rubber gloves

## Step 1

### ***Let's Get Started***

After you have acquired the above items you can now begin the preparation of the shoes. Firstly before you do anything take out the laces of your shoes and I would suggest that you put on the rubber gloves to protect your hands from the acetone.

Now put a couple of cotton balls into a small container and add a very small amount of acetone to them

***HINTS AND TIPS: it is important not to soak the cotton balls in the acetone; make sure that the cotton balls are damp but not soaking in the acetone, too much of the solution will not help with the preparation.***

Once the cotton balls inside the container have been dampened take a fresh cotton ball and dab it into the container, this will help you to get just the right amount of acetone onto the cotton without getting it too wet. If this is not working try adding a little more acetone into the container.

Now comes the hard part, begin to wipe away the wax from the shoe, this in many respects is the worst part of customising. What you might find is that you spend more time prepping the shoe than actually painting them; nevertheless you have to make sure that you remove all of the wax. What makes this process even more difficult is if you are prepping white shoes, as you can't always see if the wax is coming off, in this case I would suggest that you look at the cotton balls as a guide, because if you're doing it right you should be able to see the wax sticking to the cotton balls.

***HINTS AND TIPS: if you don't want to prep the whole shoe, simply prep the area that you want to paint and leave the rest as it is.***

Once you have removed all of the wax from the shoe, the leather should feel exposed; you might have to apply a lot of pressure when removing the wax to get this effect. For difficult areas that you cant reach such as the stitching around corners etc, make use of the cotton buds (Q-tips) in just the same way as you would use the cotton balls. Once this is done the shoe is now ready for the next stage

## **Step 2**

### ***Introduction***

So now you want to customise your shoes, the next few stages will teach you everything you need to know about painting a design of your choice onto the shoes. If you are a beginner and have never customised your shoes before please take your time in reading the next few stages.

## **Step 2**

### ***What You Need***

Before you start your customisation please take the time to check that you have the following items: -

- Leather paints
- Fabric paint if you are painting on fabricated shoes, although certain leather paints will achieve the same results
- Paint brushes
- Masking tape
- Pencil
- Acetone (to help clean up any errors)

## Step 2

### ***Let's Get Started***

Once you've acquired the tools you need for this stage, you can now begin to paint on your designs. However before you start anything I would suggest that you lay down newspaper on the area that you are going to work on, to prevent making a mess.

***HINTS AND TIPS: it is always a good idea to sketch out your shoes and the design you want on a piece of paper before you start so that you have something to copy when doing your custom job.***

If you've followed the above hint and tip then you can now begin to copy your design from the paper directly onto your shoes by drawing it out in pencil first, the pencil may not show up that clearly at first but take your time and ensure you don't make any mistakes.

Once you've drawn the outline of your designs onto your shoes, take the masking tape and tape off any area's you don't want to paint, e.g. the exposed rubber of the sole or the lacing area etc. once this is done you are now ready to start painting.

## Step 2

### ***Painting Your Design***

Now that you've drawn out the design, you can begin to add the paint, make sure you use the correct types of paints on your shoes. Using the wrong type of paints will mean that the paint will crack or rub off while wearing them.

***HINTS AND TIPS: the best leather paints to use are Angelus paint, they are extremely hard to find but are made for leather. I would suggest you take the time to find them, see [www.tailoredkicks.com](http://www.tailoredkicks.com) for links on where***

***you might find them. Createx paints may also be used but I would recommend you use Angelus.***

Once you've got the correct type of paint take a paintbrush and begin to paint on your designs very carefully, depending on what your painting will determine what sort of brush head you use, for obvious reasons use a small brush head when trying to bring out fine detail. And remember to paint one layer at a time

***HINTS AND TIPS: if you make a mistake, use a little bit of acetone as a paint remover to correct the error.***

Once you have painted on your first layer ensure it is dry before adding more paint on top. If you want to paint light colours on top of dark, I would suggest you first go over the area in white to create a base coat.

## **Step 3**

### ***General Hints and Tips***

If you're an experienced artist and have customised shoes before, I would suggest trying out a spray gun as well as paintbrushes to see what sort of affect you can create, createx paints are ideal for this, however only use a spray gun if you are confident in what you are doing.

If you are still struggling to paint on shoes, for example if the designs are not coming out as you want then to, then try painting over a stencil to get you started. You can even create your own stencils and print them out, just remember to put sellotape over the stencil to prevent the paint being absorbed by the paper, and then cut them out to use.

Hopefully if you've followed all the stages above you should come out with a great pair of your very own customised shoes. For more information please visit [www.tailoredkicks.com](http://www.tailoredkicks.com).