

THE GOLD-VAULT

Thank you for taking an interest in this Book Arts E-book.

Other e-books and manuals on the subject of the Book Arts and Gilding in particular are available for free download from the Eden Workshops website.

<http://www.edenworkshops.com>

If you are interested in gilding in particular please do check out our website at:

<http://www.gold-vault.com>

For nearly 20 years my wife Margaret & I ran a system of craft workshops devoted to the exploration of the Book Arts.

During that time we worked in almost total isolation and seclusion in the grounds of a very private monastery in rural England. We developed four book related skills; hand book binding, paper marbling and book edge marbling, printing & box making and took those skills to high levels of excellence.

In 1997 after nearly 15 years running the Eden Workshops we were voted a National Living Treasure by Country Life magazine for our contribution to the Book Arts.



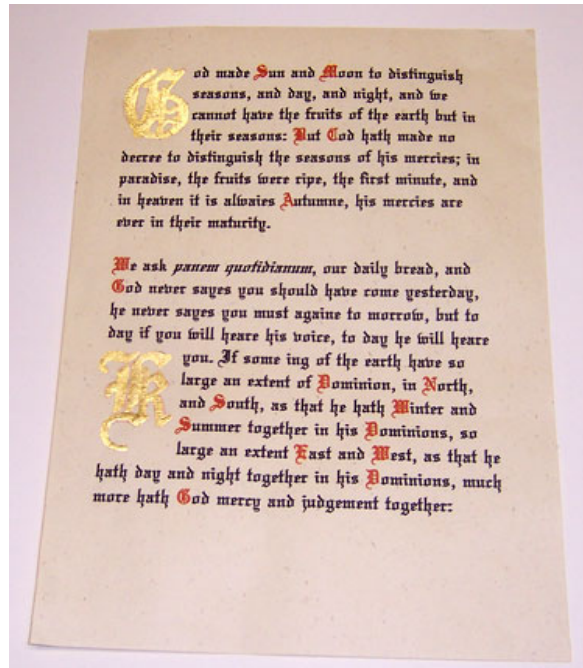
In 2004 we decided to close our workshops and move out here to Southern France, I now concern myself with mentoring those with aspirations to become crafts people, and have the time to concentrate on other aspects of the arts that interest me.

How to Make Your Own Gilded Manuscript

This manual brings together a simple technique for gilding onto paper, plus an even simpler method of making imitation vellum or parchment paper which has been used by bookbinders for generations.

Of course you don't have to apply the imitation vellum finish; you can if you wish simply use this manual to learn how to gild onto paper.

Using this method anyone can make impressive documents intended for framing, scrapbookers can create their own pages embellished with gold metal leaf.



You can also use this method to make inexpensive bespoke seasonal cards that look both hand made and attractive.

I happen to be working with Christmas themes at the moment, but you can use this method for any occasion.

This is the first two verses of "In the bleak mid winter".





Any stationers should be able to supply you with matching blank cards and envelopes.

Ok to business. We are going to need:

An inkjet printer, "Word" software or similar

A good quality paper to print onto. The paper you use is important, I have to recommend Hahnemühle Medieval Laid paper as it is better than perfect for this job, I have been using it for this purpose for more years than I can remember, but any hand made or mould made paper, off white to pale buff in colour will do and 120 – 150 gsm in weight (80 – 100lb USA)

I do supply Hahnemühle Medieval Laid paper, which by the way is an archival quality paper, acid and wood free, made from alpha grade cellulose, this paper is made to last for centuries.

Imitation gold leaf, you can use 23 carat gold leaf, but after you have applied the imitation vellum finish it will be hard to tell them apart.

A bottle of gold size, I have developed my own gold size after extensive experiments with traditional and modern gold sizes.

The size I sell is ready to use when dry and remains ready to use for weeks, it takes the guesswork out of knowing when the right time is to apply the leaf. I have called this size "Simple Scribe" it is available from the website.

A small amount of blonde de waxed shellac. This is going to be the basis of our antique finish, it is important to get this type of shellac by name; it is the right tint for what we are looking for.

Methylated Spirit is needed to dissolve the shellac, this is a 90% proof alcohol made to smell and taste bad, in America it is known as denatured alcohol.

Some small paint brushes and one larger one for applying the shellac finish to the whole sheet of paper, this larger brush is not in the kit I supply as it would add significantly to the cost, and most people have a 1 or 2 inch paint brush lying around the house.

Lastly you will need a **pair of scissors, a scalpel, or craft knife, a steel ruler and a cutting mat or sheet of waste card to cut upon, and a little masking tape.**

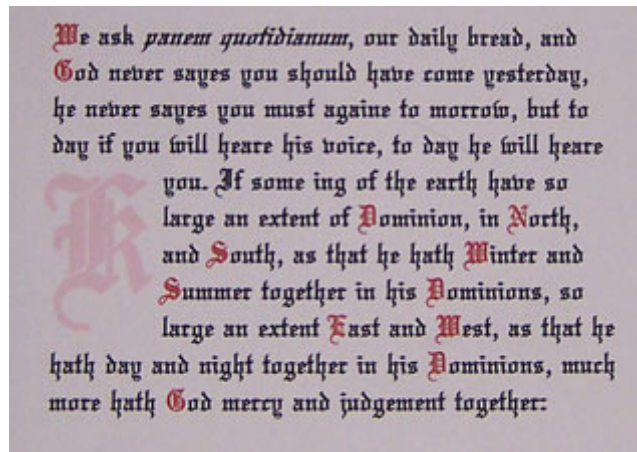
You are welcome to source your own materials and use this manual as you see fit, but naturally I do hope you will avail yourself of the [kit or supplies](#) that are available from the gold vault website.

This project can be broken up into four steps

1. The printing
2. Applying the gold adhesive
3. Applying the gold metal leaf.
4. Applying the antique coat.

OK, the first thing to do is set up what you want to print in a Word Document.

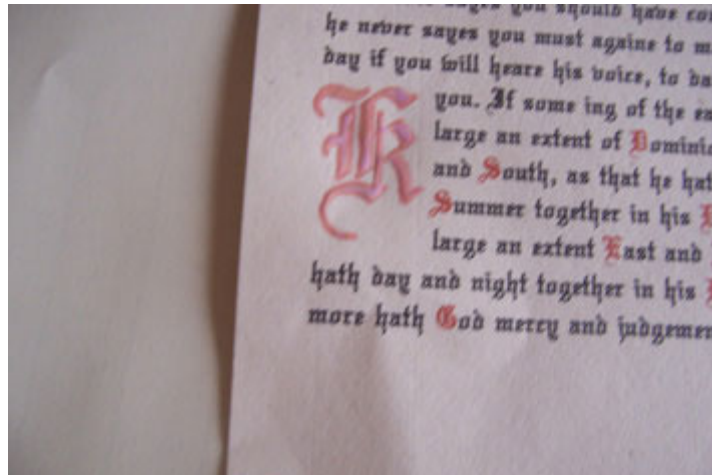
For those who don't know, you can insert a dropped capital like I have done by highlighting the letter you want to capitalize and in Word go to Format/Drop Cap/Dropped, and enter the number of lines you want the capital to extend, in effect this determines the size of the capital.



You will notice the capitals I am going to gild are printed in pale pink. This enables me to see the areas I have to gild.



Here you can see I am painting on the gold adhesive (size)



Do not apply to much size, we don't want to form a high bead with the liquid size forming a domed effect.

Rather, give the letter two thin coats.

Now leave to dry completely, say half an hour in a warm room and don't worry, remember the gold size dries sticky, you can do the gilding right away or weeks later if you want.

Next we come to the Gilding.

If you have not gilded before don't worry, imitation gold leaf is much thicker than 23 carat gold leaf which makes it much easier to handle, you can even handle the leaf with your fingers.

Take the book of metal leaf and remove one sheet of gold sandwiched between two sheets of tissue, I have found it easy to tear the three layers straight from the book of leaf.



Take a sheet of gold with a sheet of tissue back and front and place it on your cutting mat or waste card.



In this case I am going to cut the leaf into quarters as this size suits the capitals I am going to gild.



Remove one sheet of tissue from one of the pieces and lay the leaf down over the capital to be gilded keeping the top piece of tissue in place.



You can now rub down firmly with the tissue still in place; in effect this is burnishing the leaf, so rub down well.



Now we want to remove all the surplus leaf which will reveal the letter we have gilded.

Tear of a piece of masking tape 2 or 3 inches long.

Using a gentle dabbing action work your way over the leaf, as soon as the tape has picked up leaf move on to an unused part of the tape.



This works because the gold adhesive is stickier than the masking tape.



Creating the imitation vellum finish.

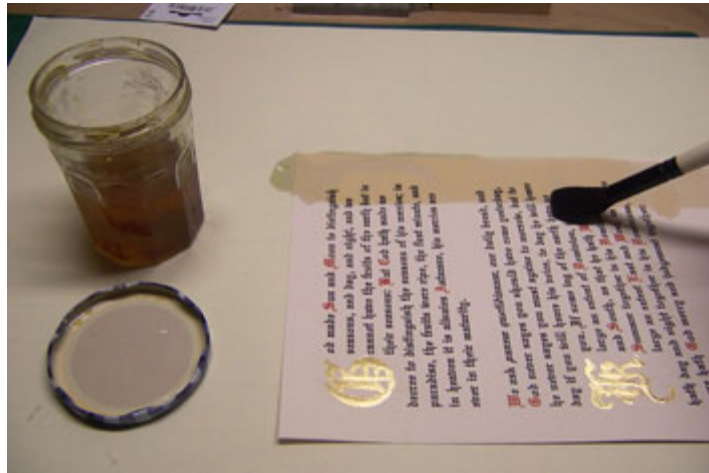
Bookbinders in the past used to produce imitation vellum and parchment by varnishing certain types of suitable paper.

We are going to do the same thing.

The shellac is mixed up 1 part of shellac to four parts of methylated spirit/denatured alcohol.

Place the shellac in a glass jar with a screw top, add the alcohol and shake occasionally over a 48 hour period.

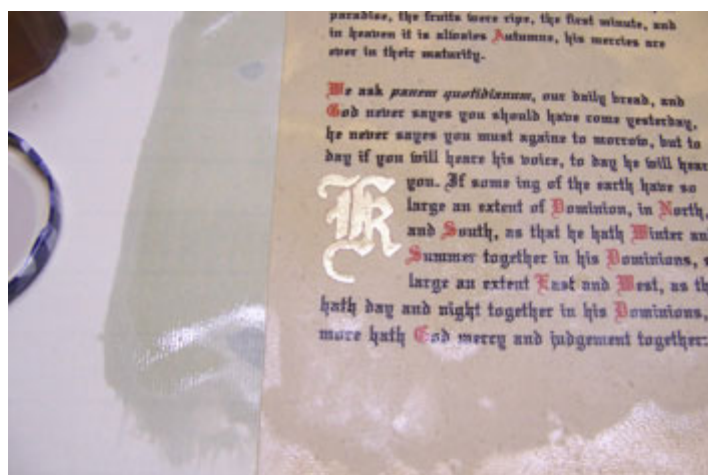
The alcohol does give off fumes so work in a room that has good ventilation if they bother you.



Just paint the shellac on, doing so does several things.

It colours the gold slightly giving it a deeper hue; it also seals the leaf so it will not tarnish.

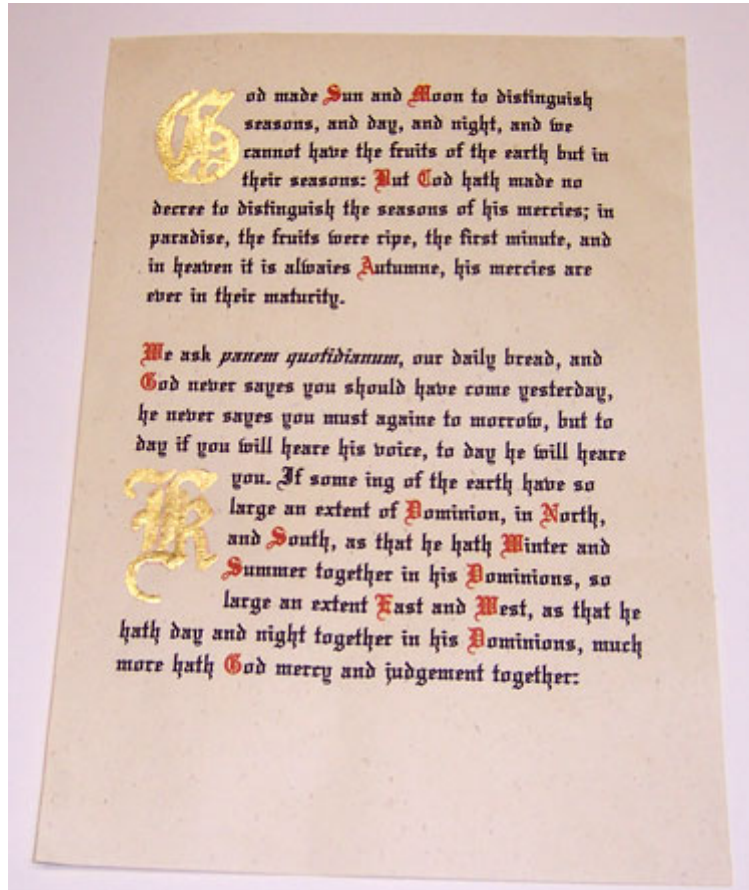
It changes the appearance of the paper, making it slightly translucent, the thinner the paper the more translucent. It also alters the tint of the paper considerably. It also increases the surface abrasion characteristics, making it scuff resistant if you like.



Let the print dry, if possible in a warm room.

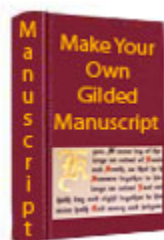
This is the result of following the four steps detailed here.

The application of the shellac has changed the feel of the paper, this is subtle and cannot be conveyed with word & picture, it feels and looks like thin vellum or parchment.



If you encounter a problem you cannot solve please do drop me a line and I will be happy to help you.

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As said previously, we do sell a kit for this method of gilding onto paper, it comprises:



One book of imitation gold leaf

One bottle of Simple Scribe gold adhesive.

A set of three quality artist brushes

50g blonde de-waxed shellac

5 A4 sheets of Hahnemühle 130gsm medieval laid paper

[The kit can be found here.](#)