
Distressed Wooden Chalkboard Sign with Courtney Cerruti

Chapter 1 - Chapter 1

Distressed wooden chalkboard

(intriguing harp music) - Hi, I'm Courtney from Creativebug, and I'm gonna show you how to make a really cool project using an inexpensive, store-bought frame. I'll show you how to age wood to give it a really lovely, lived-in patina, and I'll show you how to transform just some simple cardboard into a chalkboard finish. And finally, I'll show you how to add a message using a chalkboard paint pen. The materials that you'll need for this project are a store-bought frame, or any unfinished wooden frame that has a backing in it, most of them come with a backing, or you can make your own using book board, Davey board, or even just cardboard. You'll need chalk and paper towels, steel wool, this is gonna be a key component in aging our wood, a brush, a white chalk marker, you'll need a large jar with a lid, I like to use a pint-size jar, chalkboard paint or chalkboard spray paint, apple cider vinegar, and a pair of gloves. You'll also wanna protect your table surface, because we're gonna be painting, and if you're going to use the spray paint option for the chalkboard, then you wanna work outside. I'm gonna show you a really cool trick for aging wood, and this is something that you can use on any raw, unfinished wood, it could be furniture, it could be those little wooden plaques from the craft store. It gives it a really soft patina that's hard to get otherwise. I've got my jar set up, my apple cider vinegar, and just one single little unit of steel wool, these come usually in packs of like eight. You're gonna take a chunk of steel wool and just drop it into your jar, and we're using a whole, 16 ounce bottle of apple cider vinegar, and we're just gonna pour this in the jar, which sounds crazy, but that's what we're doing. And hopefully you picked a jar that has a lid, because this is gonna smell pretty strong, right away. And we're just gonna throw a lid on that, and you wanna let this set and cure for at least 24 hours. Here's a jar that's been sitting for about a day and a half, and what's happening is the vinegar is breaking down the steel wool, and all those little particles are dispersed into the vinegar, and it's gonna help us create an oxidized patina for raw or unfinished wood. I have an inexpensive, unfinished wooden frame, and you could be using a plaque, or a picture frame. I like the square format because we're gonna make a chalkboard out of this, but you can do this technique on any unfinished wood. Different woods and different types of vinegar are gonna give you slightly different results, and the longer that you leave this curing, the darker your stain is gonna be. This has been about a day and a half, so we're gonna get like a medium stain here. I'm just using an inexpensive hardware store style brush, coarse bristles. I'm just dunking my brush into the vinegar, and I'm gonna lightly brush this right onto the wood. I like getting a sort of streaky look on this first pass, so I'm not coating it perfectly, I'm just letting the coarse bristles do the work for me, and you're gonna start to see that the wood is gonna become gray, almost immediately, but it's gonna be a subtle change, it happens right away, but it's a subtle gray. On this first pass, I'm also just gonna roughly go in to this inner edge and the outer edges of the frame, just so everything is sort of consistently distressed looking. Again, just quick, loose, not perfect, we don't want perfect, we want this to look old. Let this sit for just a few minutes as this first coat absorbs into the wood, and then we're gonna go back and do a second, really loose coat, on top of that. You can do several coats of this, there will reach a point of maximum saturation. The longer that you let this solution sit, the darker your patina will be. But if it's still not quite dark enough, the nice thing about using this vinegar method is that it's very compatible with other water-based mediums, so you can still use acrylic paint, or other kinds of dyes on top, if you want to. What's nice is that you get something

that would normally take a lot of time to create, in just a couple of strokes with your paintbrush. Set your frame aside, and we're gonna move on to the cardboard backing that comes with the frame. If your frame doesn't come with one of these backings, you can create your own, just using cardboard, or something thicker like Davey board or book board. You wanna work outside if you're using the spray paint, and if you're using the brush-on kind of chalkboard paint, then you can just do it by protecting your table surface and having a brush. I'm just working in the studio, but we're gonna have the window open, because these spray paint fumes can add up. (paint sprays) Start with a even coat. Once this dries, it'll go from glossy to matte, and you wanna add a second coat in exactly the same way. Once your chalkboard paint is completely dry, I mean completely dry, we're gonna add a nice patina to this too, since we spent time aging our frame. Just using regular chalk, you're gonna slightly draw all over, you're just gonna scribble. And then using a bit of paper towel, we're gonna rub this in, and we're gonna do this process two or three times, until we have a nice, kind of lived-in patina on the chalkboard surface. I think about the third pass, is when it really starts to look like one of those old school chalkboard surfaces, which is what we're going for. Last, I wanna add a little message that's more permanent than just our regular, store-bought chalk. We're gonna use one of those chalk paint markers, which is technically removable with water, but the idea is that you're giving kind of a statement, in the center of this chalkboard that people then could add to. So, for the season, we're gonna do thankful, or give thanks, which is always a good, everyday reminder, any time of year. Using a paint marker or chalk pen that has a chisel tip like this is actually gonna take the pressure off knowing how to have really nice writing. So we're gonna use this to our advantage. Just eyeballing the center, I'm gonna write thankful, you could also write give thanks, or what are you thankful for? I'm gonna start, and I don't wanna press too hard, because there is some striations in the cardboard. I'm just gonna write really up and down, and you can go over your letters, if you need to. Go slowly. If you really mess this up, you can just start over, you can spray paint and re-patina your chalkboard surface. Think that looks pretty clean. The last thing I wanna do is a sweet little wreath around, and this is easy, we're just gonna do some loose marks, they can be very sketchy. And then we'll add a few little leaves. You can also just do little leaf-like marks, by pressing down and lifting up with the tip. (pen shakes) You may need to give your pen a little shake every once in a while. (intriguing harp music) Our last step is just to place that chalkboard back in the frame, and now you have a sign that has a little bit of age, and it's a nice little reminder just to be thankful, but you could of course customize this for any time of year, could be for an anniversary, a wedding, a birthday, or just little sentiment that you wanna remember everyday.