

# TRAILBLAZER GAME STAMPS

This set contains the Trailblazer edition of Game Stamps, which depicts iconic terrain like mountains, forests, and seas. If you have questions or comments, please contact me at [brendan@gamestamps.com](mailto:brendan@gamestamps.com). You can also find more information at [www.gamestamps.com](http://www.gamestamps.com).

## USING THE STAMPS

Keep a piece of scrap paper nearby. When you pick up a stamp that you haven't used in a while, make a few impressions on the scrap paper before making any permanent marks on your map. This will clean the rubber and help you decide how much pressure to apply.

### Inking the Stamp

Hold the stamp level and press it firmly into the ink pad. Give the ink time to evenly coat the rubber, holding it in place for a second or two. Don't rock the stamp back and forth, or else you may get ink on the outer edge of the rubber.

Stamps like the *Village*, *Tower*, and *Castle* have a lot of solid areas, so it may take more time to ink them. You can check whether the stamp has enough ink by turning it over and tilting it so that light reflects off the wet ink – if you see any dry patches, ink the stamp again.

Stamps like the *Deciduous Forest* have a lot of intricate detail, and it may take more time to ink them evenly. I recommend making test impressions with all stamps, but this is especially important with stamps like these.

### Stamping the Image

Before stamping an image on the paper, check which way the stamp is pointed to make sure it's right way up.

Hold the stamp level and press it straight down into the paper. Hold it in place for a second or two, applying firm, even, pressure. Don't tilt the stamp or rock it back and forth, because that may smudge the image or allow the edges of the rubber to touch the paper, creating little lines or marks...



If you see a little line or mark next to the image, clean the edges of the rubber to remove the ink, and be sure to hold the stamp level when pressing it into the ink pad and the paper.

Apply firm, even pressure. If your stamped images seem patchy, it's usually a sign that you need to slow down a bit, giving the stamp more time to collect ink from the pad or holding it in place longer on the paper. The amount of time and pressure required will vary depending on the stamp and ink pad.

## CLEANING THE STAMPS

Cleaning the stamps will remove dust and the residue of dry ink, resulting in a sharper image. It's natural for the rubber to become stained, so don't worry if it turns black over time—when you clean the stamps, you don't need to remove all traces of color, the goal is just to remove any dry residue of ink that might prevent the rubber from making a clean impression on the paper.

The quickest way to clean a stamp is to tap it on a piece of scrap paper before you set it aside, removing excess ink before it can dry. If you're only using black ink, you may find that this is enough to keep your stamps clean. However, I recommend cleaning the stamps more thoroughly from time to time, or when you switch from one color ink to another.

To clean the stamps more thoroughly, use a damp cloth or alcohol-free baby wipe. Avoid rubbing alcohol and cleaning products which contain alcohol, which may damage the rubber over time.

If the stamp has a lot of intricate details, some parts may become clogged with ink over time. If that happens, use an old toothbrush to gently scrape off the dry ink, using the bristles to reach areas you might not otherwise be able to access. This can be especially helpful for stamps like the *Deciduous Forest*, *Castle*, and *Tower*, where ink may collect inside the hollows of the tiny leaves and windows.

Never submerge the stamp in water or hold it under a faucet, because this could damage the wood or weaken the adhesive.

## USING THE STAMPS DURING A GAME

I like to create a map at home and then recreate it during the game, stamping each hex as the players explore it. It's also fun to use the stamps as part of a collaborative world-building session at the start of a campaign.

If more than one person will be using them, store the stamps on a piece of scrap paper and slide it around the table. This is a lot faster than taking the stamps in and out of the box and handing it from person to person. Remember test the stamps on scrap paper before making any permanent marks on the map, and to check which way the stamp is pointing. This is especially important during a game session, because the stamps may get turned around a lot, and it's easier to pick up the wrong one by mistake.

## INK

For best result, using an archival quality dye ink. This ink is not water-soluble and should only be used on paper. **Don't use dye ink on battle mats or wet-erase surfaces. The ink is permanent!** If you have color ink pads, be sure to clean your stamps when you switch from one color to the next, or else the colors will become muddy as the inks mix.

Close your ink pads when you aren't using them, to keep them from drying out. If your ink pad seems to be running low, you can rejuvenate it by ordering a small bottle of ink and adding it to the original pad.

## PAPER

For best results, use a smooth sheet of paper, rather than one that has been folded or creased.

The stamps can be used with blank paper, but they are also compatible with 1" hexes or grids. If you want to print your own hex paper, you can download templates from the Game Stamps website:

**[www.gamestamps.com/downloads](http://www.gamestamps.com/downloads)**

The basic set does not include stamps for rivers or roads. I usually draw these as lines that meander along the faces between hexes. For coastlines I draw a solid line with a dotted line alongside it, suggesting the presence of beaches or shoals.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

I like to use parchment paper for my maps. I recommend *Southworth Specialty Parchment Paper (Ivory)*, which can be found online.

For drawing rivers, roads, and coastlines, I recommend *Pigma Micron* pens with nibs 03 and 05, which are 0.35mm to 0.45mm thick.