



How to Carve an Eraser Stamp

A beginner-friendly tutorial from Japan – today's design: **Sweet Potato**

Difficulty ★☆☆

Time **30-45 min**

14 steps

Print at **100%** to trace

What you need

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✓ Carving eraser block ("hori-navi" etc.)

✓ Design knife (or craft knife)

✓ Pencil – 2B or softer

✓ Tracing paper

✓ Kneaded eraser

✓ Ink pad & paper for test stamps

✓ Cutting mat

+ Carving gouges (for wide blank areas)

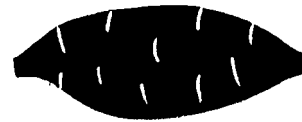
+ Masking tape / finger tape

+ Cleansing oil (removes pencil marks)

+ = optional, but very handy. All easy to find online – search "eraser stamp carving block".

The design

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A Japanese sweet potato (**satsumaimo**) – in Japan, autumn means digging them up and roasting them. The black area is what stays; the **short white dashes** are the little dents on the skin that you carve out. One simple shape, so it's a perfect first stamp.

Trace me! Print this page at **100% scale (A4)**, lay tracing paper over the design above, and you're ready for Step 1.

STEP 1-2

Trace

copy the design



STEP 3-4

Transfer

onto the eraser



STEP 5-11

Carve

outline → details



STEP 12-14

Stamp!

clean up & press

Safety first: carving knives are sharp. Tape your fingertips (or wear a thimble) while carving, keep your free hand behind the blade, and take breaks. If you slip and cut yourself, stop and treat it right away.



Hello from Japan! I'm Omochi, an eraser-stamp carver. Every design in my shop starts exactly like this – a pencil, a small block, and a quiet hour at the table. If you enjoy this guide, my YouTube channel has relaxing, no-talking videos of each design being carved from start to finish. Happy carving! — Omochi

● Let's carve – step by step

つくりかた

1

Trace the design

Lay tracing paper over the design and trace it with a soft pencil (2B or darker).

2

Prepare the eraser

Wipe the powder off the surface with a wet wipe, then dry it with a tissue.

3

Transfer the design FUN

Flip the paper onto the eraser and rub firmly with a fingernail – the pencil transfers like magic.

4

Cut the block

Cut the eraser down around the design. A small block is much easier to rotate while carving.

5

Carve the outline KEY

Insert the blade at 45° and follow the outline all the way around.

6

Carve a "moat"

Carve a shallow trench circling the design, like a moat around a castle.

7

Cut away the excess

The big unneeded parts now slice off cleanly along the moat.

8

Trim the outer surface

Shave off the leftover surface around the design so only the sweet potato stands tall.

9

Bevel & tidy up

Round off the corners and edges – beveled blanks won't chip or catch ink.

10

Carve the details

Switch to short, careful strokes with the design knife for the little dashes on the skin.

11

Scoop wide blanks

For wide empty areas, a round carving gouge is faster and cleaner than the knife.

12

Clean with kneaded eraser

Dab all over with a kneaded eraser to pick up crumbs and dust.

13

Wipe off pencil marks

Remove the transferred pencil lines with cleansing oil, then wash and dry the stamp.

14

Done! First stamp TA-DA!

Ink it up evenly, press straight down... and lift. Touch up anywhere that didn't print.

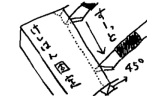
● Tips for a clean carve

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Shade what you keep

Before transferring, pencil-shade the areas that should stay – no more carving the wrong part.



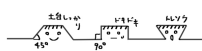
Straight lines

Hold the stamp still and pull the blade toward you in one smooth stroke.



Curves

Do the opposite: keep the blade still and turn the stamp with your other hand.



Aim for a trapezoid cross-section

Lines with a wide base (45° cuts) are strong. Straight-down walls wobble, and undercuts break off – so always angle the blade away from the line.

● Level up

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Carved your sweet potato? Stamp it in purple, then add a few in a row for a harvest basket. Next, try carving the **split-open version**: cut a stamp of the yellow inside and print it over the purple skin.

Find your carving style. On the table, in your hand, propped on a box – there's no single right way. Try a few and keep what feels comfortable.

