

## COBBLESTONES

I've painted a full stage with cobblestones before and it was very easy and took little time. Started with the base of mortar and then did a very quick wet blend of two colors and finished it off with a splatter.

I've never done the stamp idea. My fear would be that the paint would be uneven and I'd have to touch up a few stones here and there. Making your own template is a good idea. I've seen some forms for all kinds of different stone work at the big box hardware store for concrete for only around \$15. They are only 2' by 2' and the fear of repetition is valid, but I think is still a good idea. It depends on the skill of the painters. If you have a bunch of kids, then draw out the outlines of the stones and then letting the kids do a very simple two color wet blend. Then you would come in and do a few touch ups, and the splatter.

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Make a "stamp or several stamps" of plywood around 2' square or so with foam rubber "cobblestone" foam shapes (you can even buy cheap sponges of the appropriate size) adhered to one side attached to said pole. Separate the foam cobblestones with the preferred "grout" spacing, leaving 1/2 that spacing from the edge of the plywood. I would make the sure the stones were not "clean" geometric shapes.

Paint your floor the grout color, probably with a light splatter or two.

Lightly chalk line a grid on the floor. Apply paint to the foam stamp with a roller and stamp away, following the grid lines. I would stamp randomly, probably getting two to three impressions from each application of paint. Rotate the stamp 90 degrees to avoid repetition.

It would help to have an sort of identifying cobblestone, say one with a nick in it, or a corner cut off with a corresponding mark on the top of the plywood to help keep track of the rotation.

If you want rectangular stones, cut the plywood with offset stones, say four rows of five stones, offsetting the second and fourth rows 1/2 stone to the left or right. I would make several of these as you can't rotate them. Make the size of the stamps in relation to the size of the space you are painting. You'll also need some 1/2 stone stamps to finish the edges.

In both techniques, I might then make a few single "highlight" foam stamps and hit some of the stones a few more times for variation.

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I agree start with the negative space. Basecoat, then spatter for depth, (a Hudson/garden sprayer works pretty good for this as long as you thin and strain paint prior to putting it in the sprayer) Then get some knee pads and several sponges and pound out stones. Various colors on each stone will give depth and build in highlight and shadow, being careful not to make mud. You can then add more highlights and shadow to get directionality later.

I find with a few same shaped stones or a stencil, no matter how hard I try, I get a repeating pattern.

Last I find doing the above works best after rehearsal or on a Saturday or Sunday when I know I will have the space without interrupted.

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To do it quickly and easily, I would make four or five stamps from foam (with a plywood backing for stiffness). Put each one on a 42" long pole so that the "artists" do not have to bend over to stamp their stones. Make up several stone colors for the artist to randomly choose. You should be able to get the stones stamped onto the floor in no time.

