PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Inspired by the gleaming motorcycle components in *MOTO MMXX*, play with an adapted analog version of digital chrome text to create a custom nameplate or sign.

RECOMMENDED AGE/SKILL LEVEL:

Recommended approximately 16+, fine motor skills very important.

SUGGESTED MATERIALS

- Solid surface (i.e. wood panel, found metal, balsa wood, plastic, brick, or other)
- Acrylic paint in colors white, black, blue, and brown (tan or sienna substitute for brown)
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Paper
- Brushes, ideally including a small or medium size flat or angled brush
- Water container
- Palette or plastic lid for paint mixing

OPTIONAL: gesso, stencilled letters
INSTRUCTIONS

• Practice writing your chosen word in a few different styles. Check out pointers on lettering to build basic serif and sans serif type, or simply write out your letters, and then draw lines paralleling each of their sides to give them weight.

TIP: All the chrome effects will be made within each letter. Be sure to give yourself letters that are wide enough to work in so that your paint shows up clearly.

• OPTIONAL: Paint over the full board or wood using gesso, which will be your background. Stencil letters can be used instead of hand-lettering.

• Measure out horizontal lines on your board or wood to mark the top and bottom points of your letters.

• Draw in your letters using pencil. Hold the board at an angle as needed to see your lines clearly.

• After seeing the full word, edit by using an eraser to change marks or lines. For example: Our sample here was changed from a serif font to sans serif.
• Pour out some white paint and use a small brush to fill in your letters. Paint slowly in small sections, and carefully go over any very thin parts.  
  **TIP:** Turn the brush and board sideways to create crisp edges by painting from different directions.
• Prepare to make blue highlights. Mix a small amount of blue with white to produce a light blue.

• In this chrome style, you’ll pretend that a thin line runs all the way around the inside of each letter. Leaving a little space at the top of your letters, make a thin line of blue highlight across the top curve or line. If the blue mixes slightly with the white, it’s no problem. Blue should be very subtle.
• Prepare paint for lowlights by mixing white with your brown shade.
• Leaving a thin white space along the very bottom of each letter, paint a thin brown line just above that.
• Mix a light gray color. This gray should include just a little black.
• Paint your gray on the lower two thirds of each letter, while continuing to leave the edge of each letter unpainted. Your gray will touch the brown at the bottom of the letters.

_TIP:_ Continue to turn the board to make your lines as crisp as possible.

• Mix a darker gray by using more black.
• Use your darker gray to make a dark shine at about the lowest third of each letter, again avoiding the very edge of each letter.

• Next, it’s time for a few creative streaks of gray throughout your letters. With the same medium-dark gray, use a thin brush to make very small lines along some of the edges that have been left white so far.
**TIP**: Be strategic, but have fun! Avoid placing lines next to the same medium gray, but you have many choices. Places these streaks will work well include:

- End points of the letters
- Top and bottom corners
- Parts of the letter which are mostly white or very light colored
- Save some edges for other shades of gray.

These lines do not have to be very crisp. Let a little white show around them.

- Mix some white into that gray to create a new medium gray and prepare to blend.
- Blend by dabbing your brush on each letter where the two grays meet.

- Continue to highlight edges with this new gray.
- Enhance the drama by dabbing your brush in a little bit of black and dotting it into the dark area in the lowest third of each letter.
• When your lettering is dry, erase any remaining pencil lines. Set up your sign in your home, or give it as a gift!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
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Related Websites: Learn more about creating chrome effects.