

# Reverse, or "Clean" Graffiti using Bleach

by **Toulouse** on August 6, 2007

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## intro: Reverse, or "Clean" Graffiti using Bleach

In this instructable, I will show you how to create clean graffiti, commonly called "reverse graffiti", using a rag and bleach! It's very, very simple, but not everyone knows about it.

Disclaimer:

**I DID NOT invent this style of graffiti, just made it easier and put it into an instructable format. As far as I know a graffiti artist named "Moose" invented it [link], and i completely and utterly copied him. :P**

If you do something stupid, like write on someone's car with this method, DO NOT BLAME ME. I know there's always these stupid disclaimers, but really, how would you like it if someone wrote on your house or car with bleach?

Anyways, I don't believe this to be illegal, as long as you keep it on cement or concrete, but if you do it on something (Like wood) it might be, so keep it to the street guys. (Just because I don't think it's illegal doesn't mean it is, remember that) On wood, it seems to actually bleach the wood itself, so I think that someone could argue that you damaged their property.



### Image Notes

1. cup
2. glove
3. bleach.
4. rag.



### Image Notes

1. look, the internets have made it IRL





**Image Notes**

1. maybe another coat of bleach? i dont know, experiment!

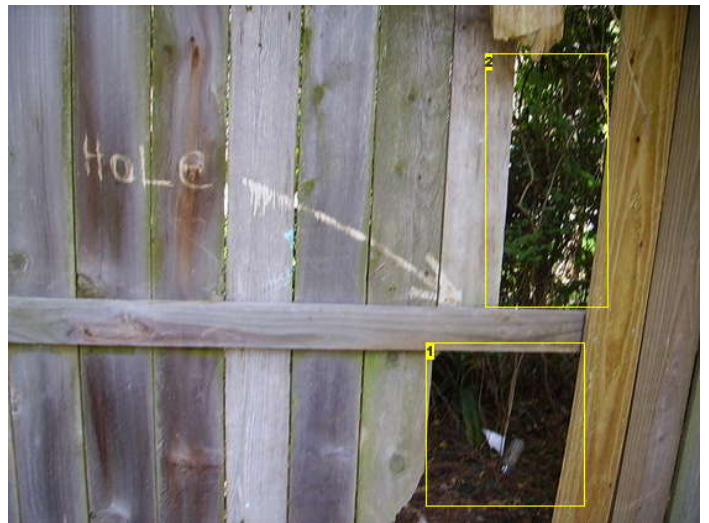
**Image Notes**

1. a dog. [schnauzer to be specific]



**Image Notes**

1. this was pretty good, cause the cement was dark here.
2. this was no good, the cement isn't dark, or dirty enough here



**Image Notes**

1. this is the hole btw
2. another part of the hole



#### Image Notes

1. you can't write on this.
2. you can write on this.



### step 1: Gather Materials

You need to round up:

**Bleach** --the most important part, duh!

**An old rag** --don't use a new one, it's getting bleached guys!

**A cup, or something to hold the bleach**

**Some nasty cement** -- look for cement that seems to have black stuff on it (that works the best)

**Gloves** --believe me, my hand smelled like bleach for the rest of the day, no matter how many times I tried to wash it

If you want to use something else to write on the cement with the bleach, go for it, I just preferred using a rag, and I happened to have one laying around.



**Image Notes**

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2. glove
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**step 2: Begin Writing!**

Ok, now we've got all the stuff, so lets find some dirty cement and start writing on it!  
 This would be the time to put on those gloves, unless you like the smell of bleach for the rest of the day.

**Pick a Design**

**Pour the bleach** in the cup about half way full. (not half empty btw)

**Dip** the rag in the cup.

**Paint** the design with the rag.





### step 3: Let it Dry

Now let that design you painted Dry.

Check it out! You are now cleaning up some cement selectively! Now go selectively clean your design everywhere!



#### Image Notes

1. look, the internets have made it IRL

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1. a dog. [schnauzer to be specific]

### step 4: Results

Now that we have cleaned up the cement selectively, let's see what we have done!

Now go spread whatever message you have chosen! ~Have Fun!



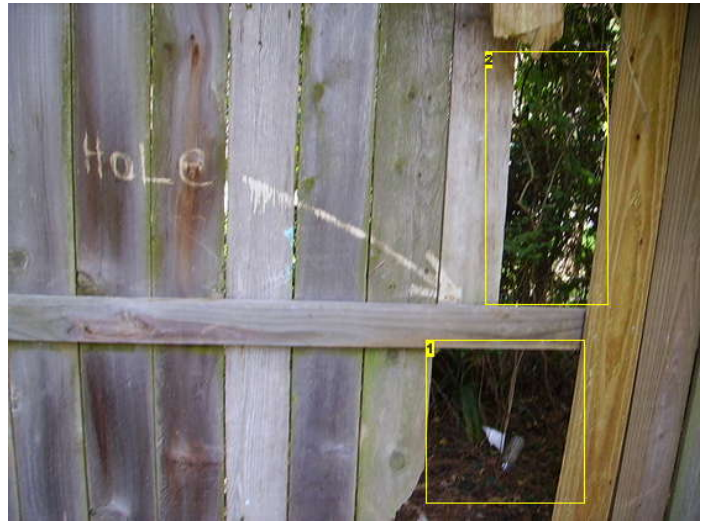
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## Comments

27 comments [Add Comment](#)



**Bard** says:

ever try doing this on a T-shirt? then you can wear your Graffiti where ever you go.

[http://www.instructables.com/id/Easy\\_T\\_Shirt\\_Sketching/](http://www.instructables.com/id/Easy_T_Shirt_Sketching/)

Mar 16, 2009. 11:34 AM [REPLY](#)



**RicochetBNB** says:

Mar 9, 2009. 9:59 PM [REPLY](#)

to all the haters... whatever! graff is art... it's been around since the dawn of time... study up on it! and yes even graff has rules. anywho nice idea, never really thought of this. seems less illegal kinda depending on where you do it lol... what they gonna make you do, make the street dirty again to cover it up haha!

p.s. no im not a graff writer... i would like to be though hehe... but i support it fo' sho'!



**The Bottomless Paddling Pool** says:

Jan 20, 2009. 2:53 AM [REPLY](#)

Personally I find that when the council paints over graffiti with their random paint swatches it turns out even uglier. What's even worse is having my neighborhood covered in corporate advertising. Perhaps using this method to remove billboard advertising could be effective?



**otangerinerinds** says:

Dec 15, 2008. 11:03 PM [REPLY](#)

detergent and a wire brush.  
check out what moose does...



**reno\_dakota** says:

Mar 11, 2008. 9:21 PM [REPLY](#)

This might work well with a simple stencil, too.



**Ward\_Nox** says:

Mar 12, 2008. 12:54 AM [REPLY](#)

and a spray bottle



**breezah** says:

Apr 12, 2008. 11:50 PM [REPLY](#)

did this after reading this instructable with a big stencil, whatcha reckon?



**reno\_dakota** says:

Apr 13, 2008. 11:39 PM [REPLY](#)

I love how that turned out! Subtle, but with a lot of detail.

Who's that a picture of?



**breezah** says:

Apr 13, 2008. 11:56 PM [REPLY](#)

thanks!! yea, it looks like an apparition of sumkind.

it's a photo of a self portrait painted by chuck close (big boy of american painting scene in the 60's) hence the pun 'close, but no cigar'. he did a lot of big-scale realistic portraits, i was just playing on the idea that an image can only really depict reality as opposed to being that which it depicts. so it can be close, but never really be the real thing. anyway this is turning in2 an essay, u get the idea! :-)





**reno\_dakota** says:  
Ha! Neat, I like it.

Apr 16, 2008. 11:45 AM [REPLY](#)



**a grain of alt.** says:

From the title, I thought this instructable would be about how to get rid of graffiti, rather than create more of it. I'm sorry, I fail to see the merit of there being so many of these things on Instructables.

Mar 31, 2008. 11:56 AM [REPLY](#)



**Toulouse** says:

mmk, sorry i displeased you, you seem pretty concerned about it

Apr 13, 2008. 10:03 PM [REPLY](#)



**breezah** says:

I made a big stencil using bleach in a spray bottle after reading this instructable, If you're interested go on my page & look at the slides, also made one using chalk podwer. Check'em out & give me sum feed back! Cheers

Apr 12, 2008. 11:47 PM [REPLY](#)



**tentacle** says:

Yea, smearing bleach on side walks and fences.

Mar 12, 2008. 10:25 AM [REPLY](#)

This is destructive and stupid, go ruin your own property and not other peoples.



**a grain of alt.** says:

I'm going to have to agree with tentacle here- If someone was smearing childish drawings in bleach on my nicely-aged, hand-built, wood fences around my house, I would be more than a little pissed- and rightly so.

Mar 31, 2008. 11:59 AM [REPLY](#)

Just because you want to do it, and can contrive ways to justify an action, doesn't mean its a responsible or decent thing to do, no matter how you spin it.



**lemons shark10** says:

How is cleaning destructive if you don't like the look of the sidewalk when it has been selectively cleaned go out and clean the whole thing yourself. And usually people use this method to force the city or town they live in to clean up the rest of the surface the artist chose to clean and therefore beautifying your streets.  
But no need to thank us!

Mar 23, 2008. 7:45 PM [REPLY](#)



**tentacle** says:

Smearing bleach on fences and side walks is not cleaning,if you had ever cleaned any thing in your life you would understand this.This is defacing public property.Writing witty sayings on side walks and fences is not cleaning them.  
It is not artistic ,it is selfish, stupid ,childish and destructive. You want to do this great, do it to your own property not public property or other peoples.

Mar 23, 2008. 8:59 PM [REPLY](#)



**lemons shark10** says:

While bleach may damage wood surfaces depending on the concentration of the bleach solution and how long the bleach solution is left on. Please remind me of how diluted bleach can damage concrete, how long do you think it would take for a diluted bleach solution such as the one used in this Instructable to actually start eating away at SOLID concrete. and also Dictionary.com defines clean when used as a verb without a direct object to be, "*to get rid of dirt, soil, etc. (often fol. by up): to spend the morning cleaning.*" So please reply and tell me how when used on concrete which is what the Instructable advises it does not suit that definition or any other for that matter.

Mar 24, 2008. 3:25 PM [REPLY](#)



**jerkey** says:

I think the real reason people are complaining about this instructable is that they cannot resolve the idea of people being able to express themselves without paying for a billboard OR committing a crime / destroying something.

May 2, 2009. 3:43 PM [REPLY](#)

It is always easier to criticise others for their behavior than to open ones mind to new ideas.



**gs choppe** says:

surprisingly enough, if you use bleach on an area of concrete, and then clean the surrounding area the next day with almost anything else, your bleached area will still be visible... short exposure might be ok, but don't leave the active bleach on there... carry a neutralizing agent in a spray bottle... otherwise, this is defacement... in addition, despite the fact that the area is dirty, forcing the owner to clean it to remove your message is criminal. its akin to graffiti in results, and is unsanctioned advertising, and on commercial premises may get you in trademark trouble for causing your tag to be associated with their property.

Apr 13, 2008. 10:24 PM [REPLY](#)



**lemons shark10** says:

The idea of a neutralizing agent such as water is a valid point and should be included in the instructable.

Apr 15, 2008. 12:36 PM [REPLY](#)



**Toulouse** says:  
im gonna find your property and clean it up for you!

Mar 12, 2008. 9:00 PM [REPLY](#)

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**abandon your idols** says:  
If you mix the bleach with a little flour, it makes kind of a paste so you get a more consistent bleaching and it doesn't drip.

Mar 23, 2008. 3:54 PM [REPLY](#)

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**Lost Moai** says:  
Portable pressure washers are also great for this.

Mar 12, 2008. 9:08 AM [REPLY](#)

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**sideways** says:  
Hmmm....bleach pen=thickened bleach. For small graffiti?

Mar 12, 2008. 7:17 AM [REPLY](#)

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**xtank5** says:  
Sweet. I wonder if city officials could paint lines using this technique. Would probably wear away easily tho. > D

Mar 11, 2008. 4:36 PM [REPLY](#)

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**GorillazMiko** says:  
Oh, so it actually makes more? I thought it made the graffiti go away. Cool job anyways!

Mar 11, 2008. 3:31 PM [REPLY](#)

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