

# Relief

## Techniques for Cutting

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When cutting a block aesthetic decisions must be made for interpreting the image and marks. Information can be interpreted in a number of different ways.

White line is the most straightforward, cutting with the gouge or knife as a drawing tool will print as a white image on a colour ground. The classic “black-line” approach echoes the historical aim of woodcut to mimic the look of a drawn line, printing a black line on a white ground. It is achieved by cutting both sides of the line with the knife to establish linear elements, then clearing away the areas in between with the gouges. High contrast cutting of solid black or white shapes interpret architectural forms and lettering while textured cutting with gouges or other mark making tools can create a variety of interesting marks that can read tonally. Patterned cutting allows for decorative interpretation of tonality and the abstraction of form.

None of these cutting techniques are mutually exclusive, they can be combined in any number of ways to provide a visual language and convey the desired outcome.



White-line cutting with a variety of line weights.



White-line describing form.



Black-line cutting conforming to the line drawing.



Decorative marks and patterns to create variety



Black-line textured cutting describes tonal values.



High contrast cutting to interpret photographic information and lettering.