



PICTO Benelux

PAPER SIZING

The choice of the paper depends on the process which is going to be used. In short, for processes based on pigments and multiple baths it is advisable to use strong papers, such as watercolour papers. The softer rag papers are more adequate for photogravure for example, printed with an etching press.

In order to prevent the pigments from penetrating in the paper fibers, the paper has to be sized. This can be done with ordinary gelatin; gelatin of photographic grade is not required. For sizing, I use a dishwarmer and an aluminum tray from a kitchen oven. **see picture 1.**



The gelatin is stirred in cold water and left to soak for half an hour. Then the mixture is warmed in a bain-marie at about 45°C. At this temperature, the gelatin starts to melt.

The quantity to be used is 30 gr of gelatin per liter of water.

In order to prevent the gelatin from coagulating before being evenly spread, I put the aluminum tray on a dishwarmer that can maintain a temperature of about 30°C. **see picture 2.**

The papers are soaked for a couple of minutes in this gelatin bath, the surface of which should be exempt of any air bells. In order to spread evenly the gelatin on the paper, the tray is fitted with a spring-loaded aluminum rod; the paper is pulled between this rod and the edge of the tray. **see picture 3.**



The papers are dried, then soaked again in the warm gelatin. They are then hung to dry with the opposite side above, in order to obtain a perfectly even layer. **see picture 4.**

After drying, the papers are passed in a formalin bath, the composition of which is as follows:

- formalin 25 ml
- water 1 litre



This is done preferably in open air. **see picture 5.**

After this bath, I squeegee the papers with a windshield wiper, and hang them to dry. **see picture 6.**

