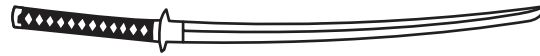




### How to Make a Skinny Cap/Stencil Tip by Estria



This is a primer on how to make 1/4" thick lines with a spray can. I invented this little device back in '86, and have been making my Skinny Caps the same way ever since.

#### What You Need

Plastic top of spray can (Not those new Krylon ones. Those are useless.)  
Fresh X-acto blade

1. Turn the cap of the spray can upside down. Cut and remove the outer cup. You want to carefully cut down to the inner cup.



2. Cut away most of the top portion. Keep a part of the top, and form a crescent shape, like so. This will be a spray guard that prevents paint from splashing up and over the front. I make it curved so it fits my finger a little better.



3. Fit the tip you will use to the can. In this example I'm using a Phantom Cap (New York outline cap). Twist it in and spray once. This will set the nozzle at exactly the right position.



4. Line up the X-acto blade parallel with the top metal ring of the can. Position the blade about one blade thickness below the hole in the nozzle. With my left hand I am positioning the cap at the exact height from the top of the can as if it were positioned on the can. Hold the cap straight.

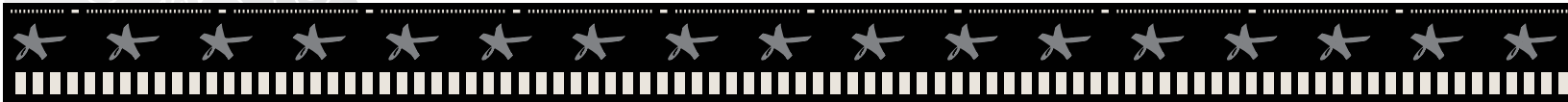


5. Push the blade into the plastic and spin the blade. Make the hole small. Clear away any plastic that is obstructing the hole, or hanging from it. Make the hole as perfectly round and smooth as you can.



6. Voila!

7. Fit the Skinny Cap on the can like so. Align the top of the nozzle with the hole. I like this tip because the arrow on the top makes alignment simple.



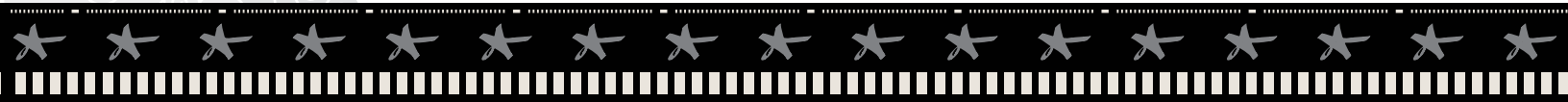
8. Here I am making a second hole for a Montana can with a grey outline cap. This cap is shorter than the Phantom Cap so I need to make the hole lower than the first one.



9. And there you have it!



10. Here is the difference between the line from the Skinny Cap used with the grey cap versus just the grey cap by itself.



## Origin of the Skinny Cap

In 1986 Crayone TWS and Razor KTD first introduced me to the Skinny Cap. Razor was the first to conceive of it. His original design had two holes in the cap. The inner cup had a big hole and the outer cup had a small hole. This made very clean lines, but dripped paint like crazy.

I took that concept and refined it. Being Japanese, I guess I figured I could improve upon the original design. This technique quickly spread to many parts of the country.

My crew, Together With Style, and our friends were early front runners known for the use of this technique. Back then I don't think we realized that this was unique to the Bay Area.

During this time, my fellow Hawaii counterpart, Slick, was down in Los Angeles developing the Fade and Cut technique and giving his characters a unique airbrushed look. He was taking the LA scene by storm.

In 1987 Crayone went to LA and collaborated with Hex. Hex taught him the Phantom Cap techniques and Crayone showed Hex the Skinny Cap. Hex went nuts and began using it on many of his murals. Crayone came back and showed our crew the Phantom Cap. We could not believe there existed a tip that created a clean, almost stenciled-edge look.

Within a month of this exchange, I went down to LA and painted with Slick at the abandoned Orbach's building. There Slick shared with me his techniques and I showed him the Skinny Cap. Slick began calling it the Stencil Tip.

-Estria



Estria has been spray painting since 1984, He was an influential leader of the "Golden Age" of graffiti (1980's) in San Francisco, pioneering painting techniques of characters and scenes . He founded and taught graffiti classes in San Francisco and Oakland. He currently owns and operates Samurai Graphix, a custom garment printing company in San Leandro, CA. He still paints murals, and works in his community.

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