PERFORMING MANY ROLES

Rolling mills provide years of service reducing your metals into a variety of sheet metal gauge thicknesses – something we all need, but that also saves us money at the same time. But that's not all they can do. We've listed just some of the additional handy things that your rolling mill can do for you...

1. ROLL CIRCLES INTO OVALS

To create an oval, take a Silver disc, set the rollers as you would for rolling sheet and feed the disc through. Once the disc has been through the mill, check for thickness and length using a vernier or calliper and repeat as necessary. When you feed the oval through the mill again, make sure it's fed through the rollers in the same direction to make sure it elongates the oval.

2. MAKE SQUARE WIRE

Using a rolling mill with square grooves allows you to shape and taper round wires. Before you start, anneal, pickle, clean and dry the wire thoroughly. Then push the wire between the square grooves and turn the handle so that the wire is drawn into the grooved section of the rollers. This will shape the wire. Then, to ensure you get the right shape, turn the wire each time by 90 degrees.

3. MAKE D-SHAPED WIRE

Rolling mills with D-shape channels allow you to form D-shaped wire. Simply follow the same principles as shaping square wire (above). Feed the wire through the D-shape section rollers and when the wire has passed through, check for thickness. If it's not the right thickness, simply repeat the process.

4. PATTERN AND TEXTURE YOUR METAL

Using objects from around the house:

Many different objects can be used to make patterns. Some of the most popular materials and objects to use are metal, feathers, lace, wire, plastics, sequins, leaves, thin keys, sandpaper, netting and chain.

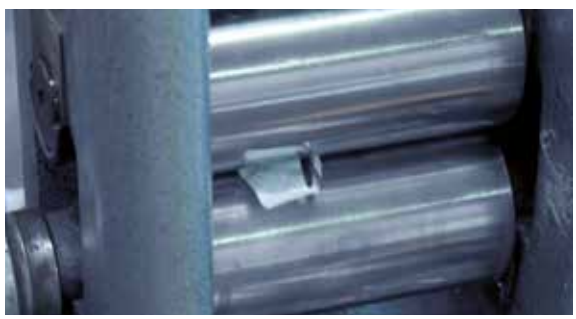
Paper can give you a wonderful, sharply detailed imprint on well annealed metal as it will pick up the matt texture of the paper. Where shapes have been cut out of the paper, metal will contact metal, leaving a shiny pattern to contrast with the paper texture. Masking tape gives you a textured pattern recessed into the surface of the metal. Lay the tape out on a glass sheet and cut shapes with a blade. You'll find that, because the shape sticks to the metal, there is little movement of the design during the rolling process.

Using pierced designs:

You can cut different shapes out of the metal and use them for imprinting. Cutting into a sheet of metal can produce intricate designs to emboss the finished piece. Drilled holes will give you small raised circles.

Using punches, files and hammers:

You can create designs on a sheet of un-annealed metal using punches, coarse files and hammers. The patterned metal can then be used for a one-sided imprint (making one copy only). Because the pattern is recessed into the pattern plate, the pattern produced on the finished piece of metal will be embossed.



Using rolled plate:

Designs can be imprinted onto a metal sheet which can then be used as a pattern. If the original design is recessed, it will give you an embossed pattern with a really interesting quality as it's one step removed from the original process.

Using brass, bronze, copper and mild steel:

You can etch brass, bronze, copper and mild steel to create patterns for roller printing. Steel can be used as a plate if you want to reuse it a number of times. Thick brass and bronze will also produce plates that can be reused.

So get experimenting with your rolling mill. It not only saves you time and money – It can also add another level of creativity to your designs too. For more hints and tips about using your rolling mill, visit cooksongold.com/blog