

Painting Steps

1. Pick your source of inspiration for your artwork (Photo, Still Life, etc)
2. Choose your Canvas size
 - a. Make sure that it is proportional to your source of inspiration
 - b. If it isn't in proportion, and you don't feel like trimming the paper, position your drawing of the artwork so that it maintains the rule of thirds.
3. Sketch your painting using big shapes only
 - a. There should be no small details added at this point.
4. Start painting by blocking in the first layer of major colors. This is often darker in color as you will build up the color to the light using consecutive layers of paint. However, I have found starting with the midtone makes it easier to estimate your darks and lights.
5. Begin layering in additional colors. This is the stage of painting where you really begin to build up the variety of values. This can be done by
 - a. Adding progressively darker colors; or
 - b. By adding multiple transparent layers of color (called glazing) which will visually mix to make areas of the painting look darker. This is a great method for controlling the color, tone and intensity of your painting.

Note: To effectively glaze your layers of acrylic paint, you must let each layer dry before applying the next glaze. If you don't let each layer dry before applying the next one, it is likely that you will lift or mix some of the previous layer.

6. Continue layering the colors - at this point you should be painting more slowly and making more deliberate marks. You should have a slow toggle between Action and Observation.



Set up a slow toggle between Action and Observation. Apply paint and then pause to observe the result. Ask yourself whether it is enough paint or do you need to apply more? Decide on your next action. Repeat the cycle until you have completed your painting.

7. Once you have finished the larger areas of color and decided that you have gotten all the values you want in the painting, then you can begin adding small details. Small details should only be added when the layer they are being applied to has fully dried. Otherwise, the small marks may spread and lose their crispness.