

# FIND YOUR PAINTING MEDIUM

In the wide and diverse world of painting there is much to learn and many techniques to try. Never fear, the experts at Jacksons Drawing Supplies are on hand to help you find your painting medium!

## ACRYLIC



Acrylic is forgiving, quick drying, water-soluble, affordable and versatile. If you're not happy with something, simply let it dry and paint right over it minutes later. Unlike oils, acrylics can be used without any toxic solvents and can be cleaned up easily with soap and water.

### Tips

- Have a spray bottle of water handy when painting as acrylics dry quickly – sometimes too quickly.
- Gesso prime the canvas even if you buy a pre-prepared surface. This will offer you the best surface and will ensure longevity of the piece.
- Experiment with a variety of brands to find the paint that best suits you.
- Cheaper acrylics have a higher ratio of binder to pigment so they will dry darker than what they appear when wet.
- Thin acrylic paint with a water or liquefying medium to produce watercolour-like effects. Do not add more than 50% water as it will break down the adhesive qualities in the paint & can result in the paint peeling or flaking.

### Brushes

Stiff bristle brushes and synthetic brushes are both suitable. It all depends on the effect you want to obtain with your brushwork. For an all-purpose brush, choose a synthetic Filbert brush.

## WATERCOLOUR



Watercolour paints come in the form of a hard pan or block which are water-soluble are great for travelling. Watercolour works well with coloured pencil, watercolour pencils, graphite and ink for creating mixed media pieces. Keep in mind it generally dries lighter than it appears when first applied.

### Tips

- Use the right paper - surfaces must be water absorbent and capable of accepting multiple washes of colour. The heavier (thicker) the paper, the better suited it is for watercolour applications.
- Use masking fluid - this allows you to preserve areas of unpainted paper from the application of a wash. When removed from the paper, the reserved white areas are revealed. This allows for a looser, freer application of colour, as you don't have to paint around the 'whites' in order to keep them.
- Use salt - a little table salt sprinkled on damp paint creates delicate spots as the salt repels the pigment to make a light area beneath.
- Mix Watercolour with other media – including an ink pen adds another dimension with a precise line.

### Brushes

Brushes are varied and there are no clear rules for which brush you should use. Synthetic brushes that are soft, yet springy enough to provide control are a good place to start.

## OIL



While getting started with oil painting is fairly easy, there is more to it than other paint mediums since you are working with toxic solvents and mediums - plus the drying time is much longer. Oil paint is usually mixed with linseed oil, artist grade mineral spirits, or other solvents to make the paint thinner, faster or slower-drying.

Oil paints take a long time to dry. It can take days, weeks, months or even years - depending on how thickly you used the paint, and if you thinned it with oil or with turpentine, if at all. A basic rule of oil paint application is 'fat over lean', meaning that each additional layer of paint should contain more oil than the layer below to allow proper drying.

### Tips

- Set up a space in a well-ventilated area
- Switch between paintings while waiting for layers to dry
- Paint with a palette knife for thicker impasto type effects
- Gesso prime your painting surface to prevent oil from seeping into the surface
- Clean your brushes well after use to prevent paint clogging brush bristles

### Brushes

You can use synthetic brushes made for acrylic paints for oil, but there is also a range of natural hair brushes that can be used with oil. Bristle (hog) brushes are the most commonly used.

## GOUACHE



Gouache (pronounced *gwahsh*) is similar to watercolour and acrylic however it has unique characteristics that differentiate it. Gouache is an opaque watercolour which dries to a velvet-like matte finish.

### Gouache recommendations

- Dilute it with water for watercolour effects
- Apply in smooth, vibrant fields of colour
- Use for fine, precise, detailed painting
- Use to create spontaneous work with free-flowing brush strokes

### Surfaces for gouache

- All watercolour papers, fine, medium or rough, (acid free, 100% Rag paper for permanency).
- Drawing & pastel papers and boards.
- Canvas and panels.

### Brushes

All watercolour brushes are suitable. Many shapes are available for every style of work; choose flat or round brushes, oval wash brushes, small sponges and liners.