

THE ART SHERPA™

# HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



## THREE FLAMINGO AMIGOS

BY: THE ART SHERPA

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON REBECCA HOBBS CLOWERS


STEPS: 9 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 HOOTS





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# SHERPA FORWARD:

I am resolved in 2021 to do more to help teach art than demonstrate how to paint art. To that end, you will see changes being made through the year. This document may be the first change that you see, and I hope you will know that everything I do is to help teach you how to paint.

This document is a step by step written description of brushes, colors and mixes, techniques and explanations taken directly from the tutorial. It is provided to you as a resource to assist you in your art journey. The document is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. Once all of the tutorials of any given month have been recorded and have an accompanying mini book, The Art Sherpa will prepare a printed version of all of those documents that you will be able to purchase.

That expanded book will include technical resources not available to you at this time about color mixes, techniques, brushes, materials, and all things art. Traceables and grid resources for this tutorial can be found at [theartsherpa.com](http://theartsherpa.com).

I provide you with the specific brush I use, but bear in mind that brush sizes are not standard across the art brush industry. The most important thing to look for is not the brand of brush I use, but the shape of the brush head, it is a bright, or a filbert, or a hog. Brushes get bigger as the numbers get bigger, and it is not uncommon for beginners to fear using too big of a brush. Use what you have, what is most comfortable for you, explore your options, don't fix what isn't broken, and learn what works for you.

This tutorial is not an extremely difficult one but introduces you to skills and techniques used painting in the abstract fashion and features misted acrylic paint drips on three primary color horses.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy your experience with The Art Sherpa and look forward to seeing your completed paintings. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [support@theartsherpa.com](mailto:support@theartsherpa.com) if you require assistance.

You can join the The Art Sherpa Official group at and please post your paintings there:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TheArtSherpa>.

Grab your paint, get your brushes and let's go!



## PAINT AND TOOL GUIDE

Use this paint legend below to understand the symbols that I use to give you important painting information.

### PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Naples Yellow Light = NYL
- Fluid White Paint = FWP

### BRUSHES:

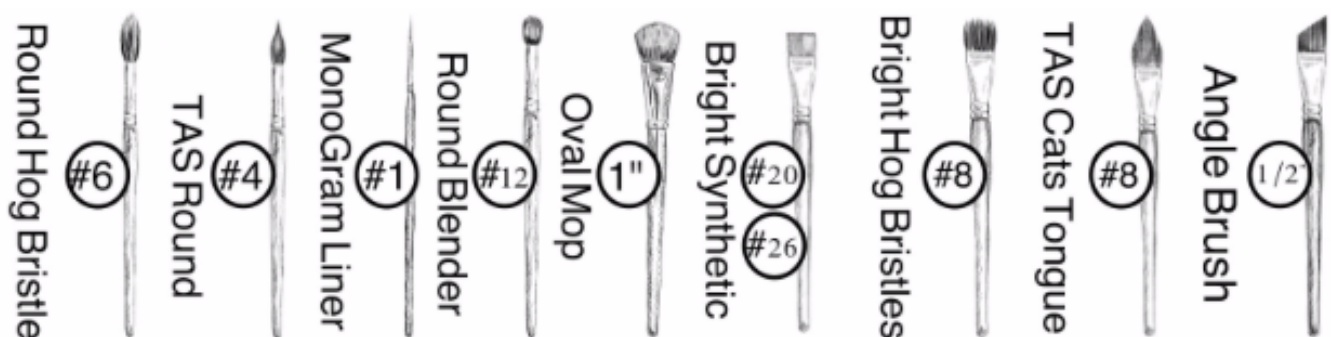
- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- 1" Oval Mop
- #10 TAS Bright
- #8 TAS Cat's Tongue
- Grass Brush, Rake Brush or Fan Brush
- 2" Hog Cutter Brush
- 1" Hog Cutter Brush

### TOOLS:

- T-Square Ruler
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- 16 x 20 Canvas (If you notice that your canvas started to warp, as sometimes happens, just turn the canvas over and put it back side forward on your easel, then mist the back of the canvas. It usually resolves itself. Let dry before you proceed.)
- Optional: StayWet Palette

### TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Sea Foam
- Color Theory
- Perspective of Waves
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Clouds
- Setting a Horizon line
- Color mixing
- Feathers





# VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE:

Below are the timestamps we inserted in the tutorial video so that you can easily coordinate using the book and the tutorial video simultaneously.

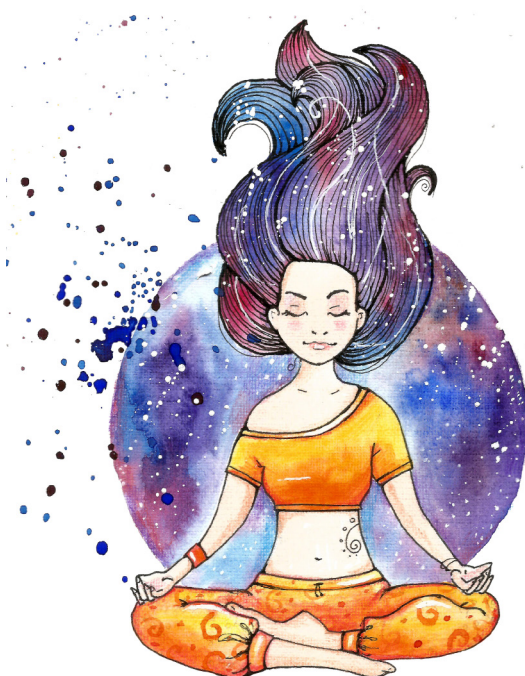
STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	
STEP 1	5:00	COLORED GROUND
STEP 2	11:35	ATMOSPHERIC CLOUDS
STEP 3	23:50	WAVY WATER
STEP 4	31:25	TRANSFER IMAGE
STEP 5	42:22	BLOCK IN FLAMINGO BODIES
STEP 6	58:15	LONG LEGS
STEP 7	1:06:58	FEATHERS/SHADING FAN BRUSH
STEP 8	1:20:52	FEATHERS/SHADING FAN BRUSH
STEP 9	1:37:20	FLAMINGO FACES
	1:58:00	SIGN



## THE GOLDILOCKS ZONE

In painting, every technique or process has what I call a "Goldilocks Zone". As an artist, you will be constantly seeking this space to achieve maximum results from any project you're doing. Much like Goldilocks, you will go into each technique and try to find a space that is just right for you. When you're loading your brush, sometimes you will have too much water, sometimes you will have too little water, and sometimes you will find the amount of water is just right. When applying strokes to the canvas, you may find that you have too much brush pressure, too little brush pressure, or that your brush pressure is just right. The Goldilocks zone changes for every technique and every process. You will know you have found it when something that seemed difficult suddenly becomes much

easier. A little goal I'd like to set for you is to notice when you have found yourself in the Goldilocks Zone so that you can locate it again easier the next time you come across a particular technique.







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# STEP 1 - COLORED GROUND

## "SKY BLUE GROUND"

### PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2" Hog Cutter Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- With a 2" hog cutter brush, or your largest brush, wet your brush or mist your canvas a bit, and remove any wishes on the canvas. Remember if you are using hog, it holds water.
- Load TW + PB and paint the whole canvas a solid blue color; it's ok if it is a bit streaky.
- Rinse and dry your brush.
- Dry.





# STEP 2 - ATMOSPHERIC CLOUDS

## “AUTOBOT OR DECEPTICON”

### PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2" Hog Cutter Brush

T-Square Ruler

Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil

### STEP DISCUSSION

- With your T-square, put the canvas in landscape mode, and come down 10" from the top and draw a horizontal line across the long side of the canvas to represent the horizon.
- With the 2" hog cutter brush, load TW + PG + PB to make a sky color. Then along the horizon line and very freely paint upwards with, back and forth, vertical sweeping brush strokes. As you get toward the top, add more PB to the mix. As we are wet into wet, we can blend the transitions very easily. I want the surface to be almost an ombre. If your paint dries fairly quickly, use a humidifier or mister or glazing liquid. Today, I chose to mist a bit for ease of flow.
- Load with more TW and

start adding some sweeping clouds using the corner of the brush. Blend the transition so they are soft. They are distant, so they are not much lighter than the sky.

- The community chose for me to freehand this image but I have provided a transfer if you prefer to use that method. There is no right or wrong way, you can grid, transfer, or freehand, whatever makes you the most comfortable.
- If you are free handing, you have numerous references to assist you. There is the picture that follows this step, the traceable, and the grid reference. I drew in only the major objects.
- Rinse and dry your brush, then come back with the damp brush and transition anything that you think needs blending. Because this is a hog and they hold a lot of water, I dropped a little water and had to come back and fix the drop left in my sky. Don't panic, there is a fix and you see it when the fix is dry.
- Use a curling stroke of the brush to give you a lot of cloud dance.

*John: The brush does brush the paint but is that easel Autobot or Decepticon?*





# STEP 3 – COLORED BACKGROUND

## “WAVY WATER”

### PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

1" Hog Cutter Brush

#10 TAS Bright Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Check your water and switch to a 1" hog cutter. Load with PG + PB, but just a touch of the blue, and starting at the horizon come down into the water area, using short random vertical marks across the canvas. As you come forward, get more TW on the dirty brush and use that aquaish color in the front part of the water. The stroke is a bit curved to imply a wave coming in. Also go back into the deeper part of the water and add white highlights on some of the darker swells.
- Rinse and wipe your brush - it's the Bend and Snap of the Art World. Reshape the brush if you need.
- Reload that color, and while it is still wet, using the short curved stroke, come back and add darkness where you need more darkness.
- Rinse and wipe.
- Get a TAS #10 Bright Brush and reset the horizon line with this same color. Use your ruler or T-square if you need to. Load the brush with TW and come to the foreground of the water to add any highlights to the swells that you need. Use my reference below to help you with placement. You want a lot of dimensionality.





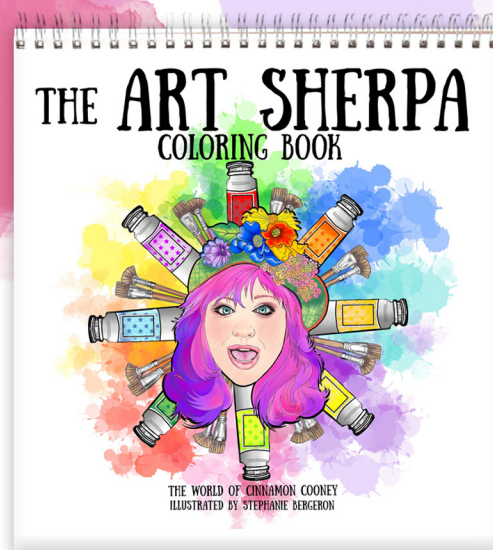


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# STEP 4 - TRANSFER IMAGE

## "LAND SHARKS"

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

T-Square Ruler

Chalk Pencil or Watercolor

Pencil

### STEP DISCUSSION

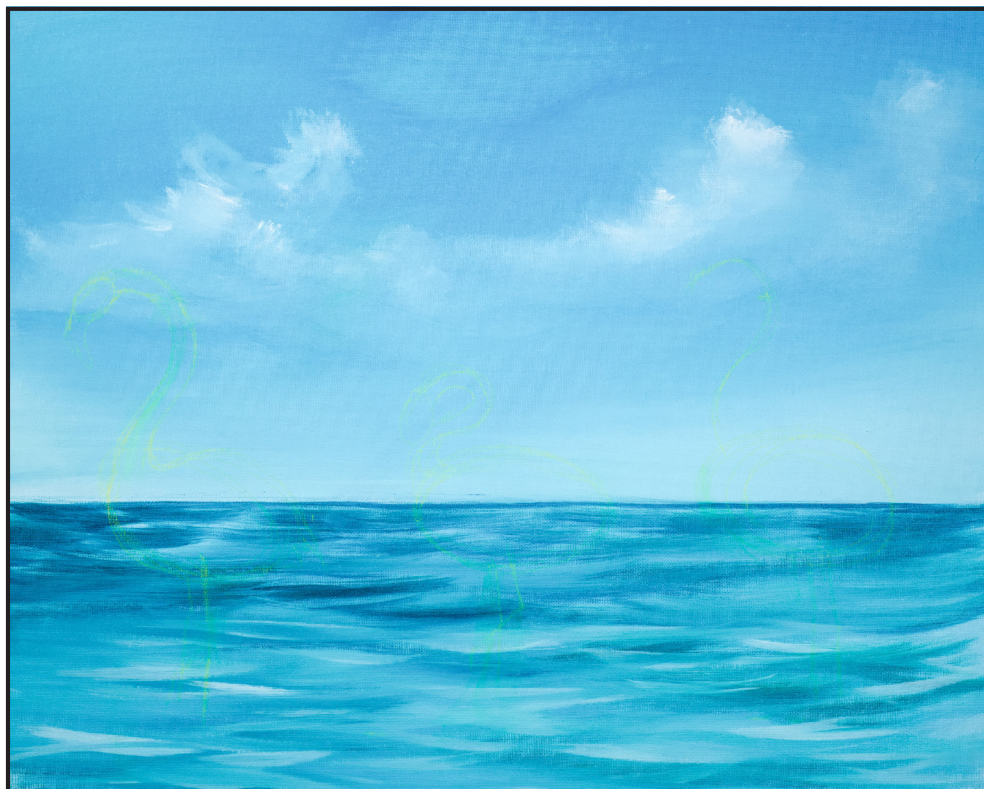
- With the T-square, mark 6" down from the top to mark where the bird's heads should end; then come down into the water and mark how high up from the bottom you want their feet to end. I am including the grid if you prefer to use that method and it is another great reference.
- I started with the left bird at the head and drew in a reverse "S" with chalk, and added an egg at the bottom for the body. Use the T-square to help you determine how long the body should be, we have three birds to fit. Draw in how you want the legs positioned. Add a round circle for his head and add some width to the neck. Lastly, draw the beak. That is his weird little flamingo-ness.
- The second bird has a very similar body line as the first, so go ahead and draw in the second bird; I added an up leg on this bird, but you do your vision of his leg position.
- My third bird is just a titch taller, but again, you do you.
- As I stated earlier, the community chose for me to freehand this image but I have provided a transfer if you prefer to use that method. There is no right or wrong way, you can grid, transfer, or freehand, whatever makes you the most comfortable.
- If you are free handing, you have numerous references to assist you. There is the picture that follows this step, the traceable, and the grid reference. I drew in only the major objects.
- You can remove any excess chalk with a clean damp brush.

*John - When I say that Florida is the only place where Flamingos and Swans can live together, I'm not knocking Florida. Disney is just magical.*

*Don't get me started on land sharks.*

*Cinnamon - Land sharks?*

*John - Alligators.*



# STEP 5 - BLOCK IN FLAMINGO BODIES

## “ALL THE BETTER FOR SCOOPING UP LITTLE SHRIMPS”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Naples Yellow Light = NYL

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

1" Mop Brush

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Get a TAS #8 Cat's Tongue, and mix CRM + NYL to flamingo orange, add a titch of QM, and paint in some of the base portions of the bird like the body, tail feathers and neck. As you paint him in, make any changes that you need to with the paint to refine his body shape. If you are right handed, you might want to start with the furthest left bird; if you are left handed, you might want to start with the furthest right bird. Paint to your strength and what works best for you. This is the darkest coral color of the bird.
- I came back with a TAS # 4 Round and put in the heads. Their little beaks are all about scooping up shrimps. Then add the legs.

- Paint in all the birds.

- Dry.

- Get fresh water and a soft brush and clean up any remaining chalk. I used a 1" mop brush. As long as the canvas is dry before you start this, the paint won't lift up.





# STEP 6 - LONG LEGS

## “SHE’S GOT BETTY GRABLE LEGS”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Titanium White = TW

Naples Yellow Light = NYL

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

### STEP DISCUSSION

- With the TAS #4 Round loaded with CRM + QM + NYL + TW, paint in the wonderful little knees. If you have a bent leg, you must first decide which is the front leg and which is the back leg; I chose for the straight leg to be in front. You will want to highlight the legs with this pink color, as well. If one of your legs is up out of the water, you want to paint in webbed feet; they do have webbed feet.
- Get more TM into the mix for the highlight color. I worked from the right bird to the left, and highlighted the front of their legs.
- Get your dark sea color on the brush and add shadows around the feet, under the birds; then with TW on the dirty brush add some little wave motions around their legs.



# STEP 7 - FEATHERS/SHADING FAN BRUSH

## “GRASS, RAKES & FANS”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Titanium White = TW

Naples Yellow Light = NYL

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

Grass Brush, Rake Brush or  
Fan Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Get a grass comb, or a rake brush or a small fan brush, and load CRM + QM + NYL + TW, but lighter than before, then start adding strokes to indicate feathers. Flamingos have feathers all over. Play with these color values to make his feathers pretty; he deserves to be pretty. I used the fan brush for this step.
- Refresh your water.
- Add some TW to the dirty brush for brighter highlighted feathers and make sure that the wing feathers kind of curve down from the top, and in front of the shoulder area to show their wings. Use my reference below to help you with highlights and wing feather placement.

- Switch to the TAS #4 Round and go back to your sky color to clean up anything that needs cleaning up in the sky around the bird. I thought the neck was too thin, so I came back to the dark flamingo color and widened it.





# STEP 8 - FEATHERS WITH GRASS COMB BRUSH

## “TAKE A TAIL FEATHER AND TIP IT BLACK”

### PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Grass Brush, Rake Brush or Fan Brush

### STEP DISCUSSION

- Little whoopsies can become feathers or they can be erased with a damp brush, because it is dry underneath.
  - I got MB, and on the tail feathers I added a bit of that black, painting from left to right.
- For the second flamingo, I used the grass comb to demonstrate feathers. Use your dark flamingo color to reinforce any of him that needs reinforcing. This is also a good brush for palm trees and grass. Come back in with your mid tones and then your highlights, corals and peaches, and capture this little flamingo doing his little flamingo thing. It was a little easier to do the neck with this brush, even though this neck was smaller. Don't forget to put in his wings.
  - Use whatever brush you prefer, the grass, or rake, or fan, or your favorite brush, and paint in the third flamingo in the same manner.

**Sherpa Tip:** You can even make your own grass brush, take small scissors to a synthetic filbert and go to town, especially if you are a hairdresser and know what you're doing.



# STEP 9 - FLAMINGO FACES

## “CINNAMON USES CAUTION”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM  
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM  
Phthalo Blue = PB  
Mars Black = MB  
Titanium White = TW  
Naples Yellow Light = NYL  
Fluid White Paint = FWP

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round  
#1 Monogram Liner

### STEP DISCUSSION

- We will finish up with flamingo faces and details so refresh any colors you need. We will be using our flamingo colors and the TAS #4 Round.
- To start, get NYL + TW, and don't worry if there is a titch of pink in it. Then at the tip of the beak, bring this up to where the eye would be set in the face. I started with the bird on the left, and added some pink to the dirty brush and did the face. Get CRM and paint the bottom part of the beak, but remember that it turns down so he can scoop up the shrimp. Come back with TW and highlight the top of that beak.
- Rinse out the brush and grab the base flamingo color and paint in the

face of the second flamingo. Paint his beak like you did the other flamingo and don't hesitate to use my reference below to help you with placement. In my world, his head was almost face down and tucked in, this can be challenging, but rewarding to the overall look of the painting. Be sure to rinse the brush before you add the pure white.

- Then do the third bird.
- Come back with a clean brush and MB to add the tip colors to all the beaks.
- Get some FWP + CYM and, above the beak line, put in a yellow eye.

*John - Now they look like little zombie flamingos. Give them little red pupils.*

- Come back with CRM around the eyes to define their faces a little, then with TW to paint around the eyes and down the top of the beak. It's like they now have little flamingo faces.

*John - "Cinnamon approaches the flamingo with caution so as not to frighten any of her student audience."*

*Community goes wild with lol(s) and smiley faces.*

- Play with those little faces and beaks until you are happy. Use my reference below for placement.
- Get MB on the tip of a clean brush, and add three little dots; one in the center of the yellow on each bird's eye.
- Get the #1 Monogram liner and FWP + CYM and fix any details around the eyes if you need to. I had to fix a boo-boo.
- Dry.
- On the liner brush, get CRM + MB and outline the eyes on each bird.
- Stand back at least 5' and look at your painting to see if there is something that needs doing. When you are happy with your painting, come back with the liner and MB to reinforce any of the black of the eyes that you need to and to add the nostrils.
- I wanted to exaggerate a few things, so I lined the top of the beaks with FWP. Flamingos just give you an opportunity to play with how to exaggerate without going overboard. Come back with MB to exaggerate the black of the beaks and outline underneath if you want to.



## STEP 9 - FLAMINGO FACES CONTINUED:

- If your flamingos look flamingo-ee to you, sign with PB thinned with water. I signed in the corner.



## THE TRACING METHOD

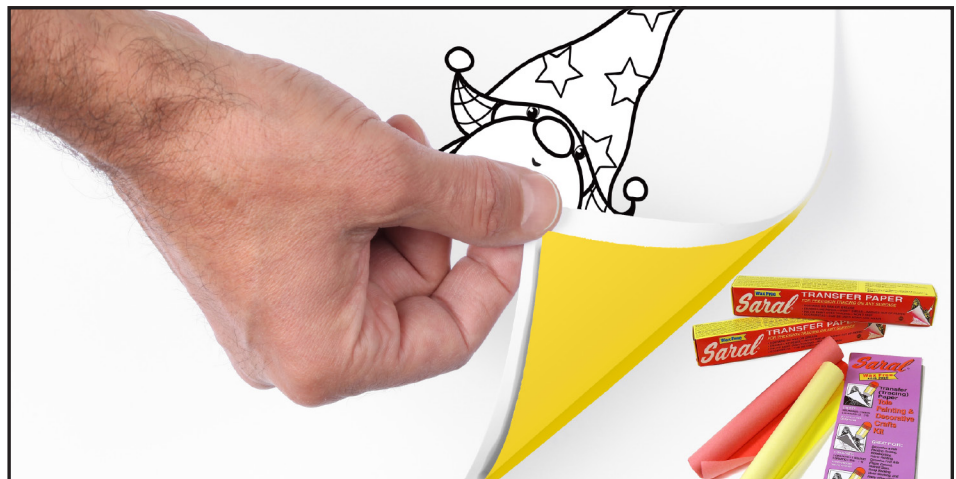
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



see that your transfer is happening. If not check if your rubbing is too thin or that your pressure is not too light. After you are done tracing the lines, remove your traceable and you should have a copy of the line art on your canvas.

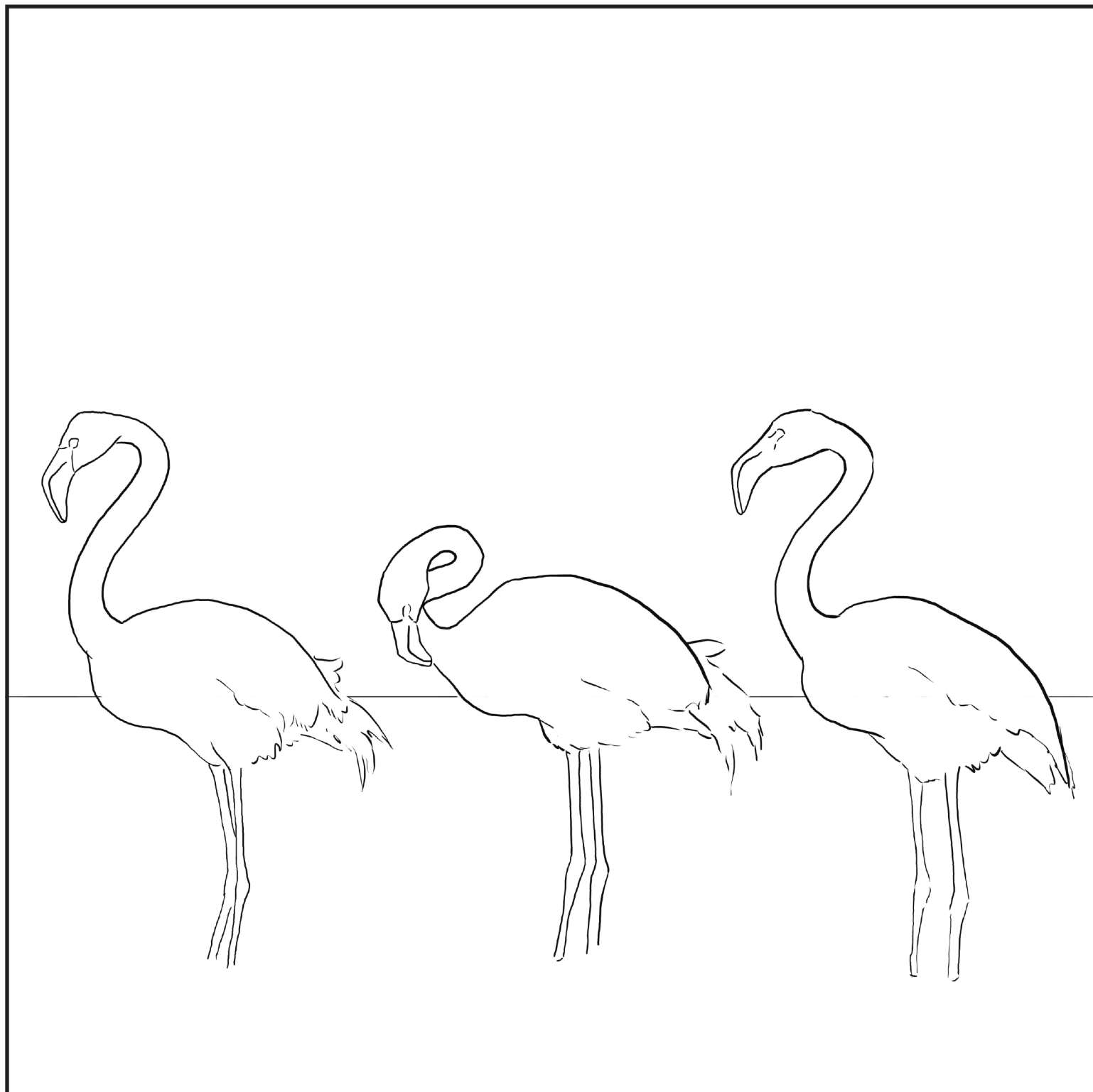


- Rub the back with graphite or use Saral paper and skip this step.
- Be sure to rub the back of your paper on the side without the lines drawing using a HB pencil.
- Hold up to window light to make sure graphite covers all the lines of the subject drawing.
- Test your Saral paper to make sure the color you are using is going to show on the canvas.
- Tape your paper on your surface to transfer with tape to keep it from moving. If you are using saral paper make sure you have both sheets taped down and the transfer side of the Saral paper will be facing your surface. Carefully, with medium pressure, redraw over every line. You can lift one corner of paper to





TRACEABLE:



## GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS:

The gridding method allows you to dip your toe into drawing without being in the deep end of the drawing pool on day one. For our purposes, the gridding method has been worked out for you. In this example, we have an 8 x 8 canvas and the example is based on a one-inch square grid with everything of equal ratio. On your 8 x 8 canvas, you will make a mark using your chalk tool and a T-square ruler at every 1 inch point both horizontally and vertically. The T-square will help ensure that your lines are straight.

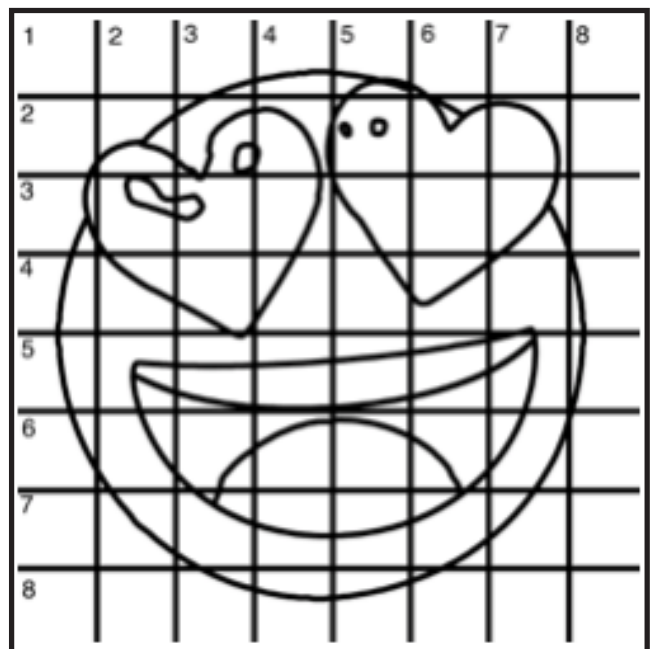
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could use chalkboard chalk. While I will always share with you the tools and equipment that I am using, you are welcome to deviate from that any time you feel something else is best for you.

Something that I have learned especially with complex images is that it can be easy to get lost in the grid. If you find yourself unsure, go back and check to make sure that the square you are marking on matches the square in your reference. After you master this method, you will be able to use gridding to transfer any image from a reference to your canvas.

Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

Find the first row that the contour line of your image enters and exits and duplicate only what you see in that one single square. Continue through the entire image square by square transferring the contour lines of the subject with chalk on your canvas. When you have duplicated the subject from your reference to your canvas, you will be done.

**HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A 8 X 8 CANVAS; YOU CAN DO A 1" GRID ON ANY SIZE CANVAS.**





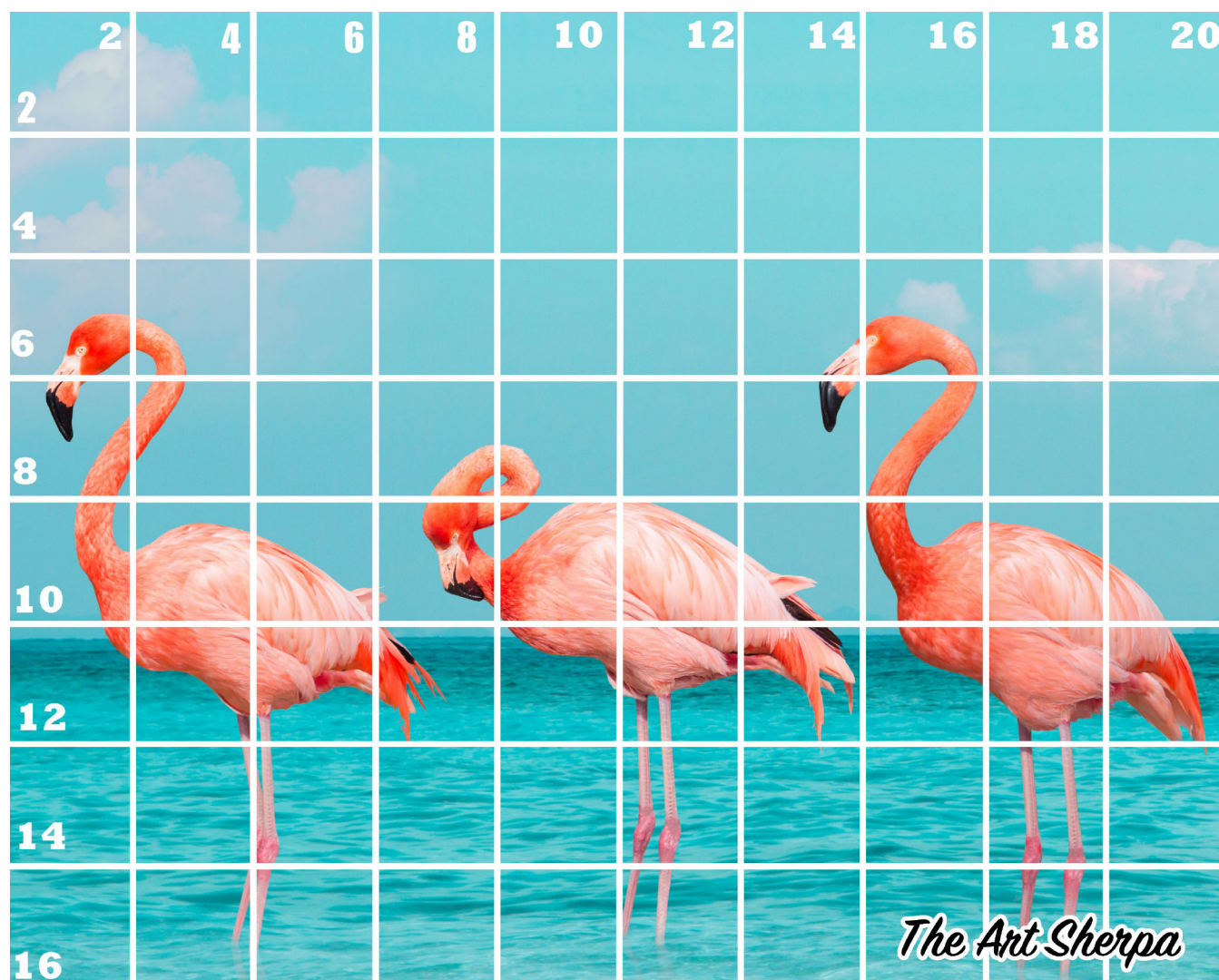
## GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

You can remove chalk easily by taking a soft brush and getting it damp with clean water. Gently brush over the lines you wish to remove and they will lift.

If you prefer a different size there are many great resources out there that involve math about how to scale. I do not teach math for many good reasons

and I could count them all for you, but that would be doing math. The resources out there for that information and those mathematical formulas exist online in copious amounts. Explained beautifully and if you are choosing to paint different sizes than we are utilizing in this mini book, I highly recommend finding one of those formulas and mastering it. Short of that, buy a 8 x 8 canvas to match the free grid for this project.

## GRID REFERENCE:







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