

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC

An acrylic painting of a beagle dog, named Knobby, looking upwards and to the left. The dog has a mix of brown, tan, and black fur. In the foreground, there are several bright yellow daisy-like flowers with green leaves and stems. The background is a light blue wash. The painting is done on a textured surface, likely canvas.

KNOBBY

BY: THE ART SHERPA


NAME CREDIT TO PATRON BRIANNA ROBINSON

STEPS: 13 | DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING | 3 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 and 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. It is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. We hope to prepare a printed version of all of those documents that you will be able to purchase which 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.

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.

Today's lesson is a continuation of my 2021 Big Art Quest which has "Gone To The Dogs". Today's subject will continue to introduce the community to techniques and skills used to paint humanity's best friends. If your pet is the center of your world, you are going to love this year's series in The Big Art Quest. You can get more information at www.theartsherpa.com, in the Facebook The Art Sherpa Official Group, and on Facebook in The Big Art Quest Group.

The link for the blue-black fur tip video is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nniah7pP3Tg&t=31s>

If there is something you don't like in the reference, you won't like it in the painting. Remove it or change it.

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 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
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Fluid White Paint = FWP
- Golden's Acrylic Gloss Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES:

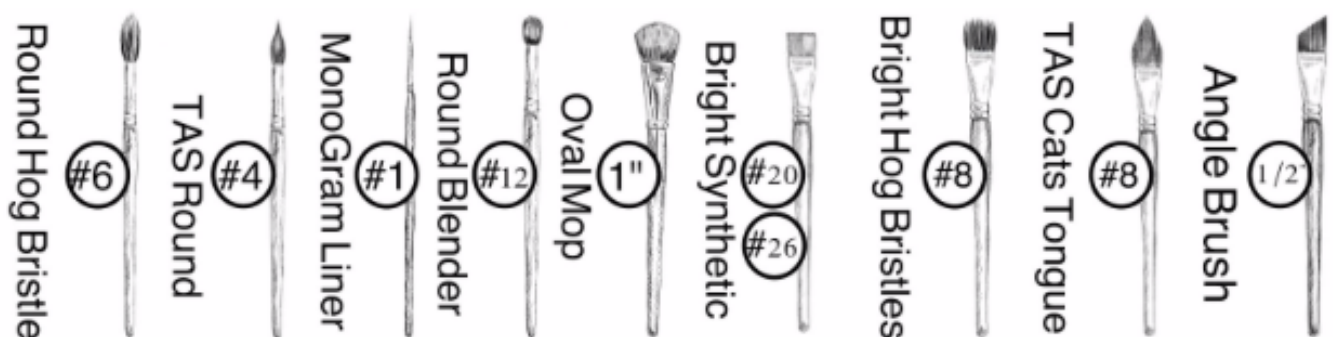
- Bright Synthetic Brush
- #4 TAS Round
- #1 Monogram Liner
- #12 Round Blender
- TAS #1 Detail Brush
- 5/8" Filbert
- Grass Comb or Filbert Grainer

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
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- Hair
- Animal Skin Folds



VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE:

Below are the timestamps chapters we inserted in the tutorial video so that you can easily coordinate using the book and the tutorial video simultaneously. The actual timestamps will be provided after the tutorial goes live on YouTube. A revised version will be made available after it is revised.

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	3:05	TRANSFER IMAGE
STEP 2	5:06	BACKGROUND
STEP 3	15:39	BLOCK IN EYE
STEP 4	25:26	FINISH EYE DETAIL
STEP 5	29:34	BEGIN NOSE
STEP 6	34:58	FINISH NOSE DETAILS
STEP 7	41:44	BLOCK IN DOG
STEP 8	57:36	FUR LAYERS
STEP 9	1:09:45	EAR AND SHOULDER
STEP 10	1:25:09	PAW
STEP 11	1:36:42	FLOWERS, SHADOWS
STEP 12	1:44:35	FLOWER MIDTONES AND DETAILS
STEP 13	1:51:38	FLOWER HIGHLIGHTS



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.



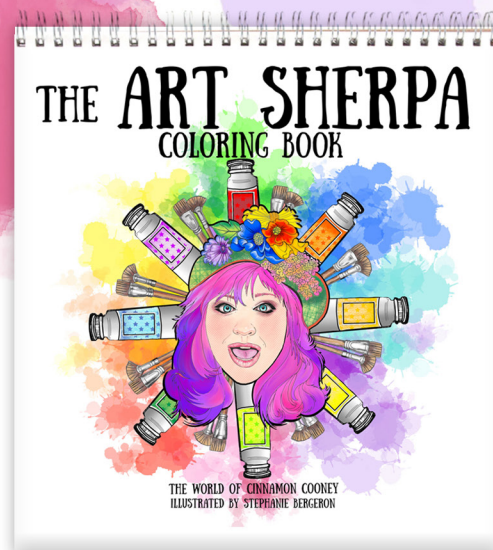


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STEP 1 - TRANSFER IMAGE

“GET YOUR DOG ON THE CANVAS”

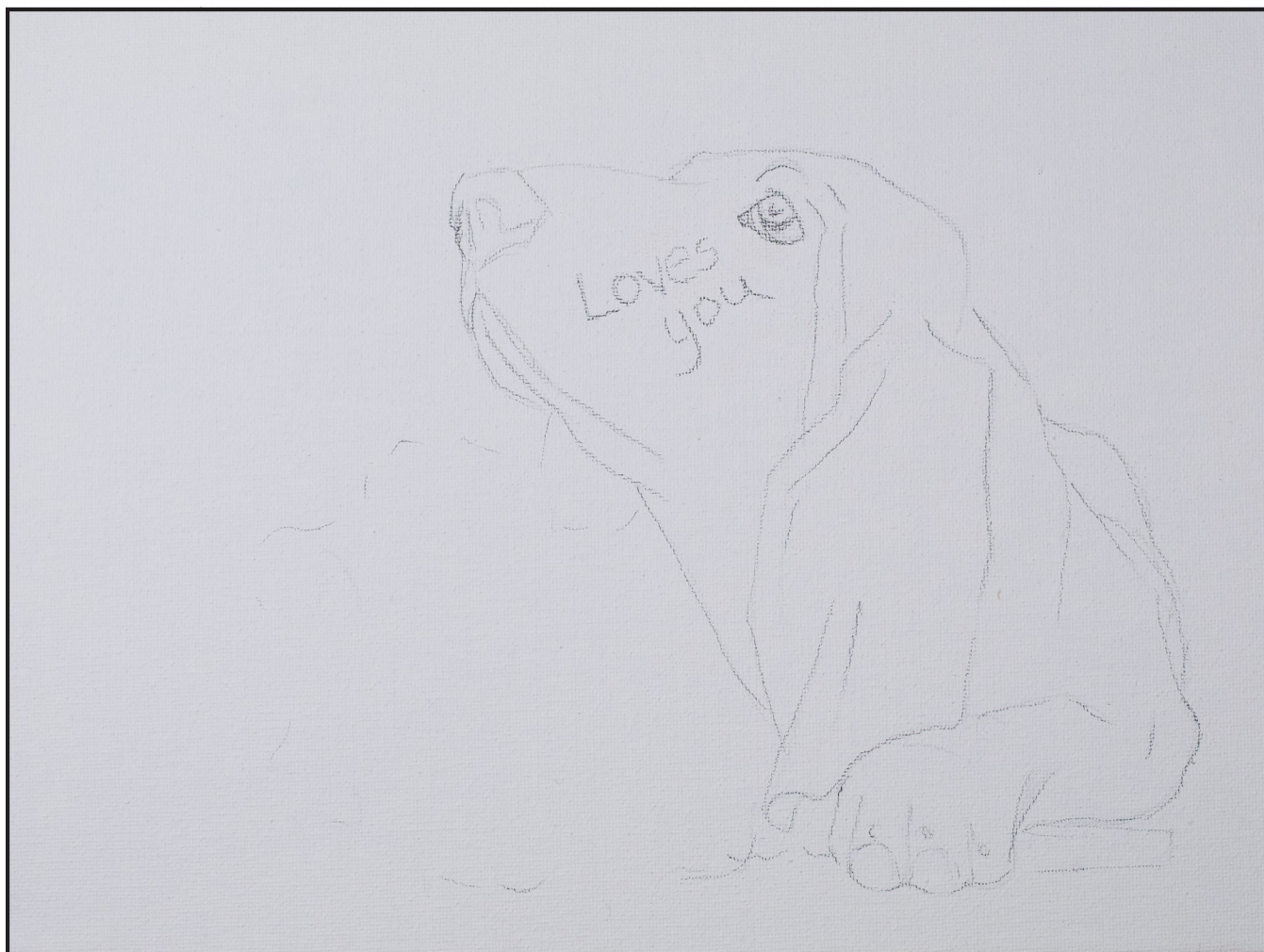
BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Transfer
Chalk Pencil or
Watercolor Pencil
Artist Tape

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.

STEP DISCUSSION

- I chose to trace this image and I provided a transfer in this document if you prefer to use that method. There is no right or wrong way, you can grid, transfer, or freehand, whatever makes



STEP 2 - BACKGROUND

“BRUSHY BRUSHY MINT BACKGROUND”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Bright Synthetic Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- I'm going to paint a vintage background, and suggest that you use a light background as well

to allow the subject to be the focal point.

- Pour FWP out on your surface and with a bright synthetic brush, paint the background around the dog. The pigment in FWP is the same pigment as in heavy body TW acrylic paint TW so it is brighter than the canvas.
- Mix PB + PG + CYM into a vintage green, then add FWP. Start adding this light mint to the white we just put down, almost like a glaze. You could use any color here that you wanted, but the only dark background I'd consider using is a red.
- It's very brushy and the color is not uniform. You do want a subtle background so blend to your heart's content.
- Dry.



STEP 3 – BLOCK IN EYE

“BIG, BAD, HOUND EYES”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

STEP DISCUSSION

- On a Round brush mix MB + BS, to get a brown-black color.
- Add this color to the eye then put in the lower lid, blending it down a little.
- Outline and blend the upper lid. We want to expose those soulful basset hound eyes.
- Line around the pupil of the eye. It is the beginning.
- Get some AGL on your palette to help with paint flow, it will also slow down the drying time of the paint.
- With AGL on your dirty brush, softly add this dark color around the eye.
- Mix CRM & BS + TW and add this color to the white part of the eye. Blush those big, bad, dog eyes.

- The interior of the eye is brown-black.
- Then add CRM to the dirty brush and bring this to the inner lid; that area just to the left and under the iris. The lid pulls away from the socket a bit to expose that inner lid and we are trying to represent that.
- Mix CRM + CYM + BS to paint in the iris.
- Get MB on the brush to paint in the pupil of the eye. He is looking up so it would be at the top of the iris and almost behind the upper lid.
- Dry.





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STEP 4 - FINISH EYE DETAIL

"IT TAKES A MOMENT"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Titanium White = TW

Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

TAS #1 Detail Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Get a Detail brush loaded with CRM + TW and add some bloodshot marks to the white area of the eye, near the tear duct.
- Add some FWP when you need to in order to improve the brightness.
- Play with the eye until your hound has the soulfull look that makes your heart melt. If your eye goes funky, just paint the entire thing white and start over.
- It takes a moment to get the eye to where you want it to be. Use my step reference picture below to help you with getting your eye to where I was before I moved on to the next step.
- To add a little light in his iris, put in a little dark orange. It's a bit exaggerated but you want to exaggerate some of what's going on.
- Using FWP add white dots and dashes under the upper and lower lid. His eye is a little wet and FWP is your friend for this kind of small detail work.



STEP 5 - BEGIN NOSE

“VELVETY SKIN FOLDS”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB
Golden's Acrylic Gloss
Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round
#12 Round Blender

STEP DISCUSSION

- Using a Round brush and MB, let's address the nose by catching the dark values and how they are

structured. Vary the colors but the nostril should be very dark and you should see that line between the nostrils.

- Then get AGL on the dirty brush and come around the muzzle of the dog to define the mouth and the darker areas around the nose.
- Use a Blender to soften this area back onto the muzzle.

Facial folds are one of the characteristics a hound has that not all dogs have, which is one of the reasons I chose to feature the basset hound.



STEP 6 - FINISH NOSE DETAILS

"I LOVE DOG SNIFFIES"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round
TAS #1 Detail Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Take a second and relax your body. Breathe in creativity and breathe out stress and anxiety. Breathe in confidence and breathe out self judgment.
- Get a Round brush with more BS + MB + TW and add this slightly lighter value along the outer ridge of the nose.
- Use your dark brown-black to define any dark areas that you are not happy with on his nose. Observe with your eyes and capture it with your imagination and skill.
- With FWP + CRM on a Detail Brush, start tapping in moisture around the nostril. Then some on the opposite side of the line that is between the two sections of nose. You can also tap this color across the bridge of the nose.

Don't short the sniffy.

Sherpa Tip: When painting your pet, be prepared for the emotional aspect to kick in, because it does. You have an emotional attachment to your pet, and you will be hyper critical of your outcome. These are normal feelings.



STEP 7 - BLOCK IN DOG

“BASSET EAR FOLDS ARE LIKE THE DRAPE OF A DRESS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

#12 Round Blender

STEP DISCUSSION

- Using your Blender, mix CRM + CYM + BS to a saddle color, then starting near the nose, add this color to the face and down to the mouth jowl area in a brushy, scrubby manner. Add AGL if you need it to help with paint flow.
- Bring this color down the chest area. Vary color by adding more BS where it needs to be darker, and more CYM where it needs to be lighter.
- Add AGL to the brush by itself where you want to blend a little lighter.
- With a Round Brush, use the dark brown-black to add that shadow fold right behind the eye and to accentuate the velvety color of the ear.
- Add enough TW to the brown mix to get a beige color for the underside of his mouth, jowl, and nose area of the muzzle.
- Use the Blender after painting these sections to get that velvety look hounds are so famous for.
- Bring MB to the mouth and define the line between the upper and lower jaw and to paint in the ear creases and folds.
- Paint the dark areas of his body and the ear on the other side of his head.
- Add your saddle color on the nearest ear, even painting over the dark fold lines we added earlier. Use the blender to soften the look.
- Load MB on the brush to outline the front forward paw and it's folds.
- With the saddle color with AGL, glaze this brown color over the dark lines of the dewclaws and nail beds of his front forward paw.
- The color on his paw changes a lot, so just use the reference below to assist you to put your gray colors and tan colors, saddle colors, and beige colors where needed.
- Dry.



STEP 8 – FUR LAYERS

“FACIAL DETAILS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Fluid White Paint = FWP
Golden's Acrylic Gloss
Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Grass Comb or
Filbert Grainer
TAS #1 Detail Brush
#12 Round Blender

STEP DISCUSSION

- With a grass comb or a filbert grainer, mix CRM + CYM to a gold color.
- Then add AGL, and start implying the growth directionality of the hair. Basset Hounds have hair, not fur.
- Add more TW + CYM for a highlight color on the face, under the eyes, in the fold in front of the ear and those darling little moles on his neck.
- Add BS to the mix for a mid-tone color.
- Use your dark brown-black to reinforce anything that needs redefinition. I am not rinsing out my brush and I'm using all these colors to add variety.
- Get some of the darker brown on the brush and come along the tip of the lower mouth area.
- Now, I rinse my brush.
- Mix your beige color with AGL on a Detail Brush and highlight along the curve of the lip, below the nose.
- Get some FWP on the grass comb and tap in irregular white markings near the nose area, and along the forehead between the eyes.
- Add lashes above the eye with your dark brown color.
- Use a pointed filbert to raise up the brown arch that he has above his eye, as you paint the shadow using MB + AGL.
- If you paint out a highlight you wanted, come back and repaint it back in.
- Play with all your dog colors. Use all the resources I provide in this document to help you with placement, and don't forget that you can always go back and rewatch the video any time that you need to.



STEP 9 – EAR AND SHOULDER

“HOMAGE MUST BE PAID”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Grass Comb or

Filbert Grainer

5/8" Filbert Brush

STEP DISCUSSION

- Get a 5/8" filbert, and your browns and beiges, and continue to build up the layers of these folds and coat. Add the highlights and shadows that tell the story about all of cuteness.
- With the grass comb and the saddle color add that soft color to the back ear.
- Then add MB on the brush and blend that in. The ears are so incredibly soft looking.
- Spend a lot of time on that outer ear. Bassetts have the most incredibly touchable ears and you want to pay homage to that.
- Use all your dog colors and blending skills to find highlights and shadows. Be in the moment. Also use all your resources, the reference material.
- With your dark colors show the incredible deep

space where the top of the ear curves back over the coat on his back.

- Apply your beige and light off whites to add some color variation and shininess on his back and along the shoulders.
- Use the grass comb to add some dark hairs along the dome of the forehead, in front of the forehead folds, and near the mouth.

This makes me so happy.



STEP 10 – PAW

“THE DARLING FOOTSIES”

PAINT:

Titanium White = TW
Golden's Acrylic Gloss
Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

5/8" Filbert Brush
Grass Comb or
Filbert Grainer

STEP DISCUSSION

- With the 5/8" filbert, get your beige mix and darken the toenail's dewclaw areas. You do want to keep them separate and even accentuate the separation between each of them with black.
- Add a lot of TW to this mix for the highlights on top.
- Use your saddle mix and tap in some color coming up from the toe pads and onto the actual leg to imply hair
- Then use the off white to blend and add some varied color.
- Get the orange mix +TW, bias to yellow, and add the brightest touches of highlight at the extreme upper area of each paw pad. If you over lighten, come back with black to redefine.
- With the dark brown-black mix, add some shadow along the bottom of his leg behind his paw.
- Get your saddle color and add those hair markings that come up the forward paw.

Sherpa Tip: If you are having trouble with your grainer or grass comb, you might need to rinse and wipe it. You can also add more AGL to the paint to help with paint flow.



STEP 11 - FLOWERS, SHADOWS

“DOG SHADOWS & BOUQUET GREENS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Golden's Acrylic Gloss

Glazing Liquid = AGL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

#8 TAS Cat's Tongue

STEP DISCUSSION

- Rinse out your water and refresh any colors that you need to.
- Mix BS + PG to a deep brown using a Round brush to add as a shadow underneath him and even going into the mint green background where his shadow would belong.
- Also find the areas casting a shadow in front of him, use my reference to assist you if you need to.
- Mix PB + PG + BS + AGL to a light turquoise blue and add these lighter shadows as a continuation of the darker shadows.
- With the Cat's Tongue mix CRM + CYM and use it to imply the petals in the bouquet next to him.
- Add PG to this color for some interesting green elements.
- Get BS + PG + CYM mixed to a dark green for the leaves that are in the deepest shadow.
- Add some bright green leaves and some midsize dots with stems for an interesting bouquet filler.



STEP 12 - FLOWER MIDTONES AND DETAILS

“SOME DESCRIPTIONS DEFY DESCRIPTION”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Titanium White = TW

Naples Yellow Light = NYL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

STEP DISCUSSION

- With the Round brush, mix CYM + CRM to a yellow-orange and start

adding in petals. If you are not using a heavy body acrylic, you might want to paint all of these petals white first because yellow can be very transparent and not cover well.

- Add some PG to that orange and then a bit of TW, and tap in some highlights on those little green stalky balls of filler.
- Add some fallen petals in orange, because we all know, petals do fall.
- Get your PG and add little wispy petals under the ball structures in the bouquet.
- Sometimes, these concepts just defy the right terms when you are trying to communicate via the written word.



STEP 13 – FLOWER HIGHLIGHTS

“WHEN YOU’RE HAPPY, AND YOU KNOW IT, SIGN”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

#4 TAS Round

#1 Monogram Liner

STEP DISCUSSION

- Using a Round brush mix CYM + TW, add highlights to some of the petals.
- Get your brown-black mix and tap in the irregular shapes in the center of the forward facing blossoms.
- Rinse out your brush
- Use PG to add the small leaves that hold the base of the blossom on the stem. (Botany is not my forte.)
- Get CYM + CRM + TW on the brush and tap in some dots on the outside edge of some of the center rings.
- Use TW + CYM to highlight a few of the petals and leaves that might be more in direct light.
- Wipe off anything you added that you don't like. It's your world. You are the master.
- I'm happy, time to stop and sign.



THE TRACING METHOD

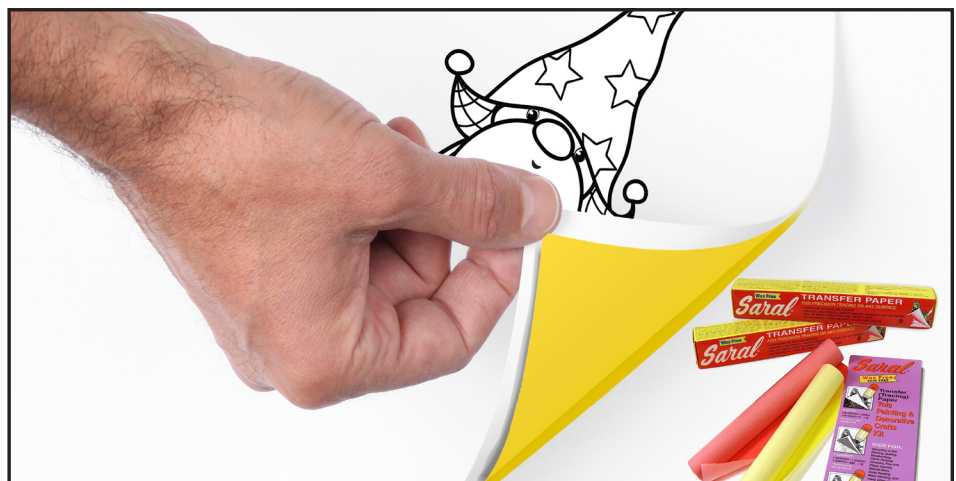
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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:



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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.

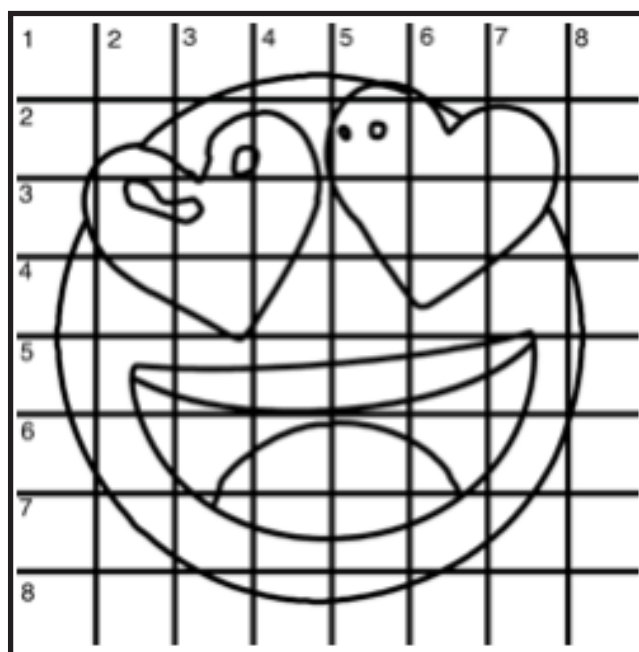
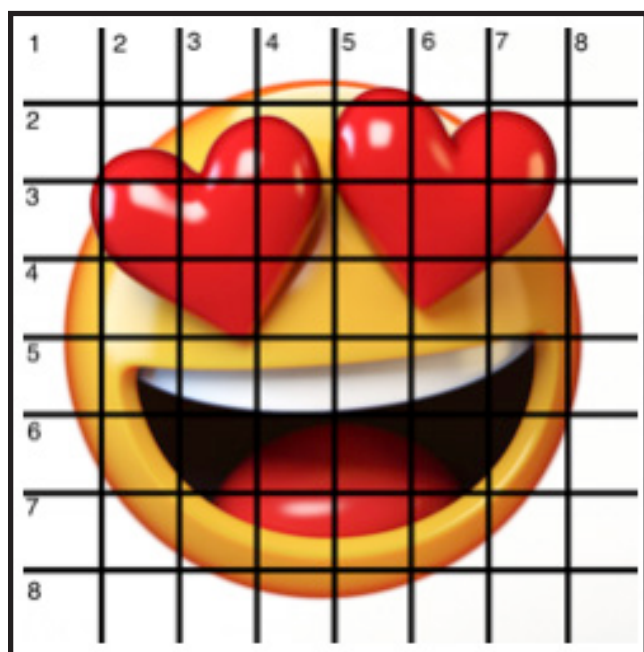
To draw the grid your canvas must be dry and it's advisable that it is also cool. You should use chalk that is wax or oil free. It must be pure chalk. I use a Dritz fabric-marking tool because it does fine lines easily and removes well from the canvas. There are also chalk pencils available or you could 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.



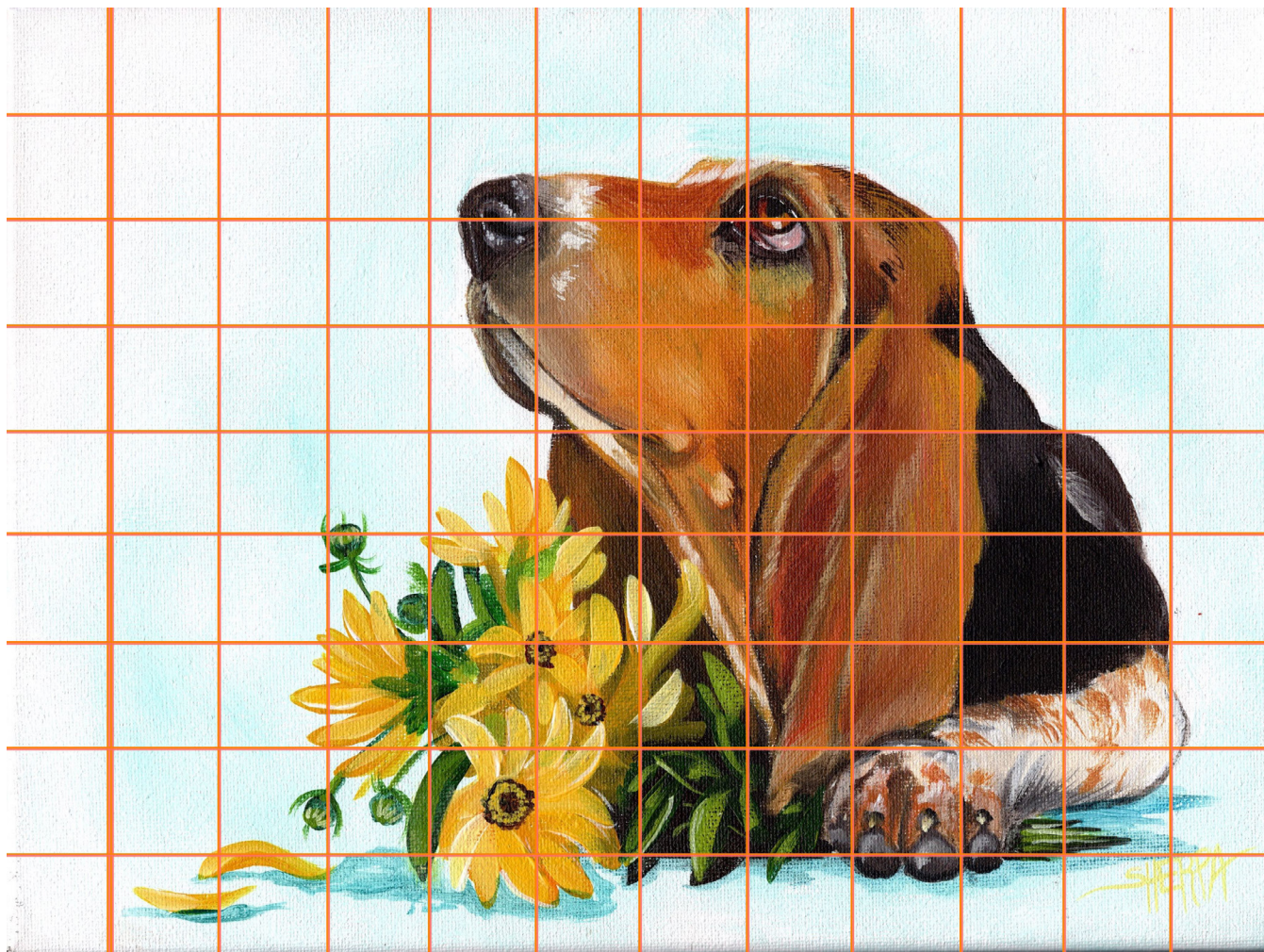
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

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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#ACRYLICPAINTING

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