

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



DANDELION BALLERINA DANDELION DANCER


BY: THE ART SHERPA
NAME CREDIT TO: HEATHER CAMPBELL

STEPS: 10 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 HOOTS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHERPA FORWARD	3
PAINT AND TOOL GUIDE	4
VIDEO CHAPTER GUIDE	5
THE GOLDBLOCKS ZONE	5
STEP 1 - LOOSE BLENDED BACKGROUND.....	7
STEP 2 - TRANSFER IMAGE / SKETCH IN	8
STEP 3 - TOP OF THE SKIRT.....	9
STEP 4 - SKIRT BITS AND FLUFF	10
STEP 5 - SKETCHING IN BLACK VALUES	11
STEP 6 - SKETCHING IN WHITE VALUES	12
STEP 7 - LITTLE BLACK FLUFFS.....	14
STEP 8 - FLY AWAY FLUFFS.....	15
STEP 9 - BLACK FLY AWAY FLUFFS.....	16
STEP 10 - FINAL DEFINING DETAILS	17
TRACING METHOD.....	18
TRACEABLE	19
GRIDDING INSTRUCTIONS	20
TECHNIQUE REFERENCES	21





SHERPA FORWARD:

I am resolved 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 are included and more can be found at: theartsherpa.com

Keep 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.

It is abstract art which means that the image representation will be a slight, partial, or complete departure from reality.

If you are a beginning painter and want to attempt this, I recommend that you choose one or two of the objects in the setting and concentrate on those and build up to the entire setting. I have done several smaller still life tutorials which can be found on my website if you would like to start with a less difficult painting. 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 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:

- Yellow Ochre = YO
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

- Large Hog Cutter
- Small Synthetic Bright
- Small Synthetic Round

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
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- Fur
- Implying Motion



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.

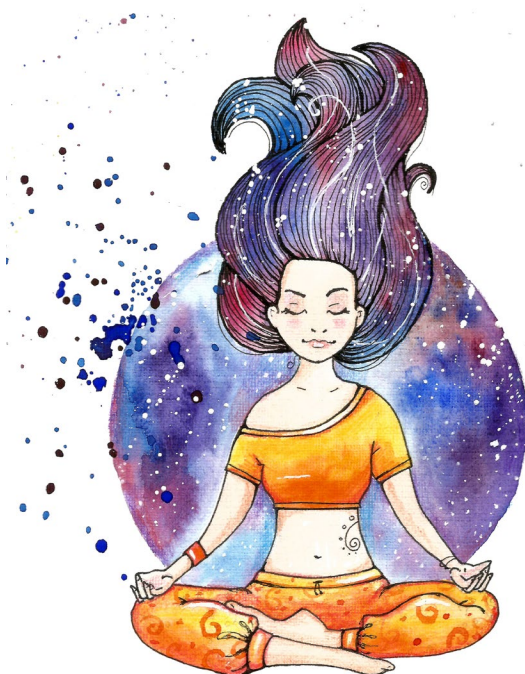
STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	03:32	LOOSE BLENDED BACKGROUND
STEP 2	10:55	TRANSFER IMAGE / SKETCH IN
STEP 3	22:52	TOP OF THE SKIRT
STEP 4	00:00	SKIRT BITS AND FLUFFS
STEP 5	33:20	SKETCHING BLACK VALUES
STEP 6	41:54	SKETCHING IN WHITE VALUES
STEP 7	48:07	LITTLE BLACK FLUFFS
STEP 8	59:04	FLY AWAY FLUFFS
STEP 9	1:02:27	BLACK FLY AWAY FLUFFS
STEP 10	1:08 :10	FINAL DEFINING DETAILS
	1:12:20	SIGN



THE GOLDBLOCKS 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.



Monday, May 2 -
Friday, May 6, 2022
With Cinnamon Cooney
The Art Sherpa
& Ginger Cook!

THE ART
SHERPA

The Art Sherpa RETREAT

Come Paint With The Art Sherpa
And Ginger Cook
At The "Mamma Mia"
Painting Retreat!

MAY 2022



*Join us in the
Pocono Mountains
of Pennsylvania!*

Register TODAY!
www.TheArtSherpa.com



STEP 1 - LOOSE BLENDED BACKGROUND

“MOODY”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Hog Cutter

COLOR MIXES:

Background = TW + YO

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Begin by covering the surface of the canvas with pure Titanium White. Curve in short quick strokes of the Background mix. Vary the mix by adding bits of Mars Black and Burnt Sienna here and there.
- Use a dry brush and blend the background to create a soft moody atmosphere. Use pops of more intense color for added interest.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 2 - TRANSFER IMAGE / SKETCH IN

"DEGAS OR PICASSO"

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Brown = MB + BS

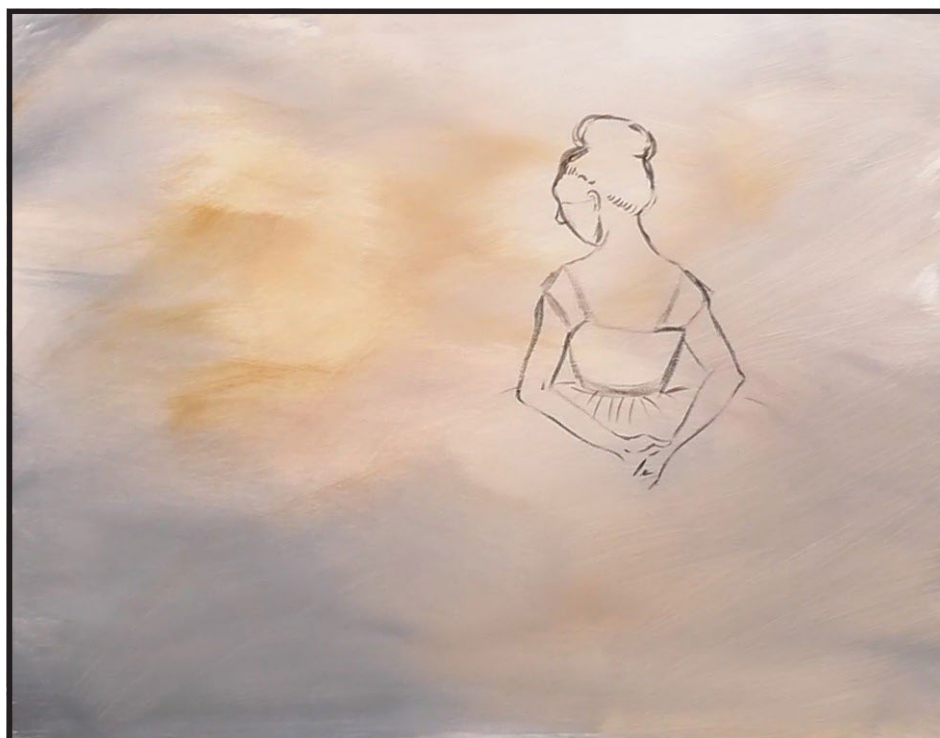
STEP DISCUSSION:

- I chose to freehand this image but I have also provided a traceable 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.
- Use the Dark Brown mix to sketch in the image. Begin off center on the right side of the canvas. Make a mark about 3 fingers from the top, as a guide. Then draw in an oval for the bun. Add a curved line for the back of the head. Create the profile of the face with just the smallest bit of the nose showing. Use a curved line as a guide from where the eye would be to the ear. Then imply

a sliver of the ear with a curved line. Paint in the neck, scooping the lines out for the shoulders.

- At about the halfway mark of the canvas, curve in a line for the waist. Then sketch the sleeve and back of the dress bodice.
- When placing the arms behind her back, keep in mind that the elbows are in line with the waist.
- Create the hands by first adding a paddle for the palms, then add the fingers, placed as needed.
- Make any adjustments needed.

Sherpa Tip: If you mentally divided the canvas in four, vertically, the ballerina would be placed in the third section.



STEP 3 - TOP OF THE SKIRT

"THE BALLERINA TRICK"

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

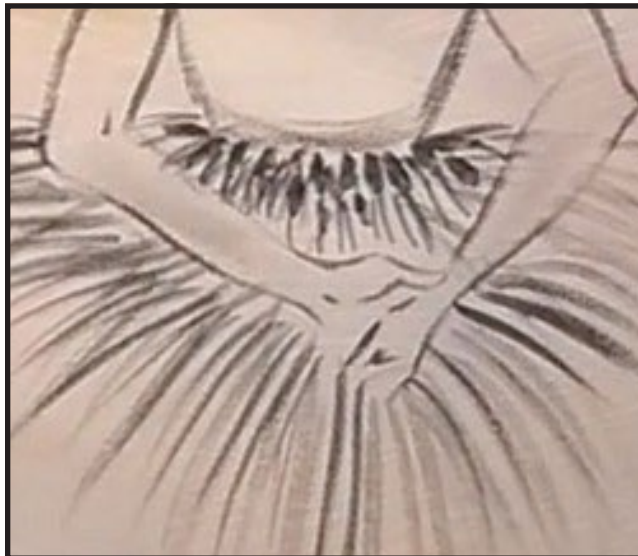
BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round
Chalk

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the seed pods at the top of the skirt. Then add small stem lines that come from them.
- Use the chalk to draw in a tutu guideline that sweeps upward in an elongated

"U" shape, about three to four fingers from the bottom. Flick lines downward, starting in the center of the skirt. Then, to create a very full hoop, begin curving the lines in the same direction you are moving. So, curved right as you move to the right and curved left as you move to the left.



STEP 4 - SKIRT BITS AND FLUFF

“DON'T GIVE UP TOO SOON”

PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Round Hog
Q-Tip Bundle

STEP DISCUSSION:

- To load the Q-Tip bundle, tap them up and down into the Titanium White. Use it to dab in some of the skirt along the bottom edge of the black lines.
- Switch to a Round Hog

brush, use a dry brush effect to add random strokes of fluff. Push the stroke outward, filling in the hoop of the skirt. Let the skirt touch the bottom of the canvas. Use some brush directionality and layer up.

Sherpa Tip: When you dip the brush into water make sure to tap it out on a towel to ensure the dry brush effect.



STEP 5 - SKETCHING IN BLACK VALUES

"SWINGIN"

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

Small Synthetic Bright

COLOR MIXES:

Background = TW + YO

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Dry brush "sketchy marks" in the shaded areas of her back with Mars Black and the Bright brush.

Continue adding this charcoal-like shading throughout her body, arms and hair.

- Use the Background mix and the Round brush for touch ups.
- Dry the surface before continuing.

Sherpa Tip: The secret to this effect is to use a very dry brush and allow a lot of the canvas to show through.



STEP 6 - SKETCHING IN WHITE VALUES

“GOING FULL AH - HA”

PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Bright

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Dry brush some “sketchy marks” in the brighter areas of the face. Continue adding this highlight throughout her hair, body and arms. Be sure to catch the light on the hands and the bodice of the dress.
- Highlight some of the stems of the dress, then adjust the bottom of the skirt as you feel you need to.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

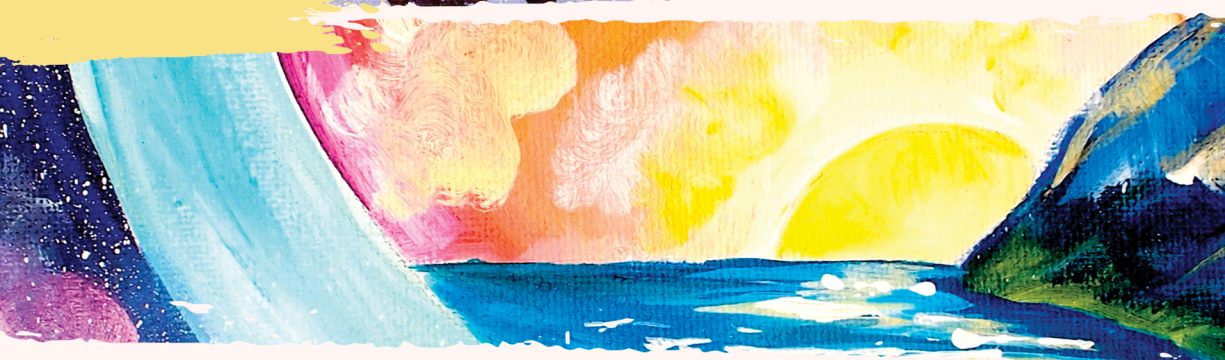


THE ART SHERPA

Patron Exclusive



BECOME AN
ART SHERPA PATRON!



PATRON-ONLY CLASSES will be taught by
Cinnamon and are created
exclusively for you with so many benefits!

- Exclusive Weekly Drawing Classes!
- Early Access to Acrylic April and other Events!
- Direct Support from The Art Sherpa Team!
- Chances to title The Art Sherpa's paintings and ask for special requests!

WWW.THEARTSHERPA.COM/PATRON



THE ART
SHERPA



STEP 7 - LITTLE BLACK FLUFFS

“YO GABBA GABBA”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Refine the lines of the ballerina using broken sketchy marks. This adds weight and energy to the charcoal feeling of the piece. Continue these lines on the dress and in the hair.
- Add star shaped dandelion puffs to the fluffy area of the tutu using a light touch and the dry brush effect.
- Sherpa Tip: Periodically wash the brush out and dry it, so the paint does not clog it.



STEP 8 - FLY AWAY FLUFFS

"LOOKING FOR THE BEST RESULT"

PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

STEP DISCUSSION:

- As in the previous step, refine the lines of the ballerina using broken sketchy marks. Continue these lines on the dress and in the hair.
- Add white dots to the centers of the dandelion

puffs and add more highlights to the stems on the dress.

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 9 - BLACK FLY AWAY FLUFFS

“REITERATE”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Thin the Mars Black with water and place little comma marks throughout the background, for the seed pods of the fly away dandelion fluff. Add the star shaped stems to the puffs.

- Dry the surface.
- Thin the Titanium White with water and highlight the seed pods. Add the white fluff using short, curved strokes.



STEP 10 – FINAL DEFINING DETAILS

“LOOKING SKETCHY”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

Small Synthetic Bright

COLOR MIXES:

Background = YO + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the Background mix onto the Bright brush and lighten any areas on the

ballerina that need it. Refine the background around the figure as well.

- Switch to the Round brush and the Titanium White to touch up and soften any light areas on the dancer that need it. Rinse.
- Use Mars Black, or the Titanium white, or the Background mix to adjust where necessary. Remember to keep the brush kind of dry to keep things looking sketchy.
- Sign.



THE TRACING METHOD

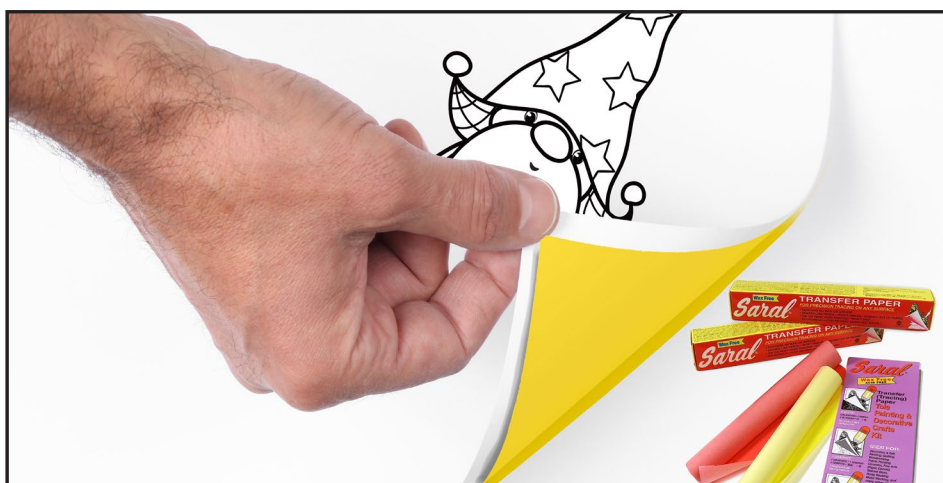
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



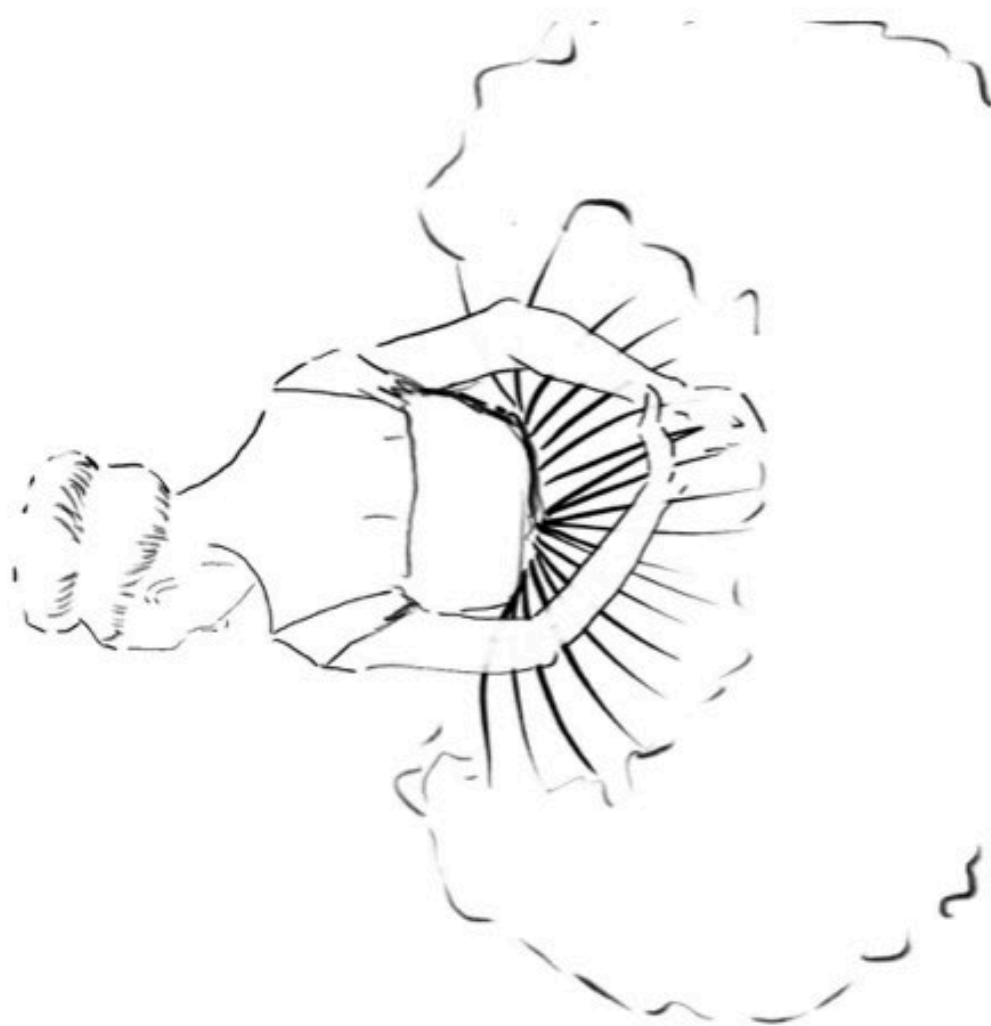
see that your transfer is happening. If not check if your rubbing is too thin or that your pressure is not too light. After you are done tracing the lines, remove your traceable and you should have a copy of the line art on your canvas.



- 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:



THE ART SHERPA

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.

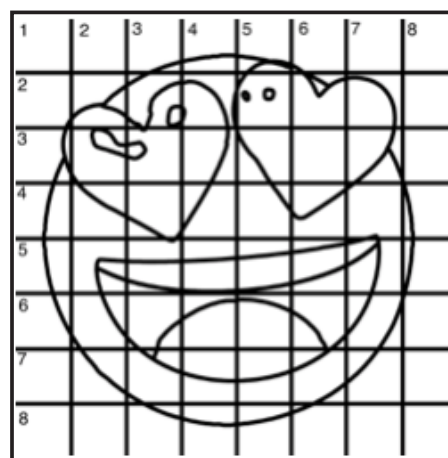
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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.

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.

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



TECHNIQUE REFERENCES:

BLENDING WET INTO WET

Create transitions from one color to another, or one value to another, in acrylic painting, by blending colors together with the brush on the canvas while both are still wet. Mastering a blend like this is also essential for acrylic painting. In general, blending requires a soft pressure with a bit of urgency because it must be accomplished before the paint is dry. If you are in very dry studio conditions, such as air conditioning or dry heating in winter, your paint may dry out faster than you can blend it. No worries...there are mediums called retarders that you can add to the paint to slow the drying time.

BLOCKING IN

Paint in the shape with a color, without detail.

CONTOUR

Following the outer lines of an object or subject with your brush or tool.

COOL COLOR

Colors on the cool side of a color wheel. Blues, greens and purples. These colors shouldn't visually feel cool to the eye. They often make up objects in our real world that are cool like ice or the green in nature. These colors tend to recede visually and give a sense of distance.

CONTOUR PAINTING

Use the brushstroke to define the outline of the form. The brushstrokes are long and smooth and help us express the form and line of the object.

FEATHERED BLENDING

Create a softened edge by gently brushing on the toe of the head of the brush allowing the bristles to feather out visually defusing the stroke.

FINE LINE WORK

Taking paint that is made more fluid and a fine line brush to create brush Strokes that are delicate and elegant in nature. This is often used for hair, delicate grasses or natural elements, edged highlights.

GLAZING

Taking thin transparent coats of paint over another coat of dry paint. The transparency of the paint allows the color from the paint underneath to affect the paint on top. This is another way for artists to make transitions with acrylic paint. Some paint is naturally transparent because of how pigmentmented it is. Colors like quinacridone magenta or phthalo blue are very transparent. Opaque pigments can be made transparent using a medium for glazing.

LAYERING

This is a very important part of acrylic painting. You can layer wet paint over wet paint. You can layer dry paint over dry paint. You can glaze over dry paint to layer also. Layering can help you build texture and depth in a painting. Understanding that techniques are built up in layers will help you move away from the magical brush thinking. You remember seeing cartoons paint a tunnel in one stroke with a single brush? As regular humans we can't do that to get these effects, we need to layer the paint. Once you embrace this thinking, the depth of your painting will improve greatly.

LOOSE, EXPRESSIVE AND PAINTERLY

When you paint showing the brush stroke. The painting has a freshly captured feel. This technique gives the impression of capturing a moment in time. It has qualities where the color stroke in texture defines the artwork instead of line.

LOOSELY MIXED

Taking two colors and mixing them together with both colors still evident in the mix and brush stroke.

PAINTERLY

Free flowing and expressive brush strokes. Painterly expression of art generally allows the medium and the brush strokes to show instead of hiding them through blending and careful placement.

S STROKES

Being able to create compound curves as strokes is

a very important technique in painting. Most of the natural world will require your ability to execute it as a stroke. It's a good idea to practice making bold S strokes and delicate S Strokes.

SCUMBLING

Scumbling certainly has some dry brushing to it but involves a more randomized circular brush stroke. Be careful when you scumble, you don't want to press so hard that you break the heel of the brush. In scumbling, just like in dry brushing, we won't be using a lot of water in the brush. We are going to want to move the brush around in a random and circular motion creating no sense of a particular line or direction.

SMOOTHLY BLENDED OR TIGHT PAINTING

This is when you smooth the paint and try to hide the brush Strokes and transitions. When you hear an artist talking about a particular painter being tight, what they're speaking of is the way that this artist is able to hide the medium method of the painting. Acrylic blending is one of the more frustrating techniques for new artists.

THOROUGHLY MIXED

Take two colors and thoroughly incorporate them so they make a smooth, even secondary color with no sign of the two colors used to create it.

TRANSITIONAL MIXING

There are many ways to blend acrylic paint creating tonal and value transitions through the hues. When you have two very different colors you can create hues that are half shades by mixing them together and biasing the mix to create a subtle transition.

UNDERPAINTING

Loose large fields of color that future layers of painting will build on.

WARM COLOR

These colors are on the warm side of the wheel such as red, yellow and orange. Warm colors remind us of things like fire and sunlight. They tend to come forward visually and pull the viewer in.

RESOURCES

- The best resource for this book is to use it with the YouTube video. Additionally, I have many resources to help new painters achieve their dreams of being creative. I've made over a thousand videos and chances are I have a video that will help you with your specific challenges.
- Be sure to check out the "Where to Start Acrylic Painting with the Art Sherpa" playlist on Youtube.
- Search for videos on the website.
- Use the traceable - it is NOT cheating.
- Join the Art Sherpa Official Facebook group for support.
- Come to live streams and ask questions.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FINISH PIECE

As an artist, there's still a lot to think about.

Do you varnish? Believe it or not, varnishing is optional with acrylic painting. In my opinion it's best only to do so in good weather in a dust free space following the instructions of the specific varnish for acrylic painting exactly. Varnish is good because it does protect and unify the finish of a painting, but it is not required.

Allow your painting a few days to cure and harden. Acrylic paintings do dry quickly but they still continue to cure a few days after you're finished even with thin applications of paint. Taking the time to allow your paintings to cure will help them be more resilient through the framing and hanging process. These days you don't need to be a professional to frame or hang your paintings. Frames and ready to hang options are available at your local craft and art store.

When acrylic paint is warm, it gets soft, so when a painting is near the warmth of a fireplace you wouldn't want to add decorations that would touch it because they could leave an impression. It's perfectly fine to hang your artwork over the fireplace and change it out seasonally like I do. It's just important to be aware of hazards and fire safety. Also knowing that acrylic paintings can become a little softer when they're warm will prevent you from accidentally having a boo boo. Perhaps your Elf on the Shelf doesn't need to sit on the edge of the frame or lean against the painting if your art is in a warm spot. Properly cared for, acrylic paint will never become wet again or lose its cure and it will always remain finished and dry. This is the nature of plastics.



 **SUBSCRIBE**

FOLLOW THE ART SHERPA



 **SUBSCRIBE**

WEBSITE:

<https://theartsherpa.com/>

FACEBOOK:

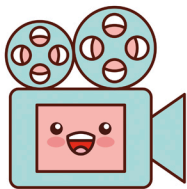
<https://www.facebook.com/TheArtSherpa/>

INSTAGRAM:

<https://www.instagram.com/theartsherpa>

PINTEREST:

<https://www.pinterest.com/cinnamoncooney/>



#THEARTSHERPA
#STEPBYSTEPPAINTING
#ACRYLICPAINTING

ABOUT THE ART SHERPA:

Artwork and video is the sole property of The Art Sherpa™ and intended for the students personal education and Enjoyment. For questions regarding using any Art Sherpa painting in a commercial setting labs@theartsherpa.com for all other questions support@theartsherpa.com Read our full disclosure here that covers partnerships and affiliate links <http://bit.ly/affiliatedisclosureTAS>