



APRIL 16, 2022

Acrylic
April

ACRYLIC APRIL 2022

BY: THE ART SHERPA



www.TheArtSherpa.com

WHEN YOU'RE BLUE

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON KELLY MALOUF

Steps: 10 | Difficulty: Intermediate | 2 Hoots



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THE GOLDSILLOCKS ZONE

In painting, every technique or process has what I call a "Goldilocks Zone". As an artist, you will constantly seek 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 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 notice when you have found yourself in the Goldilocks Zone so you can locate it again easier the next time you come across a particular technique.



THE ACRYLIC APRIL PAINT CHALLENGE EXPLAINED

The Acrylic April Painting Challenge begins April 1st 2022 and ends April 30. Thirty powerful little painting tutorials that challenge global artists to participate by completing one small acrylic painting every day for an entire month.

PARTICIPATE BY COMPLETING ONE SMALL ACRYLIC PAINTING EVERY DAY FOR AN ENTIRE MONTH!

This year's Acrylic April Challenge is designed around the "Bloom...A Story of Flowers" and every painting will embrace that theme and every tutorial will teach skills that will be built upon in subsequent lessons. If you engage in this unbelievable art journey for 30 days, you will gain a greater understanding of the nature of flowers...how they engage with nature, how they behave, and how to successfully illustrate them.

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 Acrylic Art Journey and is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. Once all of the tutorials have been recorded and have an accompanying mini book, The Art Sherpa hopes to prepare a printed version of all of Acrylic April 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 for this tutorial can be found at theartsherpa.com.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy your experience with Acrylic April 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 Facebook Acrylic April group at: www.facebook.com/groups/AcrylicApril



DAY 16: APRIL 16, 2022

Mr. Webster defines the word "Bloom" as a flower, especially one cultivated for its beauty and who can forget the ever changing blooms of the hydrangea. When planted in acidic soil, they bloom blue and when planted with lime, turn pink. The white variety often resembles large snowballs that, as children, would often amaze us.

AS WE HEAD INTO THE SECOND HALF OF OUR ART JOURNEY, HOPE THAT YOU ARE ENJOYING ACRYLIC APRIL THIS YEAR AND THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE HONORED BY YOUR PRESENCE THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY.



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MAY 2-6

PAINT COLOR & MIXING LEGEND:

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

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Naples Yellow Light = NYL
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Mop
- Small Synthetic Round
- Medium Hog Bright
- Medium Synthetic Filbert

TOOLS:

- 8x8 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 it dry before you proceed.)
- Optional: StayWet Palette
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil

SYMBOL GUIDE:

- > Less than previous amount
- < More than previous amount
- + Equal amount

TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE:

- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing



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	INTRO
STEP 1	01:30	COLORED BACKGROUND
STEP 2	06:57	SKETCH THE IMAGE
STEP 3	09:19	ABSTRACT BACKGROUND
STEP 4	17:10	STEMS
STEP 5	19:01	VASE
STEP 6	24:55	FLOWER BASE LAYER
STEP 7	29:16	LEAVES
STEP 8	33:40	SEPARATING THE BLOOMS
STEP 9	37:19	FLOWER DETAILS
STEP 10	44:12	SHADOWS AND FINAL TOUCHES
	46:46	SIGN



STEP 1 - COLORED BACKGROUND

"RELIEF"



PAINT:

- Cadmium Red
Medium = CRM
- Cadmium Yellow
Medium = CYM

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Large Synthetic
Mop

COLOR MIXES:

- Orange =
CRM + CYM



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the entire canvas using the **Orange mix**.
Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 2 - SKETCH THE IMAGE

"WIDE IN THE BELLY"



PAINT:

- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil

COLOR MIXES:

- Pale Blue = TW > PB



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.
- About an inch from the bottom of the canvas, on the left side, draw a smile line for the bottom of the vase. On both sides of the vase, start at the bottom and come out wide at the belly, then scoop it back in towards the neck of the vase.

- Sketch a curved water line, 2/3 of the way up the vase.
- Roughly sketch in the space the flowers will take up on the surface. Draw them coming off the canvas on the left side and at the top. On the right side of the canvas they will stop about 2 inches from the edge. Give these flowers shape with interesting contour lines.

SHERPA TIP:

For a more visible image on video, I use paint to sketch this image onto the canvas. You should use a Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil.



STEP 3 - ABSTRACT BACKGROUND

"GET TO KNOW YOUR PAINT'S PERSONALITY"



PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Titanium White = TW
- Naples Yellow Light = NYL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:

- Pale Green = NYL > PG + TW
- Orange = CRM + CYM



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint around the flowers at the top of the canvas with the **Pale Green mix**, using loose open brush strokes. Gradually add more Phthalo Green along the sides of the canvas, reserving the darkest green for close to the flowers.
- Coming down the vase, begin to loosely add small amounts of the **Orange mix** to the **Pale Green mix**. Increasing the orange blend near the bottom of the vase, creating a very loose division of values, that abstractly represents a table. Allowing the orange background to peek through, somewhat. Rinse.

SHERPA TIP:

For the people wondering what some of the symbols in the mixes mean, > means less than the previous amount and < means greater than the previous amount. We hope this explanation helps to get better results with the mixes.

I have a blog on my website with lots of information that perhaps you didn't know you need to know. You might want to check it out at www.theartsherpa.com.



STEP 4 - STEMS

"THE MISSMASH OF STEMS"



PAINT:

- Ultramarine
Blue = UB
- Burnt
Sienna = BS
- Titanium
White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium
Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

- Deep Brown =
BS > UB
- Blue Gray =
UB + BS



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the grouping of stems in the vase using the **Deep Brown mix** and the side of the brush. Apply the strokes in various directions and even bending one or two.
- Add a little Titanium White to the **Blue Gray mix** for the highlight. To place the stems in order, break the highlight up on either side of the stem in front. To bring a stem forward, highlight the stem with a continuous line from top to bottom. Rinse.



STEP 5 - VASE

“DON'T LOSE YOUR STICKS”



PAINT:

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW
- Naples Yellow Light = NYL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

- Turquoise = PB + PG
- Blue Gray = UB + BS
- Muted Turquoise = PB + PG + TW > NYL
- Pale Green = NYL > PG + TW
- Tinted White = TW > PG

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Turquoise mix** to paint a curved line in the vase, implying the water. Add some Titanium White on the dirty brush and line the top of the water. Paint a curve in the opposite direction, making an eclipse. Fill it in to create the water surface. Add more Titanium White on the dirty brush and line the sides of the vase.
- Use the **Blue Gray mix** to line the base of the vase. Also add some of this color as a little shadow on the top, right side and for a larger shadow on the left.
- Paint between the stems in the left half of the vase with the **Muted Turquoise mix** and add a little reflection to the

water surface on the right. Add the **Pale Green mix** on the dirty brush and paint between the stems on the right. Rinse. Line the outside of the vase with the **Blue Gray mix**. Rinse.

- Loosely fill between the stems that show above the water line, with **Tinted White mix**. Add just a touch of Quinacridone Magenta on the dirty brush for a surprise of color, allowing the orange background to show through a bit.
- Add a bright reflection along the right side of the vase near the top and around the bottom left corner with Titanium White. Paint a few more smaller, thinner reflections along the edges of the glass.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

STEP 6 - FLOWER BASE LAYER

"SURPRISE, SHE SAID"



PAINT:

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Ultramarine Blue = UB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium Hog Bright

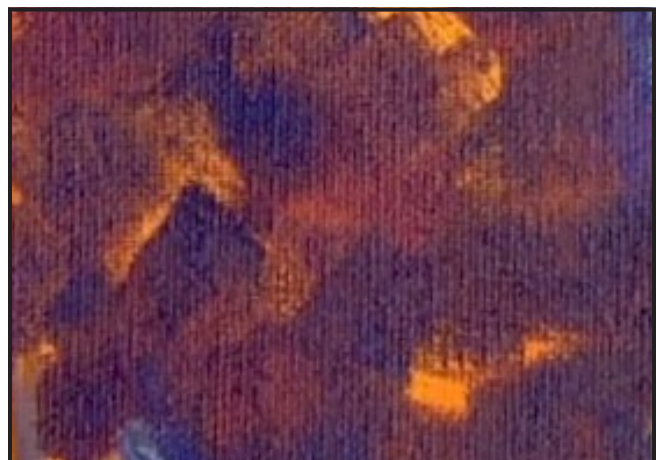
COLOR MIXES:

- Deep Purple = UB > QM



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Loosely paint a base for the hydrangeas using the **Deep Purple mix**. Use an open, criss cross stroke that allows the background to peek through.
- Add a few marks on the table area to imply fallen petals. Rinse.
- Thin the mix with quite a bit of water then glaze a shadow under the vase and under the petals on the table.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 7 - LEAVES

"LEAF TUCKING"



PAINT:

- Cadmium Yellow Medium = CYM
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

- Dark Green = PG + BS
- Medium Green = PG + BS + CYM
- Light Green = CYM > PG + BS > TW



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Dark Green mix** to paint a slightly curved line that angles from almost the left edge of the canvas up to the bottom of the flowers. Then above the line, apply a touch pull stroke using the edge of the brush. Begin the strokes small near the end and get a little wider closer to the flowers. Do the same to the bottom side of the line.
- Add another smaller leaf near the center of the vase and a third, larger leaf on the right.
- Paint another value on top of the leaves with the **Medium Green mix** and use the same touch pull stroke, while allowing the green below to show through. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing with the highlight.
- Dry brush the **Light Green mix** on the edge of the leaves as a bright highlight. Rinse.

STEP 8 - SEPARATING THE BLOOMS

"DON'T BE ONE DIRECTIONAL"



PAINT:

- Phthalo
Blue = PB
- Titanium
White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium Hog
Bright

COLOR MIXES:

- Medium Blue =
PB > TW



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Start forming the individual blooms by applying short, irregular brush strokes into a circular shape, using the **Medium Blue mix**. To be able to see the separation between the different blooms, change their value slightly. Adding a bit more Titanium White to the mix will bring a bloom or even an edge of a bloom, forward and keeping the mix dark, will set the blooms back. Rinse.
- Add this color to the petals on the table, as well. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 9 - FLOWER DETAILS

"WHOA MOMENTS"



PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Phthalo Blue = PB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Titanium White = TW
- Naples Yellow Light = NYL

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Medium Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:

- Pink = QM < CRM > TW
- Light Blue = PB + TW > PG
- Bright Blue = TW + PB > NYL
- Light Turquoise = PB + PG + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Find areas to separate the blooms even further by adding a few pops of the **Pink mix** but retaining some of the dark values between the bloom structures where there is depth.
- Add a little Naples Yellow Light on the dirty brush and apply a few tiny pops of this warmer color on the blooms and to the petals on the table. Less is more with this color. Rinse.
- Highlight the right side of the flowers with **Light Blue mix**. If they get too light in any area just add more Phthalo Blue back in. Add some vivid highlights by alternating between the **Bright Blue mix** and the **Light Turquoise mix**. Keeping more of the lightest colors to the right side of the blooms.

- Continue separating and highlighting each bloom.
- Blend a bit of Quinacridone Magenta in the back bloom where it is more in shadow.
- Allow the dark layer below to peek through when highlighting the blooms on the right, they are in shadow. Add touches of highlight to the petals on the table. Rinse.

SHERPA TIP:

When using a Hog brush, rinse your it out from time to time to keep it from getting clogged with paint and be sure to towel it dry to get out any hidden water.



STEP 10 - SHADOWS AND FINAL TOUCHES

"THE SAUCE OF AWESOME"



PAINT:

- Quinacridone Magenta = QM
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

- Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

- Blue Gray = UB + BS
- Deep Purple = UB > QM



STEP DISCUSSION:

- Add the **Blue Gray mix** at the base of the vase to reinforce the shadow there.
- Use the **Deep Purple mix** for the shadow under the vase and under the petals on the table. Rinse.
- Apply a thin reflection line along the bottom edge of the vase, using Titanium White.
- Adjust or add any final touches to the piece that you feel are needed, using any of the previous mixes. Rinse.
- Sign.



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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.



- 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 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.



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.

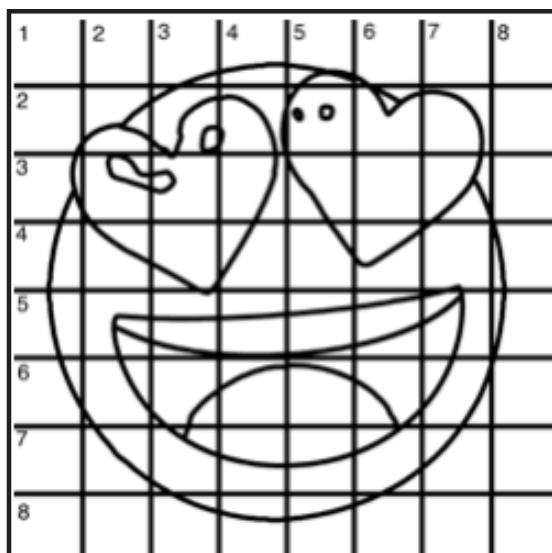
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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.

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 instructions above.

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

Another way to create transitions from one color to another, or one value to another, in acrylic painting, is 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, no detail is required.

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

Glazing is 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 pigmented 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. It can be hard for new artists to understand because it's used in so many different ways. 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. What I mean by that is 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

This is 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 we're both colors are still evident in the mix and brush stroke.

PAINTERLY

Brush strokes that are free flowing and expressive. A 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 not 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

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

Taking two colors and thoroughly incorporating 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. This is always useful.

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 FINISHED PIECE

As an artist, and, yes, you are an artist, because you have created a painting. But 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.





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