

THE ART SHERPA™

# HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



## LOOK, MOM!

BY: THE ART SHERPA

NAME CREDIT TO PATRON: JENNIFER BOWMAN


STEPS: 14 | DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING | 3 HOOTS





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# 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: [www.theartsherpa.com](http://www.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.

This tutorial is a lengthy one, but not an extremely difficult one.

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](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
- Ultramarine Blue = UB
- Phthalo Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW
- Yellow Ochre = YO
- Fluid White Paint = FWP

## BRUSHES:

- Large Synthetic Oval Mop
- Small Hog Round
- Small Synthetic Angle
- Medium Synthetic Angle
- X-Small Synthetic Round
- Grass Comb/Grainer
- Small Craft Hog Brush

## TOOLS:

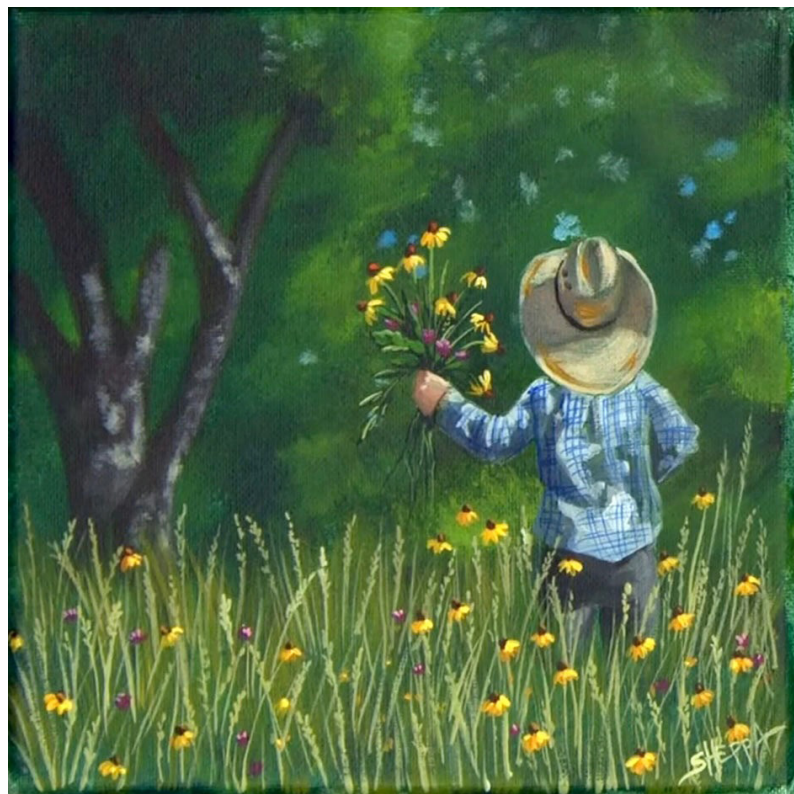
- 8 x 8 Canvas (If you notice that your canvas started to warp, as sometimes happens, just turn the canvas over and put it back side forward on your easel, then mist the back of the canvas. It usually resolves itself. Let dry before you proceed.)
- Optional: StayWet Palette
- T-Square Ruler
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil

## SYMBOL GUIDE:

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

## TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Implying Foliage
- Atmospheric Perspective
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Color Theory
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Color Mixing
- 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	02:43	GROUND
STEP 2	05:36	BLENDED BACKGROUND
STEP 3	21:19	TREE BASE
STEP 4	26:07	OUT OF FOCUS TREE DETAILS
STEP 5	34:21	SKETCH THE IMAGE
STEP 6	39:42	SHIRT
STEP 7	50:25	SHIRT STRIPES
STEP 8	54:02	PANTS, HAND AND HAT
STEP 9	1:03:17	HAT DETAILS
STEP 10	1:09:38	HAND DETAILS AND FLOWERS
STEP 11	1:22:35	GRASS
STEP 12	1:30:54	GRASS DETAILS
STEP 13	1:51:50	YELLOW FLOWERS
STEP 14	2:02:52	FINAL DETAILS
	2:07:57	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 – GROUND

“I’M NOT ROTATING TODAY”

## PAINT:

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Angle

## COLOR MIXES:

Dark Green = PG + BS

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Roughly paint the entire surface with the **Dark Green** mix, adding a drop or two of water to improve the flow, if needed. Smooth the paint out slightly by painting long side to side brush strokes.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.





# STEP 2 – COLORED BACKGROUND

## “IT’S TOO SLIPPERY TODAY”

### PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Synthetic Oval Mop

Small Hog Craft

### COLOR MIXES:

Dark Green = PG + BS

Light Green = PG + CYM

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Begin adding the background colors, using a small Craft brush to stipple the colors onto the top 6 inches of the canvas, and switching to a Mop brush to blend them out softly. Create texture by alternating between the **Dark Green mix** and the **Light Green mix**. To stipple, use a light up-and-down, tapping, motion with the Craft brush; then, switch to the Mop brush and use light pressure to blend, curving the stroke in a multitude of directions while barely touching the surface. Continue creating the out of focus background, wiping the brush on a towel occasionally to remove excess paint. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

***Sherpa Tip:** Try to pay attention to the background reference photo as you paint because it has the lighting you will need to understand.*

*UV Light is one of the things that ruin and destroy paintings the fastest; you don't even want to hang paintings in your house where they come into very direct window sunlight.*





# STEP 3 - TREE BASE

## “GETTING IT ALL IN”

### PAINT:

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

Mars Black = MB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Hog Round

Medium Synthetic Angle

### COLOR MIXES:

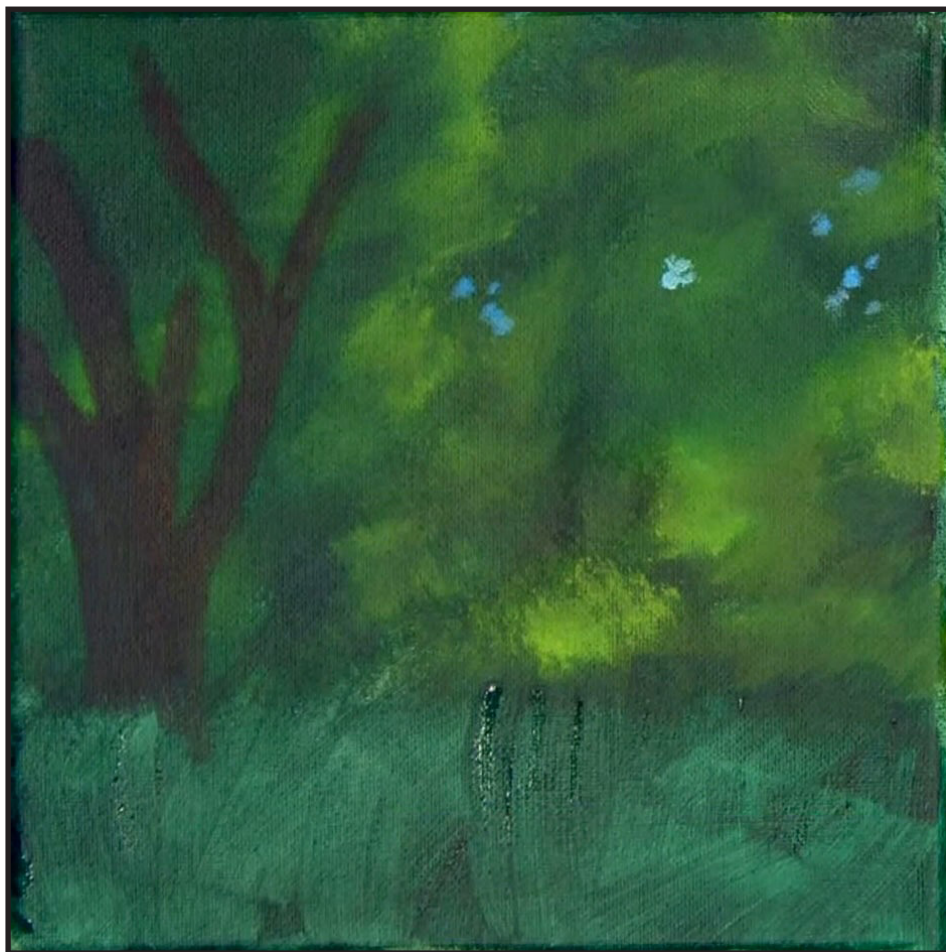
Dark Green = PG + BS

Light Blue = PB + TW

Dark Brown = BS + MB

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Roughly paint another layer of the **Dark Green mix** onto the bottom 2 inches of the canvas using the Angle brush. Rinse.
- Switch to the Round brush and use the **Light Blue mix** to tap in bits of the sky peeking through the trees, here and there. Wipe the brush.
- Plant the tree about 1 inch from the left side and 2 inches from the bottom of the canvas. Use the **Dark Brown mix** and a soft, short, up-and-down stroke, in a dry brush technique, to keep the edges out of focus. Create a few branches growing upward from the trunk, in various directions and disappearing into the upper left corner. Add a couple that go off the side of the canvas.
- Rinse.



# STEP 4 - OUT OF FOCUS TREE DETAILS

## "MAYBE THIS IS FERDINAND'S FAVORITE TREE"

### PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

Mars Black = MB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Hog Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Dark Green = PG + BS

Light Green = PG + CYM

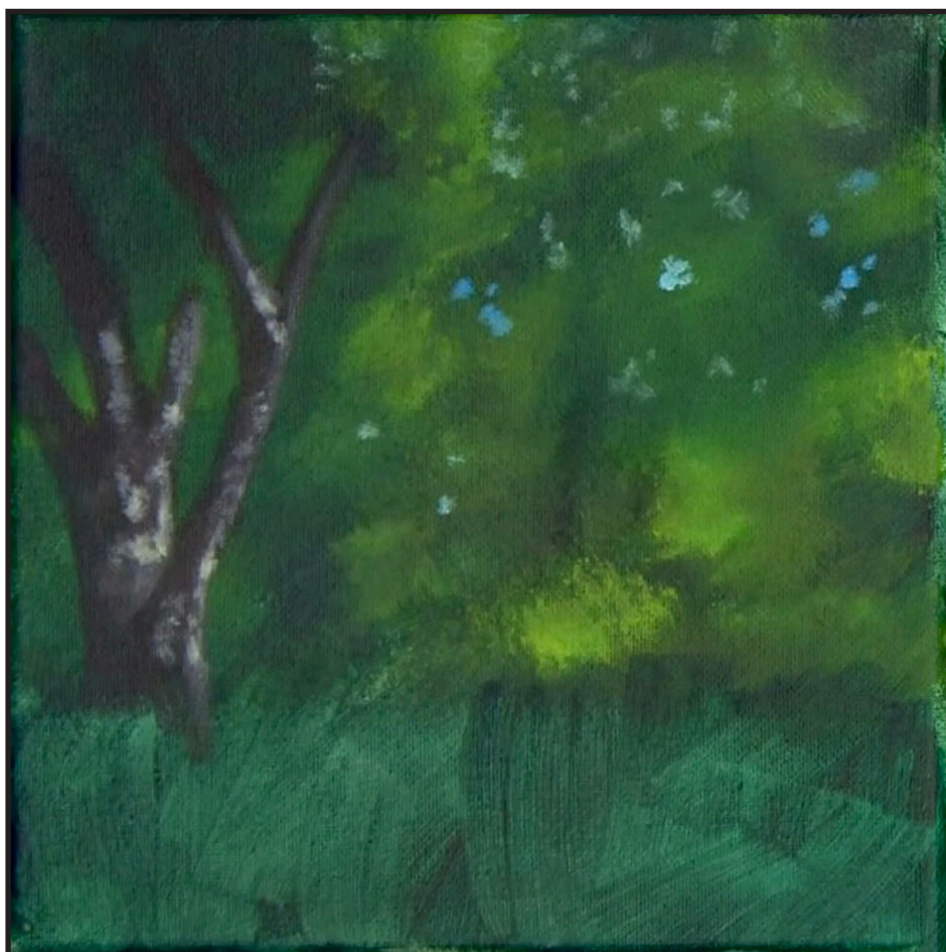
Brownish Gray = BS + MB + TW

Light Blue = PB + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- In the upper left corner of the canvas, apply the **Dark Green mix**, using a dry brush technique, to tap in dark background leaves over top of some of the branches. Blend and soften them into the background using the side of the brush in a circular motion, wiping the brush on a towel occasionally to remove excess paint. Alternate the color with the **Light Green mix** and camouflage the upper branches somewhat. Rinse.
- Highlight the tree with the **Brownish Gray mix**. Angle the light at the branch crotches then using the same soft, short up and down strokes in a dry brush technique to softly apply highlights to the front faces of the tree.

- Add more Titanium White to the **Brownish Gray mix**. Then paint a little bit of a slightly lighter dappled sun on the trunk. Rinse.
- Very lightly tap in some distant color variations in the background trees using the **Light Green mix** and **Light Blue mix**. Rinse.
- Add some Cadmium Yellow Medium to the **Brownish Gray mix** and tap some warm highlights onto the tree trunk. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.





# STEP 5 – SKETCH THE IMAGE

## “ADD THE IMAGE ‘AS YA DO”

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

T-Square Ruler  
Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil

### 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. 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.
- On the right side of the canvas, map out the space that the person will occupy. Make a mark about two fingers from the bottom and 2 fingers from the right. Then use a T-square ruler to make another mark that is not quite 2 ½ inches from the top. Sketch a circle for the hat that is just below the top mark and a bit more than 1 inch in diameter.

- Draw a shoulder line that arches through the bottom of the hat and is almost the same width. Add short, downward angled, parallel lines coming off of the left shoulder as the upper arm. Then bend them upward at the elbow to represent the lower arm. Draw the sides of the shirt coming down at about the same width of the shoulders and hanging loose and long, about 2 inches from the bottom of the canvas. Angle the right arm down and bend it at the elbow so it disappears in front of the little person. Make sure to keep both elbows the same length.
- The slightly bumpy lines of the pants are the width of the shirt. Create a few curves where the fabric would naturally wrinkle, such as the bottom of the bum and the crease of the knees. The inside edges of the legs are an inverted “V” shape with the right leg being more in front.
- Then at the top of the hat draw a smaller slightly elongated circle to imply the crown. Sketch an ellipse below that matches it. The perspective of the hat shows the rim on the front right side quickly folds in towards the crown while the left rim comes outward first, before showing the thinner fold. Add the crease to the center of the crown.
- Imply a small hand at the end of the arm and a few stems curved in various directions above and below.

**Sherpa Tip:** *Children's torso and limbs are shorter than an adult's, so refrain from elongating them.*



# STEP 6 - SHIRT

## "PUT YOUR WHOLE BURDEN DOWN"

### PAINT:

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Angle

### COLOR MIXES:

Gray Blue = TW + UB + BS

Light Gray Blue = TW > UB > BS

Dark Gray Blue = UB + BS > TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the mid-range value on the shirt with the **Gray Blue mix**. There are a couple smaller highlights on the left shoulder and a longer one that angles downward from the left side toward the center. Continue finding and painting these highlights while observing their placement using the reference picture. For more control, use the corner toe of the brush when painting the smaller areas.
- Paint the shadow areas of the shirt with the **Dark Gray Blue mix**, once again observing their placement using the reference picture while filling in the remainder of the shirt. Rinse.
- Add the brightest highlight using the **Light Gray Blue mix** and the toe of the brush. Continue

using these values to form the wrinkles and creases until it pleases you. Rinse.

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.





# STEP 7 - SHIRT STRIPES

“GENERALIZATION IS YOUR FRIEND”

## PAINT:

Ultramarine Blue = UB

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Adding stripes to a shirt can prove to be daunting and the folds in the material can drastically change pattern directions and that can be intimidating. The trick I use is to create just a generalization of the pattern. Paint the checkered stripes, directionally in each area, loosely and lightly using thinned Ultramarine Blue. Rinse.



# STEP 8 - PANTS, HAND AND HAT

## "LITTLE COWBOY KID BOOTIES"

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Yellow Ochre = YO

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Angle

### COLOR MIXES:

Gray = MB + TW

Mid Gray = TW > MB

Skin Tone = CRM + YO

Light Skin = CRM + YO + TW

Straw = YO + TW > BS

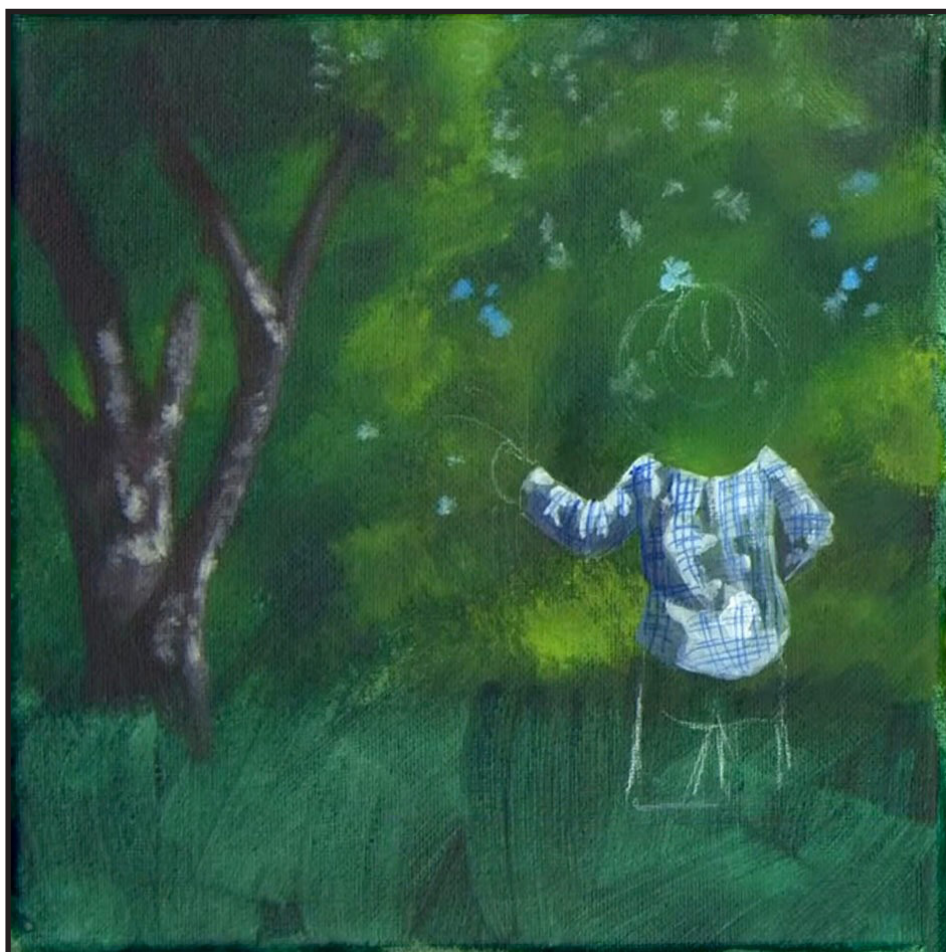
Mid Straw = YO + TW + BS

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the deepest value of the pants, on the left side of each leg and directly under the shirt with Mars Black. Then paint the bum and the right side of each leg with the **Gray mix**. Highlight the wrinkles on the right outer edges of the legs and the hip pocket with the **Mid Gray mix** and a slightly curved stroke. Rinse.
- Deepen the **Skin Tone mix** with the **Dark Brown mix** and paint the bottom of the hand using the toe of the brush. Apply just the **Skin Tone mix** on to the top of the hand. Then, highlight the top of the hand with the **Light Skin mix**. Rinse.
- Paint all the light values along the bottom, the left

front rim and at the crown of the hat with the **Straw mix** using the toe of the brush, or the edge, as needed. Use the **Mid Straw mix** to paint the ellipse under the crown. Add Mars Black on the dirty brush and apply it to the shadows on either side and paint the band with more Mars Black using the edge of the brush. Rinse.

- Add just a touch more Titanium White to the **Mid Straw mix** and apply it to the edges of the crown. Then add a bit of Mars Black to the dirty brush and paint the top crease. Wipe the brush.
- Highlight the shadows on the hat using the **Straw mix** combined with some of the **Gray mix**. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.





# STEP 9 – HAT DETAILS

## “NO SKIN HATS”

### PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

Small Hog Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Straw = YO + TW > BS

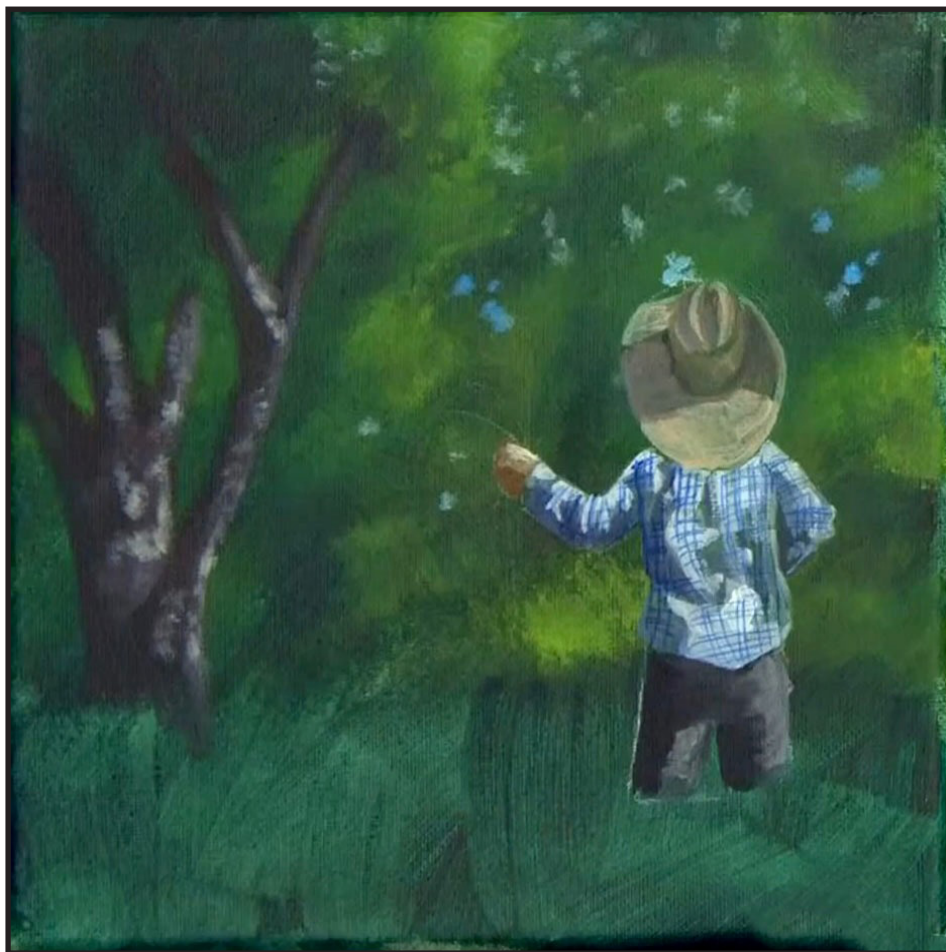
Light Skin = CRM + YO + TW

Mid Straw = YO + TW + BS

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Exaggerate the highlight on the top of the hat using the **Straw mix** and the toe of the Synthetic Round; add the **Light Skin mix** at the tip of the thumb area.
- Switch to the Hog Round to blend it in.
- Add the **Straw mix** to the light areas of the hat, curving the stroke and using a dry brush technique. Then dry brush the **Mid Straw mix** onto the mid value areas. Add Mars Black to the dirty brush and dry brush that color onto the shadows of the hat. Rinse.
- Switch back to the Synthetic Round and add the detail highlights on the outer edges of the hat using a touch of Titanium White to the **Straw mix**. Rinse.

- Define the band of the hat and add the rivets on the left side of the crown using Mars Black on the toe of the brush. Rinse.
- Then paint pure Yellow Ochre along the inside edge of the hat rim and the back of the crown. Rinse.



# STEP 10 – HAND DETAILS AND FLOWERS

## “JUST BE ‘I AM WATER’ AND MOVE ON”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

Small Hog Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Light Skin = CRM + YO + TW

Deep Green = MB + BS + PG

Med Green = CYM + PG + BS

Bright Green = PG + CYM + TW

Mid Pink = QM + TW

Light Pink = TW > QM > CYM

Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM

Dark Brown = BS + MB

Orange = CRM + CYM

Light Yellow = CYM + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the Hog Round brush and the **Light Skin mix** to add a highlight on the top of the hand. Add Burnt Sienna to the mix as a darker color on the bottom of the hand. Rinse.
- Switch to the Synthetic Round then add Titanium White to the mix. Highlight the very top of the hand and a couple of the knuckles. Rinse. Blend in a little Mars Black as a shadow on the finger and at the cuff of the sleeve. Rinse.

- Begin painting stems coming out of the top of the hand using the **Deep Green mix** on the toe of the brush. Create a healthy bunch of stems going in all directions. Hint at some leaf shapes and add some interesting bits by tapping the brush up and down.
- Paint some crooked roots coming out of the bottom of the hand. Rinse.
- Thin the **Medium Green mix** with water and begin adding a lighter value to the foliage and roots. Use the **Bright Green mix** as a highlight. Rinse.
- Tuck in some flowers in the middle of the bouquet using little brush strokes and the **Mid Pink mix**. Add touches of highlights on these flowers with the **Light Pink mix**. Rinse.
- Paint petals drooping down from the tops of the stems with the **Yellow Orange mix** and paint their center buttons using the **Dark Brown mix**. Rinse. Highlight the buttons on the right side using the **Orange mix**. Rinse. Highlight the petals with the **Light Yellow mix**.





# STEP 11 - GRASS

“WE DO LOVE OUR FACEBOOK GROUP”

## PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert

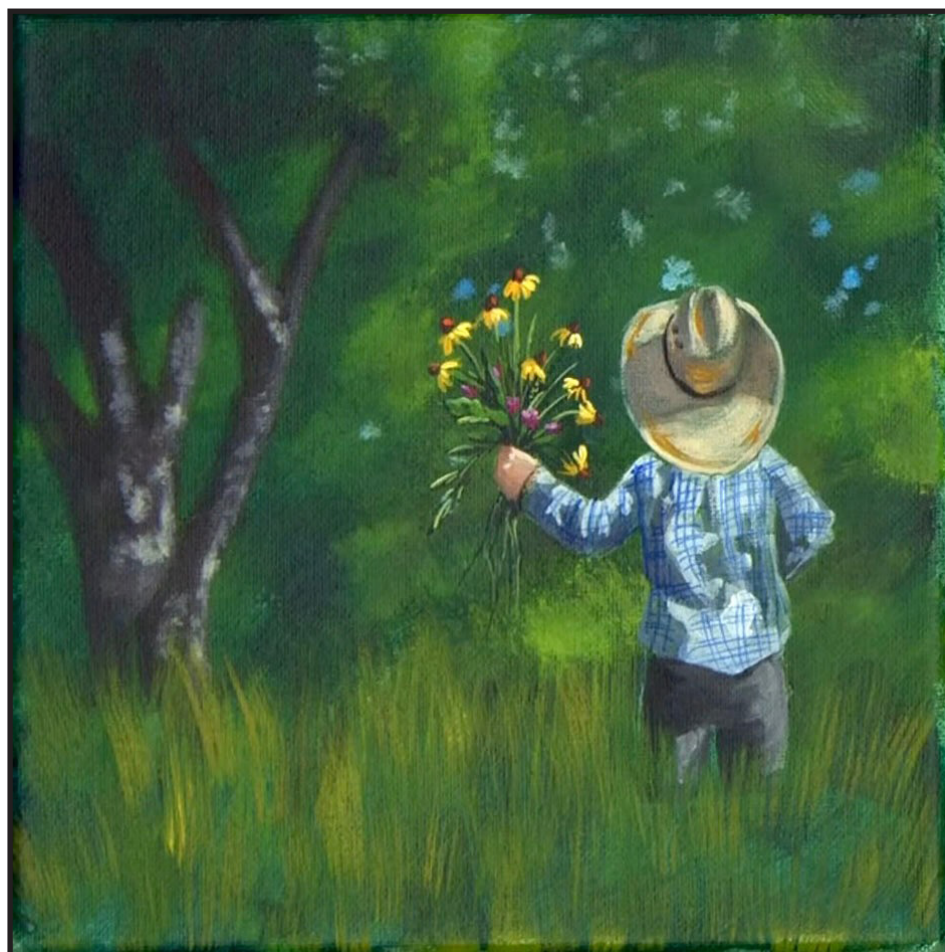
Grainer

## COLOR MIXES:

Med Green = CYM + PG + BS

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Begin painting the grass with the **Medium Green mix** thinned with water. Apply short upward strokes that flick out at the end and bend in all directions. Continue adding the grass in this method throughout the foreground. Paint a bit of the grass layering over the pants somewhat. Vary the mix by adding more Cadmium Yellow Medium and more Burnt Sienna to it and add a second layer over the grass. Rinse.



# STEP 12 - GRASS DETAILS

## “ZIPPERING DETAILS”

### PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Fluid White Paint = FWP

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Pale Green =

FWP > PG > CYM > BS

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the lighter individual blades of grass using the **Pale Green mix**. Again, paint the grasses in all directions. Zipper in seed details on the tops of some of the blades. Continue adding grass and seed tops and filling in the foreground. Add a few blades of grass that layer over the pants. Rinse.





# STEP 13 – YELLOW FLOWERS

## “ENVIRONMENTAL AFFECTS”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM

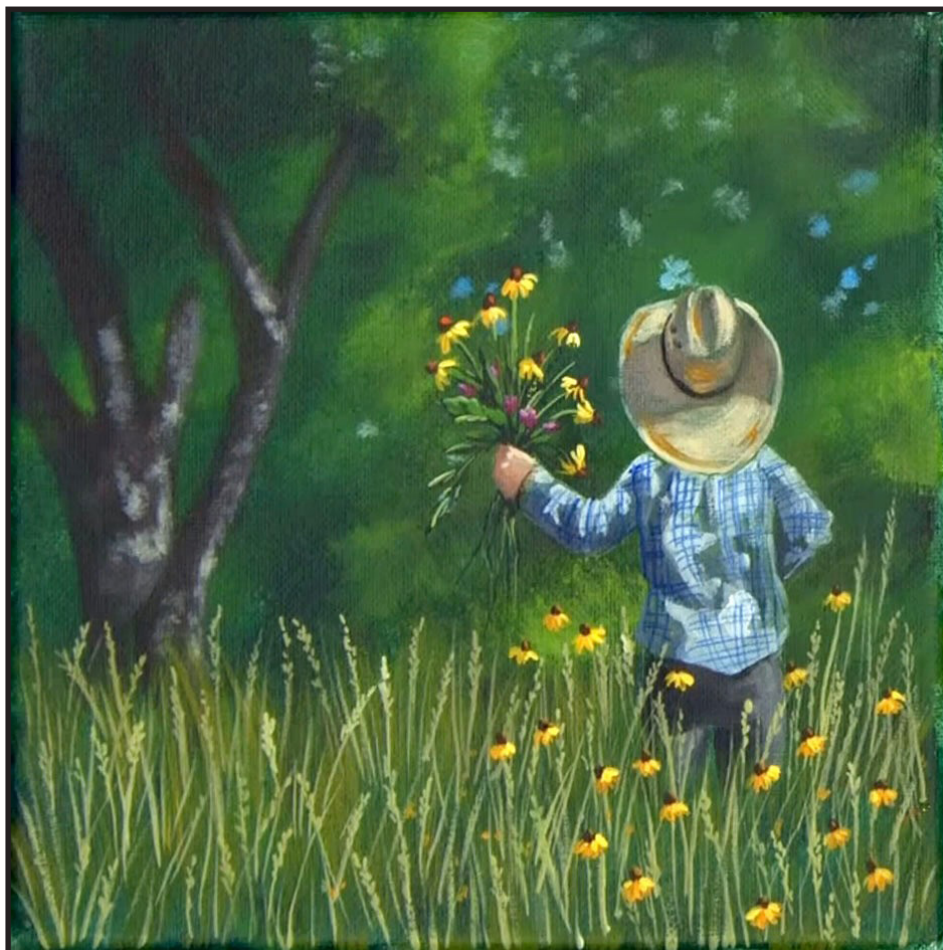
Dark Brown = BS + MB

Light Yellow = CYM + TW

Orange = CRM + CYM

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- On the bottom right side of the canvas, paint flower petals that droop down in the foreground grass, using the **Yellow Orange mix**. Add their center buttons using the **Dark Brown mix**. Rinse. Highlight the right side of the petals using the **Light Yellow mix**. Rinse.
- Tuck a few small flowers amongst the grass with the **Yellow Orange mix**. Rinse.
- Highlight the buttons on the right side using the **Orange mix**. Rinse.



# STEP 14 – FINAL DETAILS

## “TAKING IRENE’S SUGGESTION”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Fluid White Paint = FWP

- Use the **Light Pink mix** and tap in a few highlights onto the pink flowers. Rinse.
- Sign.

***Sherpa Tip:** To achieve better flow when painting these fine details, you can use the Fluid White Paint in place of the Titanium White in the mixes.*

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM

Mid Pink = QM + TW

Dark Brown = BS + MB

Light Yellow = CYM + TW

Orange = CRM + CYM

Light Pink = TW > QM > CYM

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- On the bottom left side of the canvas, paint flower petals that droop down in the foreground grass, using the **Yellow Orange mix**. Add fewer on this side than you did on the right side. Rinse.
- Randomly add small flowers throughout the grass with the **Mid Pink mix** and short little strokes. Rinse.
- Add the center buttons to the yellow flowers using the **Dark Brown mix**. Rinse. Highlight the right side of the petals using the **Light Yellow mix**. Rinse.
- Highlight the buttons on the right side using the **Orange mix**. Rinse.





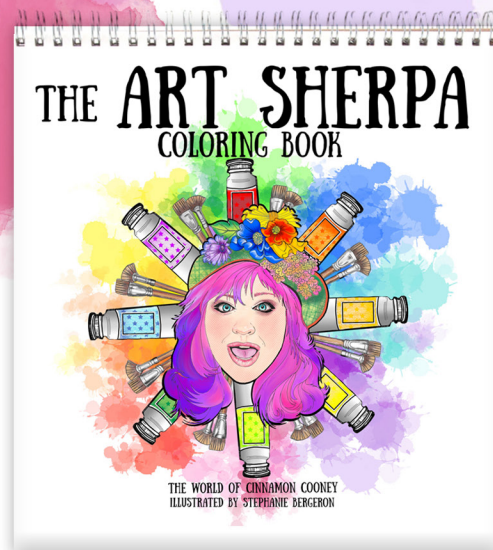


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## THE TRACING METHOD

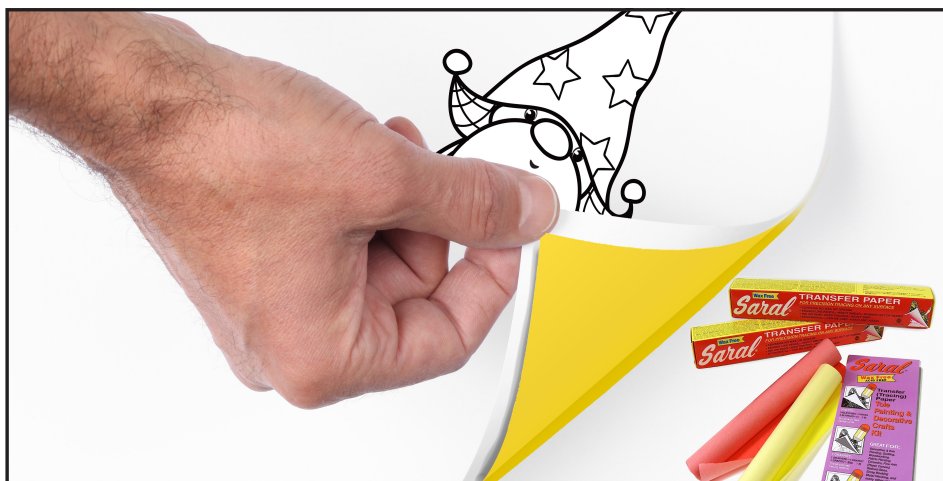
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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.

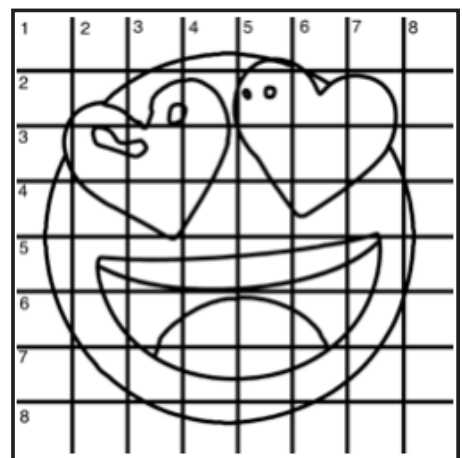
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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.

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.*





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