

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



IRISES, VINCENT VAN GOGH


BY: THE ART SHERPA

STEPS: 13 | DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE | 2 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 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 a fairly neutral still life which is the most commercially successful subject for painting. A still life is a work of art depicting mostly inanimate subject matter. You would commonly see natural subjects, including food, flowers, plants, rocks, shells, or man-made subjects, like drinking glasses, books, vases, jewelry, coins, and pipes.

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

BRUSHES:

- Large Hog Bright
- Medium Synthetic Filbert
- Small Synthetic Round Angle
- X-Small Synthetic Round

TOOLS:

- 11 x 14 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.)
- T-Square Ruler
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- Optional: StayWet Palette

SYMBOL GUIDE:

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

TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Color Theory
- Implying Foliage
- Expressive Painting Strokes
- Being Painterly and Loose
- Finding Value
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- Setting a Horizon line
- Color Mixing



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.

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	03:44	SKETCHING IN
STEP 2	11:46	TABLETOP
STEP 3	15:41	BACKGROUND
STEP 4	24:48	PITCHER
STEP 5	35:23	BLOCK IN IRISES
STEP 6	45:25	BLOCK IN SOME VALUES
STEP 7	55:16	UPPER FLOWERS
STEP 8	1:11:40	ADDING SOME DETAIL
STEP 9	1:27:45	FILLING IN THE ARRANGEMENT
STEP 10	1:35:58	MORE VALUE
STEP 11	1:40:39	MORE DETAILS
STEP 12	1:52:54	DARK LINING AND FINAL DETAILS
STEP 13	2:08:43	IMPASTO
	2:16:57	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.



WATERCOLOR

WEDNESDAYS

FREE
weekly watercolor
live stream virtual art class!
7:00 PM EST

Watch directly from TAS Facebook
page each week.

ALL skill levels welcome.
Bring your watercolors and let's

RELAX &
CHILL OUT
TOGETHER

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STEP 1 – SKETCHING IN

Timestamp 3:44

“PLACING THE OBJECTS WITH CONTOUR LINES”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Ultramarine Blue = UB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

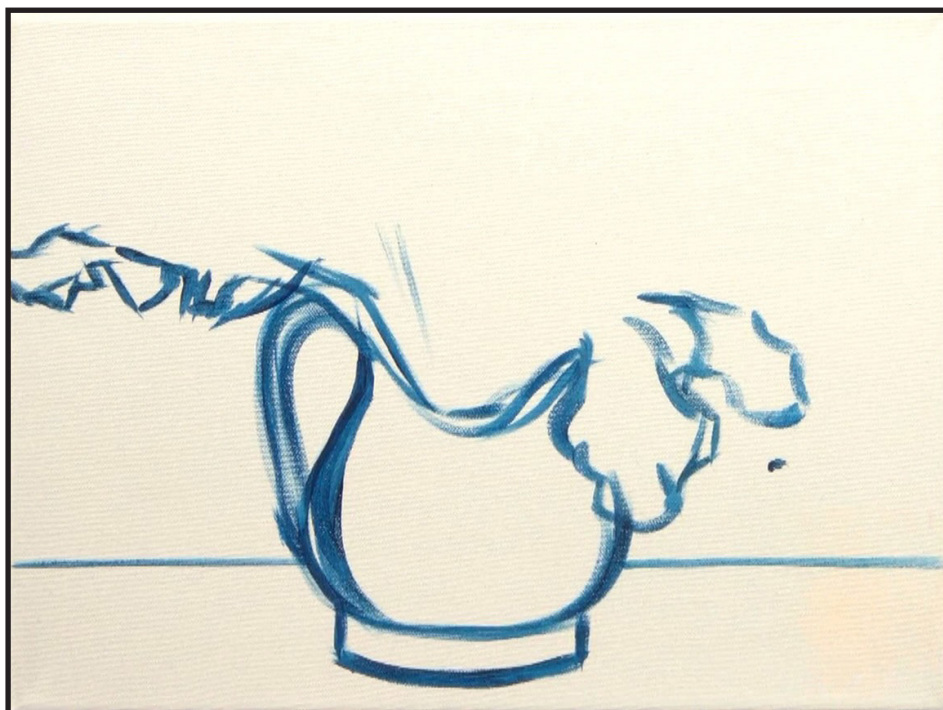
Blue = UB + PB > CRM

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 to get your image on the canvas. 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.
- Start at the bottom of the canvas with the base of the jug. Use the **Blue mix** to paint two upward curved smile lines in parallel, about 3 inches long. Join them with a vertical line on both ends to create the base. Mark the height of the jug about 1 ½ inches below the center. Then, round

out both sides of the jug symmetrically. The lip of the jug dips down to the right of the handle and then rises again for the spout. Add an elongated, curved handle on the left side that rises above the height of the jug and joins where the bottom of the jug begins to curve into the base.

- Paint two bent stems coming out of the jug to the left over the handle. Sketch in the lip of the spout, so you can paint the contour outline of the irises that hang down over the right side of the jug. Contour lines are just the outer shape of the flowers to hold space and position them. Sketch the outline of the group of irises on the left side of the canvas. Then, use the reference photo to make any adjustments you feel are needed at this point.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next direction.
- Use the T-square and the **Blue mix** to sketch a horizontal line for the table at about 2 inches from the bottom of the canvas.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 2 - TABLETOP Timestamp 11:46

“A MINTY GREEN TABLECLOTH”

PAINT:

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

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Roughly paint a thick layer of the **Mint mix** on the tabletop. Sometimes add extra Burnt Sienna, sometimes a bit extra Titanium White, and allow them to mix on the canvas. Make adjustments as you go to add painterly expressions. Rinse and dry the brush.

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:

Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW



STEP 3 – BACKGROUND Timestamp 15:41

“SHOW YOUR ENERGETIC BRUSH STROKES”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Large Hog Bright

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Brown = BS + MB
Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the **Dark Brown mix** onto the brush, then wipe it off on a paper towel, leaving only a small amount of pigment on the brush. Add a lot of Titanium White to create a very light color. Begin applying this to the background using short back and forth brush strokes.
- You can take this opportunity to trim any area of the jug or flowers using the background color. Keep the brush strokes horizontal and the paint layer thick.
- Sometimes add a smidge of Mars Black in a few spaces, sometimes a smidge of Burnt Sienna in other places, but always keep the value light by using a lot of Titanium White.
- Make any needed adjustments to the bottom of the jug, using the **Mint mix**. Rinse and dry the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 4 – PITCHER

Timestamp 24:48

“VASE OR VAHZ”

PAINT:

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Blue = UB + PB > CRM

Dark Beige = YO + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Blue mix** to paint a clean outline on the vase, trimming and adjusting as needed. Rinse the brush.
- Tint the Titanium White with a tiny amount of Ultramarine Blue to paint a thick application of this color onto the vase, leave obvious paint strokes. Trim the interior lines of the vase as well, if needed. Paint inside the lines, leaving the strong outlines showing. Rinse the brush.
- At this point I dried my canvas, then made adjustments to the vase to make it more symmetrical, using the **Blue mix**. Rinse the brush. Dry the surface again.
- Tint the Titanium White with a tiny amount of Burnt Sienna to make sure both sides of the vase are

rounded out. Paint it very loosely and leave a lot of paint on the surface.

- Paint the shadow on the inside of the handle with the **Dark Beige mix**. Add just a bit of this color on the left side of the base and belly of the jug. Then, add a bit of shadow on the right side of the neck and under the spout lip. Rinse the brush.
- Tint the Titanium White with a tiny amount of Ultramarine Blue again, and paint another thick application of this color onto the vase. Rinse the brush.
- Use the **Blue mix** to paint a thin line between the shadow and the highlight on the handle of the jug. It is a good time to strengthen the line between the tabletop and the background. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 5 – BLOCK IN IRISES

Timestamp 35:23

“MAKE BLUE BLOBS AND GREEN LINES”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Blue = UB + PB > CRM

Dark Brown = BS + MB

Forest Green = BS + PG > PB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Blue mix** to block in the outlines of the shape of the irises hanging over the right side of the vase. Leaving some negative space between flowers. At any time you can come back and strengthen the negative space with the background color which is Titanium White mixed with a tiny amount of the **Dark Brown mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Block in the iris shapes on the left side of the canvas with the **Blue mix**, capturing the basic space the shapes are occupying. Rinse the brush.
- Use the **Forest Green mix** to begin adding in the leaf shapes. Paint two bent leaves starting on

the left side of the jug, leaving a negative space between. Continue filling the mouth of the jug with stems and leaves that will fill in the neck of the jug and support the flowers. Use vertical strokes that angle in different directions, only painting them to just above the halfway point on the canvas. Next to the first two leaves that were painted, add a taller leaf that angles and bends to the left, and another leaf directly below that. Place another longer leaf in the grouping that also leans to the left. Rinse the brush.

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Sherpa Tip: You may need to refer to the reference photo a lot while painting these flowers to determine placement and shapes of the flowers, leaves and stems. However, this is a reproduction, so as an artist you can simplify the arrangement or make different color choices than Van Gogh.



STEP 6 – BLOCK IN SOME VALUES Timestamp 45:25

“DIFFERENT VALUES START TO BUILD FLOWER STRUCTURE”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Sky Blue = PB + TW
Light Blue = UB + TW
Medium Green =
CYM + PG + BS
Blue = UB + PB > CRM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Start with the group of irises on the left, and paint their basic shapes with the different values that will build their overall form. Apply the **Sky Blue mix** with painterly strokes to create implied folds, angles and curves. Values are varied by adding more Titanium White in some places, or more **Light Blue mix** in other places. Leave an outer edge of the darker blue that is beneath, to separate the shapes and to create the outlines that are part of the style choice of Van Gogh. Use the reference photo to precisely locate the shapes and values while building the irises.

- Move to the right side of the jug. Use the **Medium Green mix** to curl a leaf that layers over the top of the flowers. Again, leave the edge of the darker color below. Add a couple more short strokes of this color to imply leaves.
- Use the same method on the flowers on this side of the jug as you did on the other side. Also apply the same flower color mixes, and variations of them as above. Strengthen the outlines of the irises with the **Blue mix** on the edge of the brush. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Sherpa Tip: Instead of striving for an exact reproduction, just try to get the feeling of the piece, and learn from how it is constructed, so that we can construct it in your own art.





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STEP 7 – UPPER FLOWERS

Timestamp 55:16

“BALANCING THE WEIGHT OF THE ARRANGEMENT”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

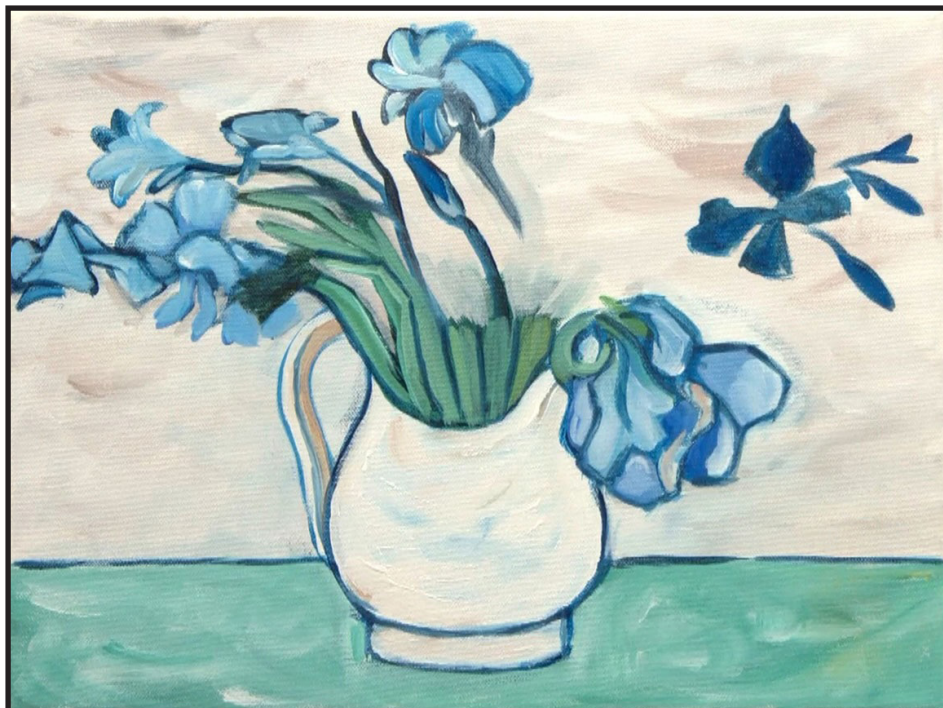
COLOR MIXES:

Blue = UB + PB > CRM
Pale Brown = TW > BS
Sky Blue = PB + TW
Light Blue = UB + TW
Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the shape of the lone Iris at the top of the canvas with the **Blue mix**. Add the jointed stem, as well, with the **Mint mix**. Rinse the brush. Make adjustments to leaves if needed by painting over them with the **Pale Brown mix**. Paint this upper flower using the same method and mixes as before. Create basic shapes, with the different values that will build their overall form. Switch between the **Sky Blue mix** and the **Light Blue mix** or variations of them. Paint a closed iris below, and to the left of this flower. Use the **Light Blue mix** to fill in this diamond shape. Outline it with the **Blue mix**, and paint a stem going down into the jug. Rinse the brush.

- You can adjust some of the greenery with the **Pale Brown mix**. You can adjust the negative spaces in the painting at this point. Rinse the brush.
- In the upper left quadrant, paint the basic shape of another iris above the other flowers, using the **Blue mix**. Add a stem coming horizontally from that flower then bending into the jug. Continue using the **Blue mix** to paint another flower shape in this same area, but a bit further right. Add the stem from the flower to the jug, then paint in a couple more random stems. On the far right of the canvas, with the **Blue mix**, add some more interesting bud shapes for balance. Then, paint in the shape of another iris in bloom. You can add outlines to any elements as you go. Rinse the brush.
- Apply the **Mint mix** to the inside of the leaves and stems, use painterly strokes to add the lighter value. Vary the mix, add angles and curves for interesting leaf shapes. Leave the outer edge of the darker green to separate the shapes, and help create the leaf structure. Exaggerate the lines that outline the leaves using the **Blue mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Use the **Sky Blue mix** to shape the irises in the upper left quadrant. Add a bit of the **Pale Brown mix** to mute the color a bit in a few spots. Combine some of the **Mint Green mix** and the **Sky Blue mix** to paint a highlight at the top of the tallest flower. Vary the mix by adding more Ultramarine Blue at the bottom of this flower. Highlight some of the lower flowers with the **Light Blue mix**, outlining with the **Blue mix** as you go. Paint a bit of Phthalo Blue on the tip of the flower bud that is in the center of the canvas. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 8 – ADDING SOME DETAIL

Timestamp 1:11:40

“VALUE CREATES INTEREST AND DIMENSION”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Blue = UB + PB > CRM
Light Green = CYM < PG + TW
Beige = TW > CYM > BS
Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW
Muted Blue = UB + BS + TW
Sky Blue = PB + TW
Light Blue = UB + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint a forward, downward facing flower shape on the left side of the jug handle. Use the **Blue mix**, and layer this shape over top of the flowers behind. Rinse the brush.
- Continue on the left side of the canvas, to paint the highlights on the stems with **Light Green mix**. Add more Cadmium Yellow Medium to vary the mix to paint the casing at the base of the flower heads. Paint another leaf that peeks out from between the bottom two flowers on the left using the **Light Green mix**. Add a bit of the **Beige mix** on the

brush to touch bits of this color in here and there. Loosely tuck little bits of leaves using these various green values.

- Outline the tallest flower in the center of the canvas with the **Blue mix**. Rinse the brush. Then, paint the stem and the base of this flower with the **Mint mix**. Vary the mix by adding Cadmium Yellow Medium and layering it on top. In a few spots you can even add a touch of Phthalo Blue into the mix. Continue painting the stems and leaves in a similar fashion. Rinse the brush.
- Move to the right side of the canvas with the **Mint Green mix** to begin painting the stems that attach to the floating buds and flower. Vary the mix as you did on the left side, and sketch in more leaves on this side. Check with the reference photo for placement. Line the leaves and stem with the **Blue mix**. Then, still with the **Blue mix**, paint four more leaves in the bottom right quadrant. Rinse the brush.
- Pop in some of the **Beige mix** here and there throughout the greenery for interest and dimension. Rinse the brush.
- Alternate between the **Muted Blue mix**, the **Sky Blue mix** and the **Light Blue mix** to add the various values on the iris in the upper right corner. Add some of the highlight colors to the other flowers as you go to continually add more dimension. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 9 – FILLING IN THE ARRANGEMENT

Timestamp 1:27:45

“PATCHING UP THE HOLE IN THE MIDDLE”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Blue = UB + PB > CRM
Light Green = CYM < PG + TW
Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Blue mix** to block in the shape of the group of irises that is in the middle of the arrangement. As you move down the canvas, layer the flowers over some of the work below, allowing some of the colors below to peek through the negative spaces between these new blooms. Paint another large flower shape on the left side, just above the handle. Rinse the brush.
- Use the **Light Green mix** to paint the leaves back in anywhere you need to. Rinse the brush. Paint the four leaves at the bottom right with the **Mint Green mix**, leaving the dark edge around the outside. Vary the mix slightly as you go. Define any other leaves that need it. Then, add Cadmium Yellow Medium onto the dirty brush to blend onto the tips of some of the leaves. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 10 – MORE VALUE

Timestamp 1:35:58

“MORE DIMENSION”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Blue = UB + PB > CRM

Sky Blue = PB + TW

Light Blue = UB + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Blue mix** to build any more flower shapes where needed. Then, start applying the **Sky Blue mix** to the dark blue iris shapes. Let the brush strokes be painterly. Values are varied by adding more Titanium White in some places, and the **Light Blue mix** in other places. Leave the outer edge of the darker blue that is beneath to separate the shapes, and help create the flower structure. Use the reference photo to approximate the shapes and values while building the irises. Add some of the highlight colors to the other flowers as you go, continually adding interest and dimensionality. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 11 – MORE DETAILS

Timestamp 1:40:39

“TIME TO SWITCH TACTICS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Green = PG
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Tan = CYM + YO + BS + TW
Sky Blue = PB + TW
Light Brown = TW > BS
Blue = UB + PB > CRM
Light Blue = UB + TW
Light Green = CYM < PG + TW
Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Tan mix** on the toe of the brush to start adding highlights on the tips of the petals on the upper left iris. Blend these in with loose strokes of the **Sky Blue mix**, applying the paint thickly. Moving from left to right, add the **Light Brown mix** highlights, and loosely blend with the **Light Blue mix**. Sometimes blend in pure pigment from any of the colors in the mixes. Focus Titanium White near the centers of some of the flowers. Then, add a dot of the **Tan mix** to the very center of the white. Add outlines with the **Blue mix**, and

highlight with the lighter mixes. Continue to switch between these mixes, and their variations throughout the irises. Rinse the brush.

- Paint the leaves in a similar fashion, but use the **Light Green mix**, the **Mint mix**, or their variations. Exaggerate the lines that outline the leaves using the **Blue mix**. Rinse the brush. Add little pops of the **Light Brown mix** here and there. Rinse the brush.
- Continue applying small touches of color, leaving thick paint strokes, until you are happy with the look of your painting. You can always check the reference photo for this step to get ideas for where to place color.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



STEP 12 – DARK LINING AND FINAL DETAILS

Timestamp 1:52:54

“TIME TO ADD INTERESTING DETAILS”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Phthalo Blue = PB
Ultramarine Blue = UB
Phthalo Green = PG
Titanium White = TW
Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Blue = UB + PB > CRM
Light Ochre = YO + TW
Turquoise =
PB + PG + CYM + TW
Light Green = CYM + PG + TW
Medium Green =
CYM + PG + BS
Light Brown = TW > BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Blue mix** on the toe of the brush to outline the elements in this piece. These dark lines add weight to the piece as well as creating shape and form. Add interesting lines to create folds and veining within the flowers, and leaves as well. Also, add some dark leaves that layer over a few things in the arrangement. Rinse the brush.
- Highlight a few places around the flowers with the **Light Ochre mix**. Then, brighten the centers with Cadmium Yellow Medium. Tuck some of these colors here and there to add some pop. Rinse the brush.

- Brush in some strokes of interesting color on the flower petals with the **Turquoise mix**.
- Add another layer of paint to define the leaves. Alternate between the **Light Green mix** and the **Medium Green mix**. Pop touches of green here and there between the flowers for continuity. Rinse.
- Trim or define the negative spaces with some of the **Light Brown Mix**. Add pure Titanium White in places on the flowers, and on the jug, to create flow and continuity to the piece. Use the **Blue mix** to touch up outlines, to deepen the shadow areas, and to add dimensionality. Play with the colors and mixes until you are happy. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

Sherpa Tip: At some point you are going to have to pay more attention to your painting than to your reference. What you are creating should become more important to you than duplicating someone else's work.



STEP 13 – IMPASTO

Timestamp 2:08:43

“A GOOD WAY TO USE LEFTOVER PAINT ON THE PALETTE”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

COLOR MIXES:

Light Brown = TW > BS

Light Green = CYM + PG + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Because this is heavy body paint, applying a thick layer, and using short brush strokes will give the Impasto effect.
- I had a lot left of Titanium White, Burnt Sienna, Cadmium Yellow Medium and Phthalo Green on the palette, so I made the **Light Brown mix**, and painted a thick layer onto the background. Then, I made a **Light Green mix**, and added a thick layer to the table. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface.
- Sign.



THE TRACING METHOD

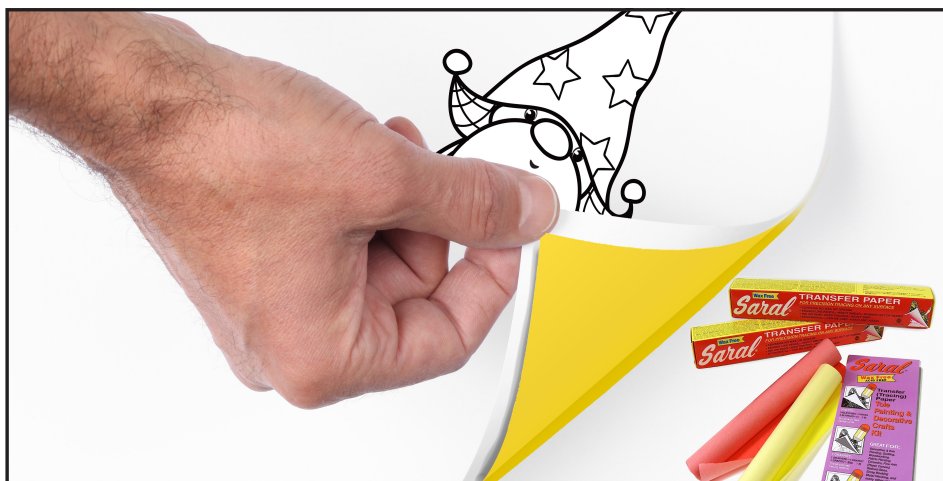
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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.

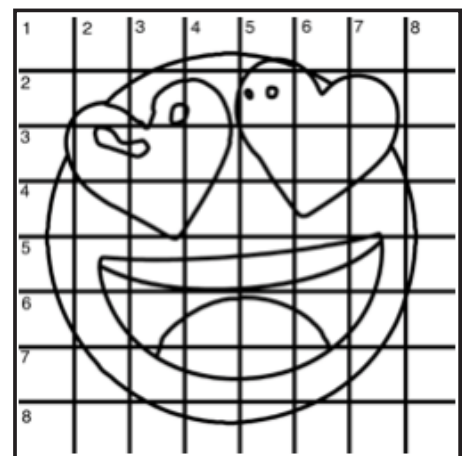
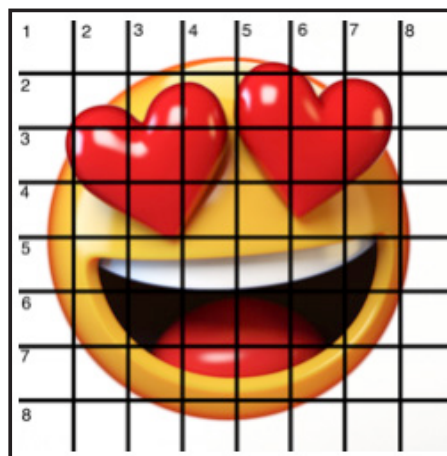
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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.

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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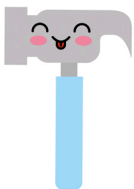
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