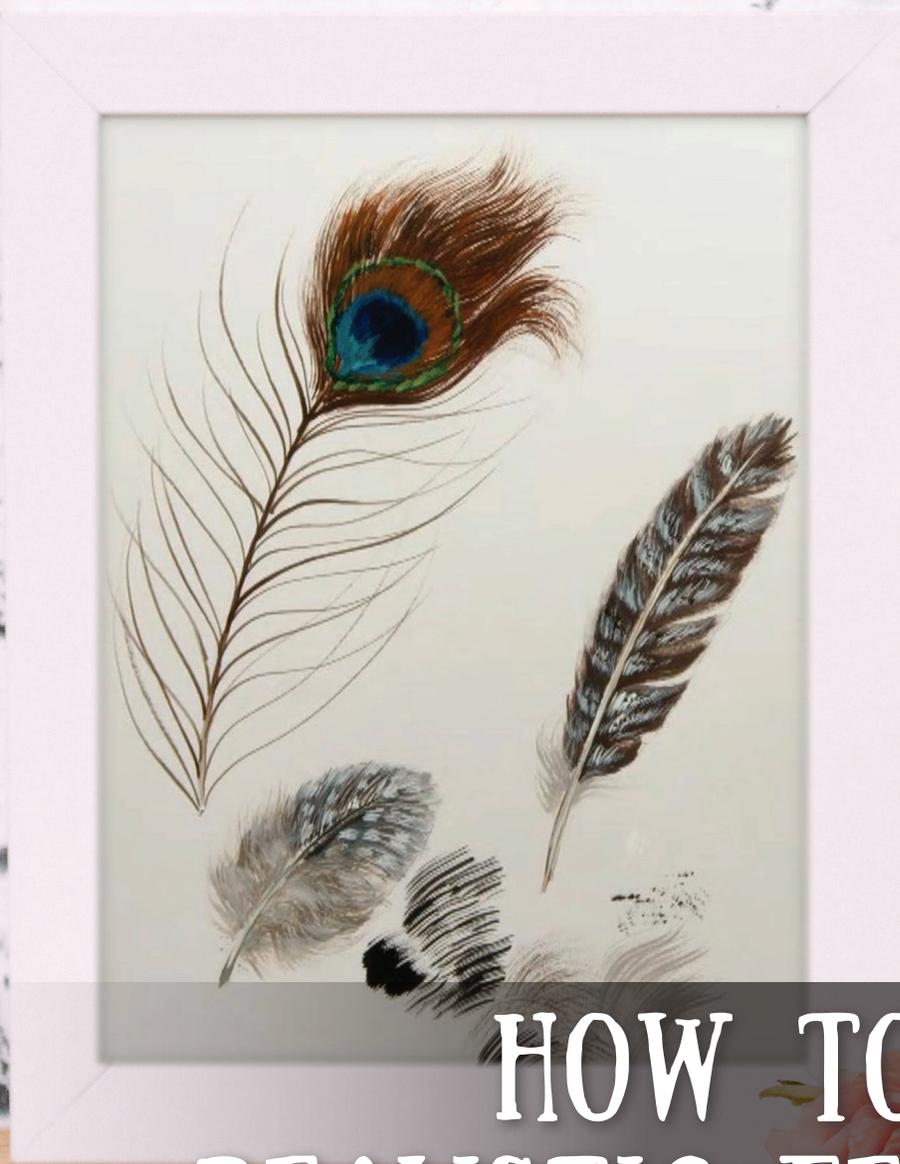


THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



HOW TO PAINT REALISTIC FEATHERS

BY: THE ART SHERPA

STEPS: 16 | DIFFICULTY: BEGINNER | 1 HOOT



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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.

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
- 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:

- Small Filbert Grainer
- Small Synthetic Angle
- X-Small Synthetic Round

TOOLS:

- 2B Pencil
- Chalk Pencil or Watercolor Pencil
- 9x12 Fabriano 1264 Mixed Media Pad, White
- Optional: StayWet Palette

SYMBOL GUIDE:

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

TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Color Theory
- Foliage
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- Directionality
- Blending Wet into Wet
- 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:	STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO	STEP 14	1:07:15	ADDING COLOR
STEP 1	04:31	SMALL POLKA DOT FEATHER	STEP 15	1:08:27	FANTASY FEATHER
STEP 2	10:56	TOP OF THE FEATHER	STEP 16	1:10:56	PAINT THE RAINBOW
STEP 3	13:46	DOTS		1:22:01	OUTRO
STEP 4	17:09	DOWNY FLUFF			
STEP 5	22:36	TURKEY FEATHER			
STEP 6	26:47	DARK VALUES FIRST			
STEP 7	31:50	TURKEY STRIPES			
STEP 8	35:49	STRIPES AND SPOTS			
STEP 9	40:31	PEACOCK FEATHER			
STEP 10	49:15	DOWNY AFTER FEATHERS			
STEP 11	51:44	THE EYE			
STEP 12	57:38	RED AND YELLOW FEATHER			
STEP 12	1:04:01	THE QUILL			



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 - SMALL POLKA DOT FEATHER

Timestamp 4:31

“FEATHERS HAVE SKELETONS TOO!”

PAINT:

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2B Pencil

X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Warm Grey = TW + YO + MB

Light Cream = TW > YO

STEP DISCUSSION:

- To decide on the scale of the feather, start by sketching a small curved line for the quill in the bottom left corner. To capture the gesture, start at the bottom of the quill and curve upward and to the right. Then lightly draw in the perspective of the feather. It is turned more towards the viewer, so the right side will show more than the left side.
- Thin the **Warm Grey mix** with water. It is thicker at the bottom of the quill and thins out as it moves up the feather. Rinse the brush.
- Deepen the **Warm Grey mix** by adding more Mars Black to the thinned paint. Then, apply this color from the midpoint of the quill up to the tip, to translate how the quill goes from a light color to a dark color. Rinse the brush and wipe it on a paper towel.

- Run a fine line of the **Light Cream mix** down the very center of the quill, Then, shade the sides and the bottom point of the quill the **Warm Grey mix**. Rinse the brush.

Sherpa Tip: If you need to improve a line, just make adjustments using the color below, to thin or to make any changes needed.



STEP 2 - TOP OF THE FEATHER

Timestamp 10:56

“FEATHERING OUT”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert

Grainer

COLOR MIXES:

Light Grey = TW > MB

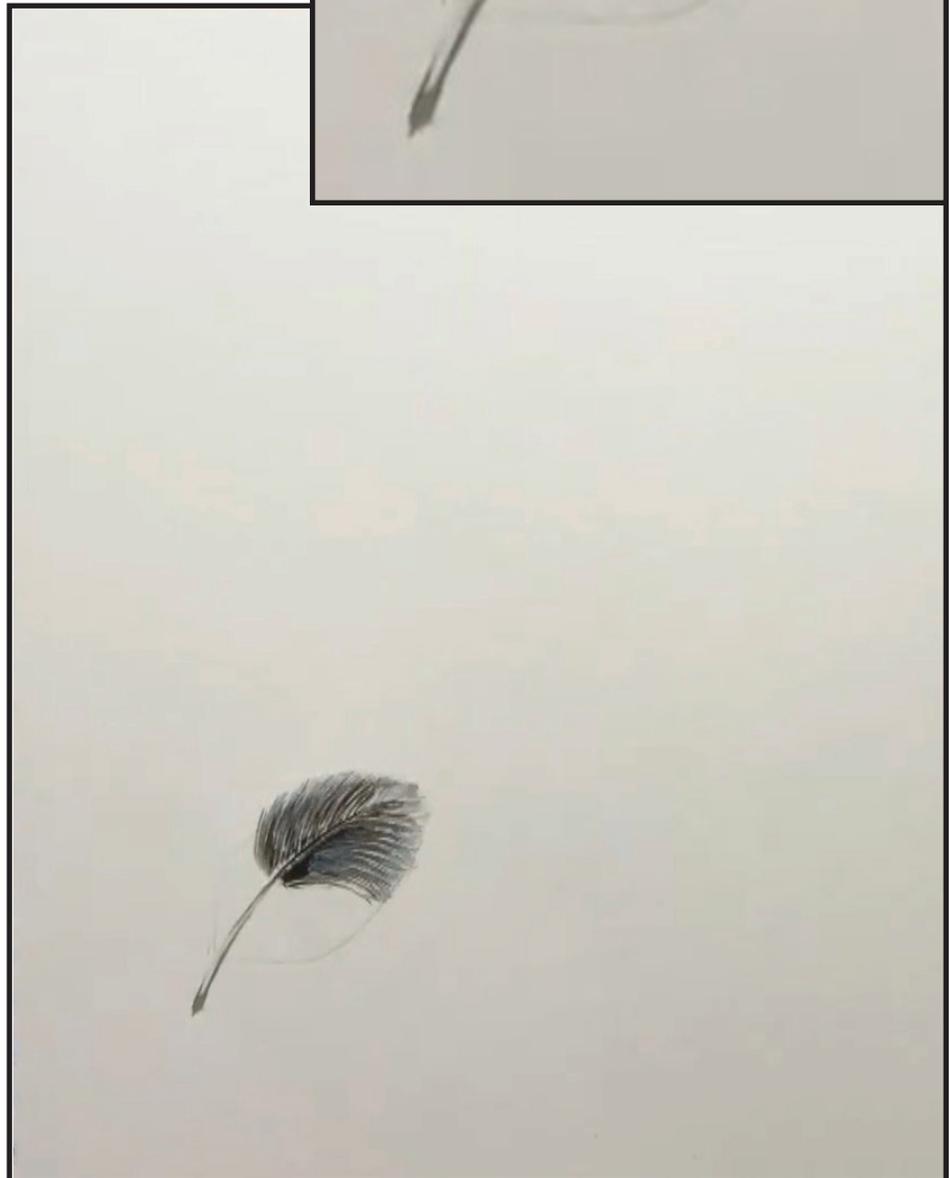
Dark Brown = BS + MB > TW

Mid Grey = TW > MB > BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Thin Mars Black with water and use very light pressure on the tip of the brush to apply the brush strokes. Start on the right side of the quill, at the midpoint and curve the stroke outward to the right. Then, continue adding these strokes along the quill, towards the tip, allowing the shape of the brush to form the details of the feather.
- Move to the midpoint of the left side of the quill. Then, curve the stroke up and slightly right.
- Delicately, apply the **Light Grey mix** to the outside edges of these feather strokes.
- Add a shadow on the inside of the feathers, along the quill, using the **Dark Brown mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Use the **Mid Grey mix** along the highest point of the

curved lines as a bit of a highlight. Rinse the brush.



STEP 3 - DOTS

Timestamp 13:46

“DOT, DOT, DOT...”

PAINT:

Titanium White = TW

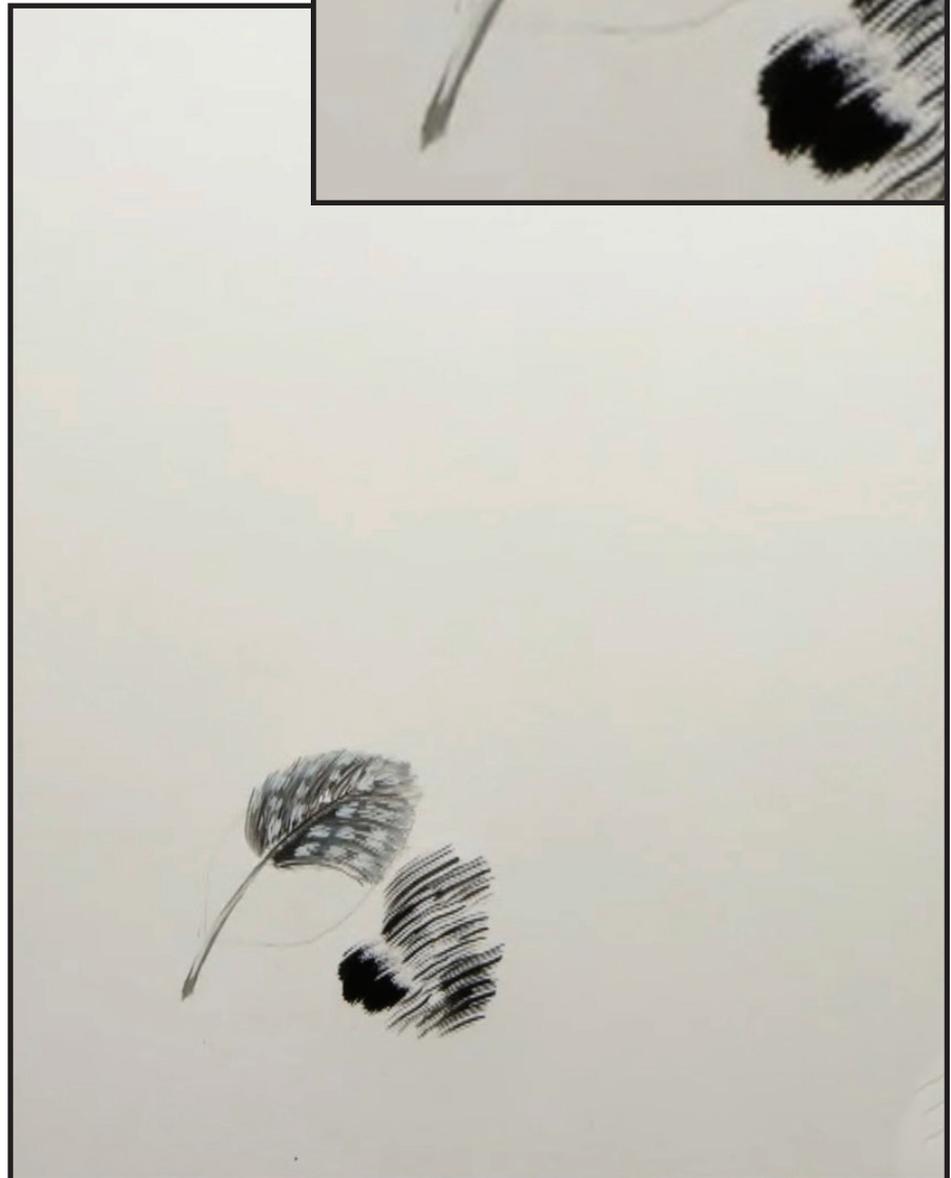
Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Add just a smidge of Mars Black into the Titanium White. You still want it white, just not absolute white. Then, using the tip of the brush, apply short little lines that come together to form a dot shape that is not completely solid. Continue painting these broken dots, in rows of three along either side of the feather. Rinse the brush.



STEP 4 - DOWNY FLUFF

Timestamp 17:09

“FLOWN DOWN”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert

Grainer

COLOR MIXES:

Warm Brown = BS + YO > MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Lighten the **Warm Brown mix** with Titanium White, and thin it with water. Apply messy “S” strokes on either side of the quill at the bottom of the feather. Use light pressure in various directions to create the downy fluff.
- Lighten the mix further by adding more Titanium White to it. Lightly, highlight over the fluff, using light pressure. Tap some of this color close to the quill. Rinse the brush.



STEP 5 - TURKEY FEATHER

Timestamp 22:36

“ALSO KNOWN AS THE THANKFUL FEATHER”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Titanium White = TW
Yellow Ochre = YO
Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2B Pencil
Small Synthetic Angle
X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Mid Ochre =
YO + TW > BS > MB
Warm Brown = BS + YO > MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Move to the right of the polka dot feather, start by sketching the curved line for the turkey quill. This quill also curves upward and to the right, but it is longer. Then, start a little bit up from the bottom of the quill and begin to lightly draw the left side of the feather. It bows out from the quill slightly rounded, then follows the quill in parallel to the tip, where it rounds out again, and then points down. The right side of the quill is drawn in a similar fashion.
- Apply the **Mid Ochre mix** onto the quill using the edge of the Angle brush. Release the pressure on the brush as you move along to the tip. Thicken the bottom of the quill slightly. Rinse the brush.
- Switch to the X-Small Round and thin the **Mid Ochre mix** with water. Use this to add the very thin part of the upper quill. Rinse the brush.
- Using the Fluid White Paint, apply a thin line through the center of the quill, without entirely covering all your previous work.
- Shade the bottom of the quill with the **Warm Brown mix**. Then, apply more of the Fluid White Paint on the quill center, without rinsing the brush. Followed by a brighter highlight using pure Fluid White Paint. Rinse the brush.



STEP 6 - DARK VALUES, FIRST

Timestamp 26:47

“IT’S DARKEST BEFORE THE LIGHT”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2B Pencil

Small Synthetic Angle

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Brown = BS + MB > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the pencil to draw the breaks in the feather. They are mostly along the right side, with some on the tip of the feather.
- With the point of the Angle brush facing down, paint the right side of the feather with the **Dark Brown mix**. The brush strokes should come from the quill, outward in the direction they would grow from. They curve and break along the edge, sometimes using a dry brush technique.
- Begin changing direction and use shorter strokes on the tip of the brush to piece out the top of the feather.
- Start again at the bottom of the left side of the feather. These strokes are slightly shorter than the other side, and they curve up and to the left. Rinse the brush.



STEP 7 - TURKEY STRIPES

Timestamp 31:50

“GREY GOES UP AND OUT”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert
Grainer

COLOR MIXES:

Fluid Grey = FWP > MB > BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Using the tip of the brush and the **Fluid Grey mix**, begin finding the stripped patterning on the feather. Start on the bottom right side, and apply short, broken strokes.
- As you move around to the left side of the feather, notice that the striped pattern lines up with that on the right side. Finally add the downy fluff at the bottom of the feather, using messy “S” strokes. Rinse the brush.



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STEP 8 - STRIPES AND SPOTS

Timestamp 35:49

“MAKING IT REALLY TURKEY”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round
Small Synthetic Filbert
Grainer

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Brown = BS + MB > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Highlight bits of the striped pattern with pure Fluid White Paint on the Grainer brush. Rinse the brush.
- Use the tips of the bristles to tap tiny spots of the **Dark Brown mix**, on the strips of the feather. Rinse the brush.
- Switch to the X-Small Round, and refine the tip of the quill with Fluid White Paint. Rinse the brush.



STEP 9 - PEACOCK FEATHER

Timestamp 40:31

“STANDING OUT”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Mars Black = MB
Yellow Ochre = YO
Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert Grainer
X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Warm Brown = BS + YO > MB
Dark Brown = BS + MB > TW
Russet =
CYM + CRM + BS + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- On the left side of the surface, use the pencil to draw a slightly long-ish, slightly “S” shaped curve for the quill of the peacock feather. Down a bit from the tip, widen the barbs on either side of the quill. Then, draw the eye of the feather in the center, near the base of the widened area.
- Use the X-Small round to thin the **Warm Brown mix** with some water. Paint the quill of the peacock feather only a small way into where the pattern will be because the eye will be built off of that point. Rinse the brush.
- Add Fluid White Paint to the **Warm Brown mix** and lighten the center of the quill at the bottom. Create an ombre as you go up by

adding just the **Warm Brown mix** next, and then adding the **Dark Brown mix**, and finally the Mars Black at the tip where the eye will be. Rinse the brush.

- While the paint is still wet, use the damp brush, wiggling it back and forth to blend the transition areas. Rinse the brush.
- Switch to the Grainer brush and load it with a thinned **Russet mix**. Begin adding opposing curved lines at the tip of the quill. Move down the quill a bit on the right hand side, and begin lightly painting wavy, elongated “S” strokes, upward and feathering out to the right. Use the very tip of the brush and very light pressure to add fine, feathery hairs on the ends of these strokes. Repeat this process on the left side. Then, delicately fill in this area with more fine elongated hair-like strokes to create a base for the eye. Rinse the brush.



STEP 10 – DOWNY AFTER FEATHERS

Timestamp 49:15

“FILLING OUT THE FEATHER”

PAINT:

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Brown = BS + MB > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Starting at the base of the solid part of the feather, begin adding the sparsely positioned, long curved vanes along the quill using the **Dark Brown mix**. Apply these strokes using the tip of the brush and light pressure, crossing them over one another at times. Repeat this process on the opposite side of the quill. Rinse the brush.

Sherpa Tip: I am working from the top left and downward. This is because I am right-handed, so I am making a strategy based on where my dominant hand tends to rest so I do not drag it through the paint. You can base your strategy on where your dominant stroke is and where you rest your hand.



STEP 11 - THE EYE

Timestamp 51:44

“EYE OF THE PEACOCK”

PAINT:

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

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Angle
Small Synthetic Filbert Grainer

COLOR MIXES:

Turquoise = PB + PG > TW
Dark Blue = PB + MB
Emerald Green = PG + CYM
Light Green = CYM > PG + TW
Light Turquoise = PB + TW > PG
Russet = CYM + CRM + BS + MB
Burnt Orange = CYM + CRM
> BS
Dark Brown = BS + MB > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the tip of the angle brush and the **Turquoise mix** to sketch a square-ish circle at the base of the more solid part of the feather. Also use this color to paint curved strokes in either direction, along the bottom and sides of the eye. Then, using the edge of the brush, paint short strokes along the top of the eye.
- Paint the darker center of the eye in a kidney bean shape, using the **Dark Blue mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Use the **Emerald Green mix** and short brush strokes

to paint a halo around the outside of the eye. This halo is closer to the eye at the base and gets further away as it goes around the top. Add a second value to the halo using the **Light Green mix**.

- Add a second value to the bottom of the eye using the **Light Turquoise mix**. Adjust in the eye and blend the colors using any of the blue mixes on the palette. Rinse the brush.
- Switch to the Grainer brush and adjust the brown part of the feather with the **Russet mix**. Rinse the brush. Add a layer of Phthalo Green around the halo, followed by Phthalo Blue in the center of the eye.
- Paint the area between the eye and the halo using the **Burnt Orange mix** and small strokes. Then, use this color to highlight a few of the other vanes as well. Rinse the brush. Adjust the shadow on this part of the feather using the **Dark Brown mix**. Rinse the brush.



STEP 12 – RED AND YELLOW FEATHER

Timestamp 57:38

“LIKE A PHOENIX”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Burnt Sienna = BS
Titanium White = TW
Mars Black = MB

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2B Pencil
Small Synthetic Angle

COLOR MIXES:

Orange = CYM + CRM
Dark Brown = BS + MB > TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- In the bottom left corner, capture the gesture by curving the quill upward and to the right. Then, lightly draw in the edges of the feather including the breaks.
- Paint the tip of the feather with Cadmium Yellow Medium. Then, with the tip of brush facing down, paint the left side of the feather, using Cadmium Red Medium. Allow the paint to be more solid near the quill area and feathering out along the edges. Create some breaks in the feather and add more water to improve flow, as you move downward. Pay attention to directionality as you repeat the process on the opposite side, leaving a thin space between to imply the quill.

- Moving further down the feather, begin blending in some of the **Orange mix**. Continue adding more Cadmium Yellow Medium at the bottom of the feather. Create the breaks in the vanes and continue to pay attention to directionality. Then, glaze a bit more of this color onto the tip of the feather.
- At the bottom of the feather, use the dirty brush to blend in a bit of the **Dark Brown mix**, starting from the quill and moving outward, slightly. Rinse the brush.



STEP 13 – THE QUILL

Timestamp 1:04:15

“OLD FASHIONED”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Fluid White Paint = FWP

Yellow Ochre = YO

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round

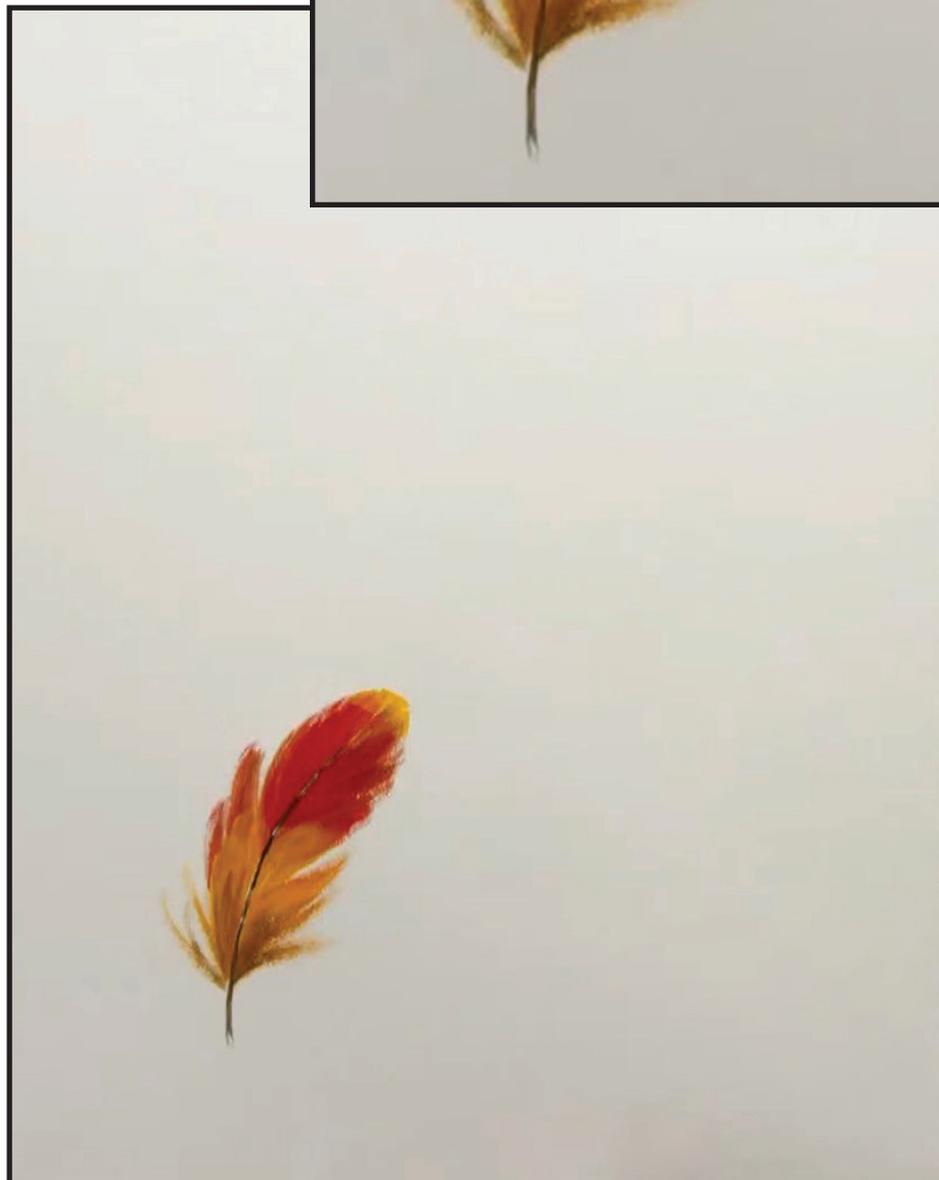
COLOR MIXES:

Warm Brown = BS + YO > MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Thin some Mars Black with water. Carefully paint the quill from the bottom up, tapering it to a very thin line near the top. Rinse the brush. If you need to thin the line further, use Cadmium Red Medium right along the quill, then follow the directionality of the feather, outward. Rinse the brush.
- Add a broken highlight along the quill using Fluid White Paint.
- At the bottom of the quill, paint a second value using the **Warm Brown mix**. Then, add some Fluid White Paint in the center of the quill, at the bottom, using a back and forth wiggle to blend it in.
- Carefully, create a bit of a shadow along the right edge of the quill with Mars Black. Rinse the brush.

Sherpa Tip: Watch for the drop of water that likes to hide in these fine liner brushes.



STEP 14 - ADDING COLOR

Timestamp 1:07:15

“FLAMING BEAUTY”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Filbert

Grainer

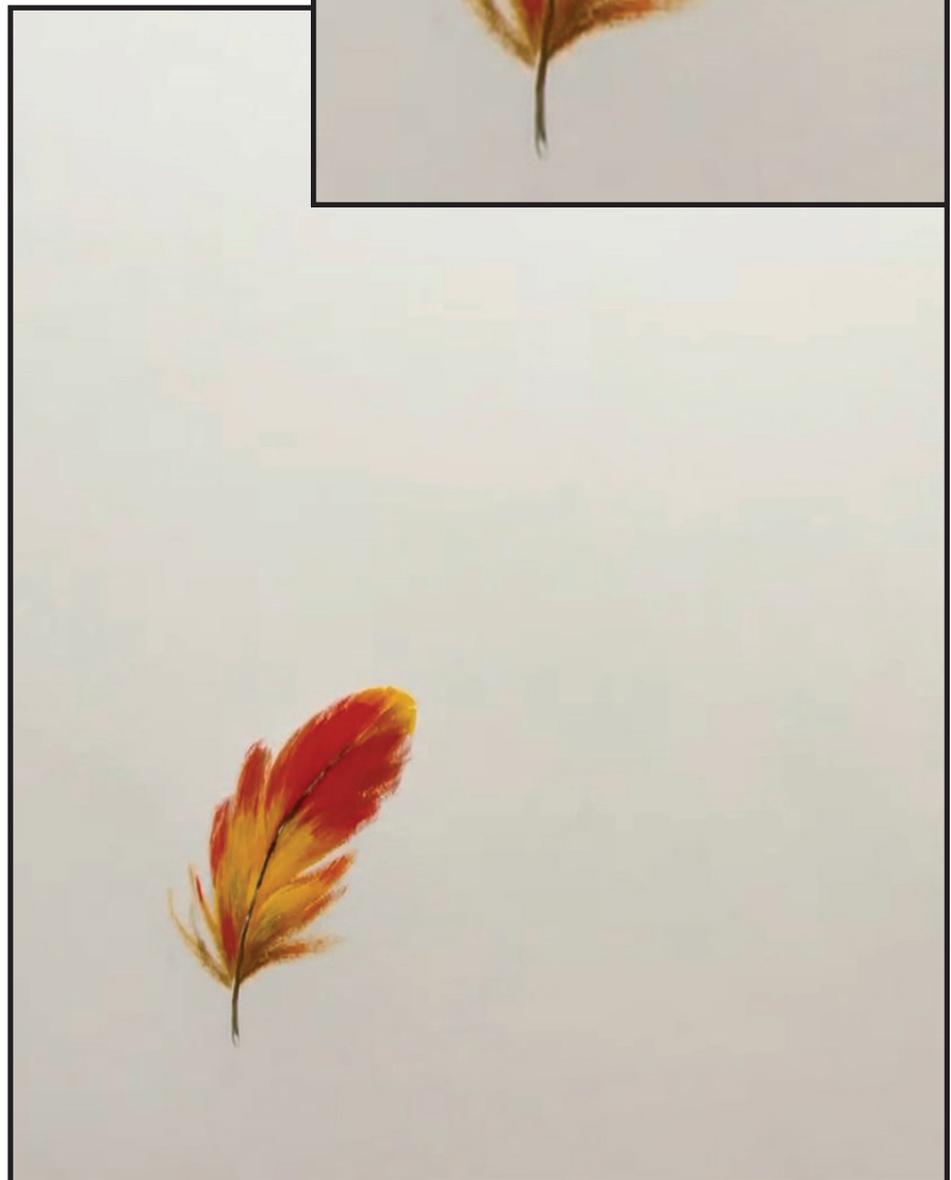
COLOR MIXES:

Light Yellow = CYM + FWP

Orange = CYM + CRM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Delicately, layer the **Light Yellow mix** onto the lower midsection of the feather. Then, thin a bit of the **Orange mix** and layer that in the red area and along some of the edges. Rinse the brush.



STEP 15 - FANTASY FEATHER

Timestamp 1:08:35

“FINAL FANTASY”

PAINT:

Yellow Ochre = YO

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Fluid White Paint = FWP

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2B Pencil

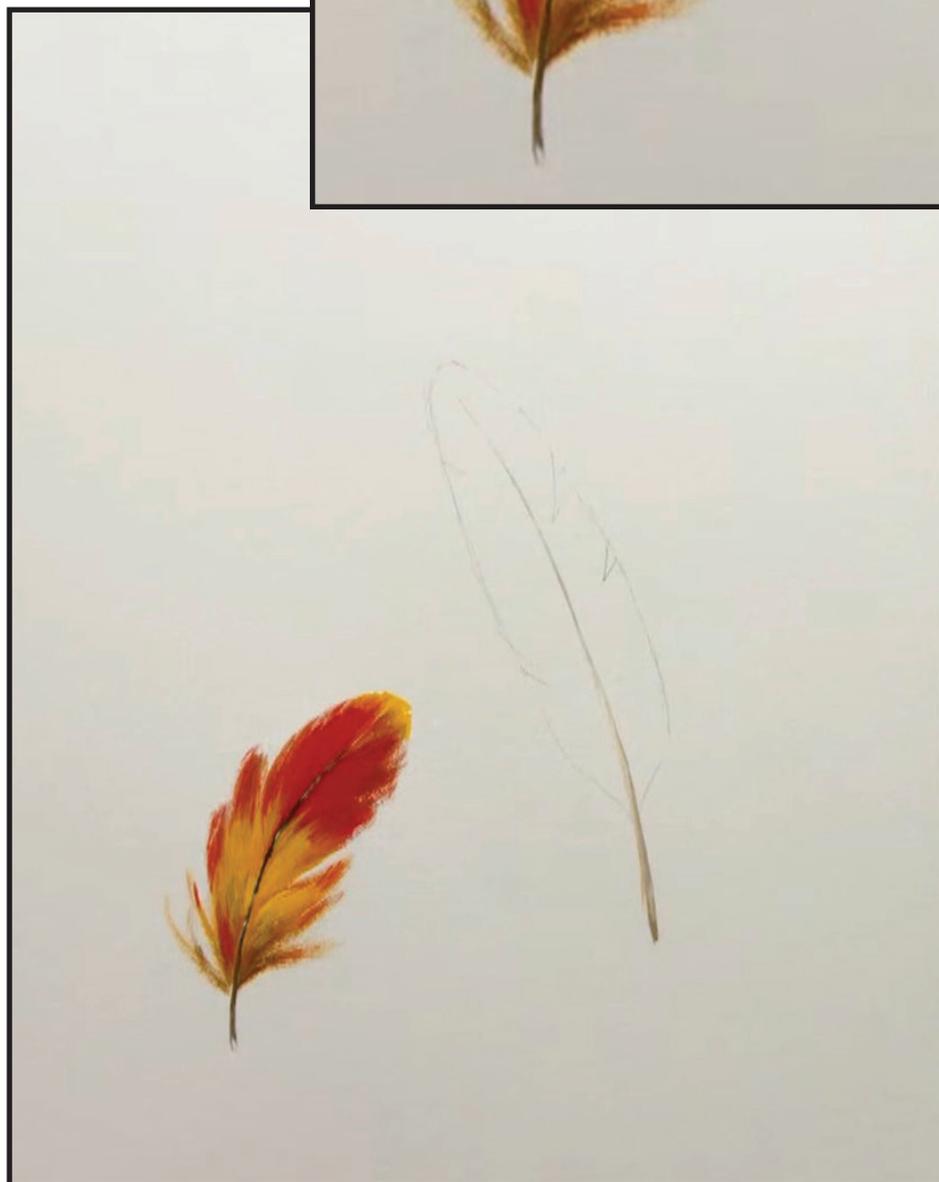
X-Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Light Brown = FWP > BS > MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use a pencil, and utilize what we have learned in the previous steps to draw the shape of this fantasy feather. Curve a longer quill in the opposite direction just for the sake of interest. Add the breaks in the vanes, and the fluff at the bottom while creating the basic feather shape.
- Use the **Light Brown mix** to carefully paint the quill from the bottom up, tapering it to a very thin line near the top. Then, add a bit of Yellow Ochre at the bottom of the quill and blend it in using a wiggly, back and forth motion. Follow that by adding some Fluid White Paint, and blend it in as well to create an ombre. Carefully add the Fluid White Paint along the center of the quill as you move towards the tip. Then, blend it downward.



STEP 16 – PAINT THE RAINBOW

Timestamp 1:10:56

“FLOCK OF COLOR”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Cad 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 & TOOLS:

X-Small Synthetic Round
Small Synthetic Angle
Small Synthetic Filbert Grainer

COLOR MIXES:

Lgt Magenta = FWP + QM > UB
Violet = QM + UB
Light Brown = FWP > BS > MB
Dark Turquoise = PB + PG
Emerald Green = PG + CYM
Orange = CYM + CRM
Viva Magenta = QM + CRM
Light Brown = FWP > BS > MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- With the toe of the Angle brush facing down, paint the tip of the feather with the **Light Magenta mix**, coming out from either side of the quill and along the top. Moving a little further down the feather, begin adding the **Violet mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Paint the next color section with Phthalo Blue using the same feathering technique and allowing some of the vanes to

break. Deepen along the edges of the quill with more of the Phthalo Blue.

- If you lose the quill, add it back in with the X-Small Round and **Light Brown mix**.
- Continue using the Angle brush, and paint the next section of the feather with the **Dark Turquoise mix**. Follow that with a section of the **Emerald Green mix**. Tapping in pure Phthalo Green along the quill. Rinse the brush.
- Paint the next section with Cadmium Yellow Medium. Rinse the brush. This is followed by a section of the **Orange mix**.
- Occasionally reset the quill with the X-Small round brush and **Light Brown mix**.
- Continue using the Angle brush, and paint the next section of the feather with Cadmium Red Medium. Rinse the brush.
- Switch to the Grainer brush and apply messy “S” strokes on either side of the quill at the bottom of the feather with the **Viva Magenta mix**. Use light pressure in various directions to create this downy fluff. Add Fluid White Paint to give the fluff some delicateness. Rinse the brush.
- Switch back to the X-Small round brush, and reset the quill once more with the **Light Brown mix**. Follow that with a deep shadow along the right side of the quill using Mars Black. Rinse the brush.
- Paint a fine highlight through the center of the quill with Fluid White Paint. Rinse.
- Switch to the Grainer brush. Start from the bottom of the feather, paint slightly lighter versions of the color below each section to create depth. Rinse.
- With the X-Small round and Fluid White Paint use the tip to apply short little lines that come together to form a dot shape. Rinse.
- Add fine detail lines along the edges, using corresponding colors. Rinse.

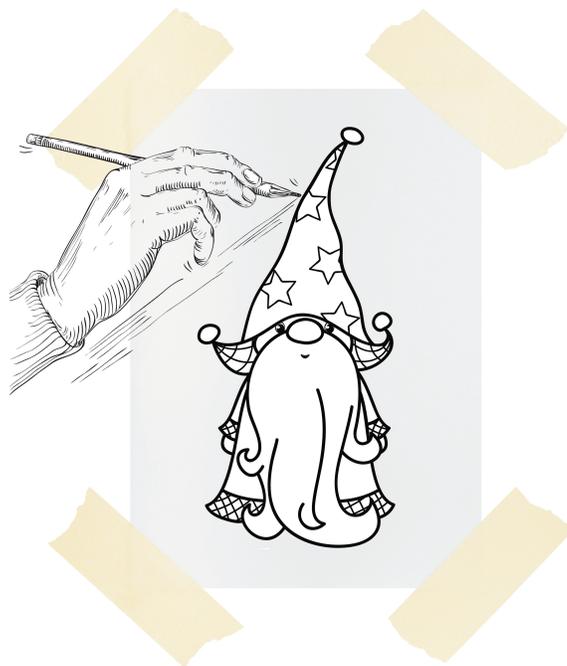


THE TRACING METHOD

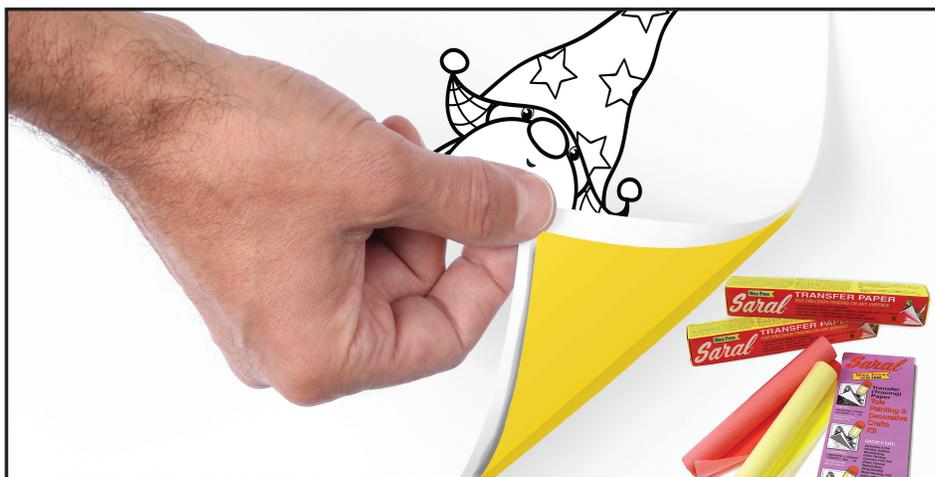
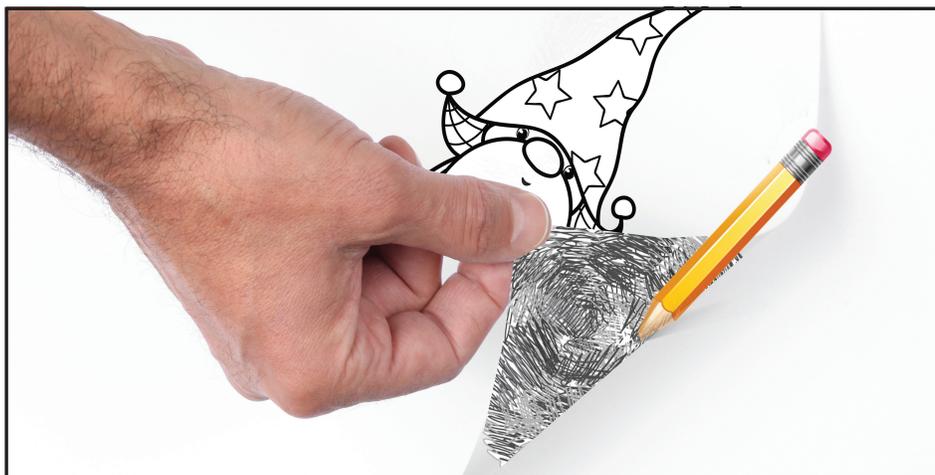
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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



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.

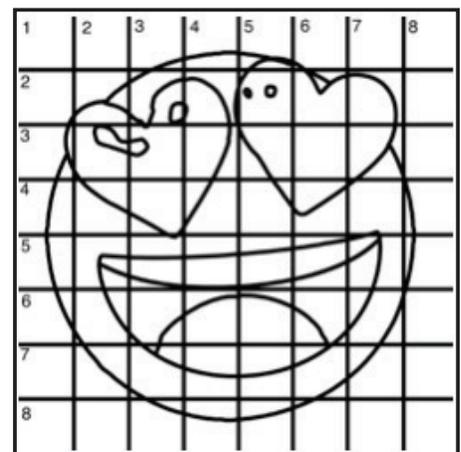
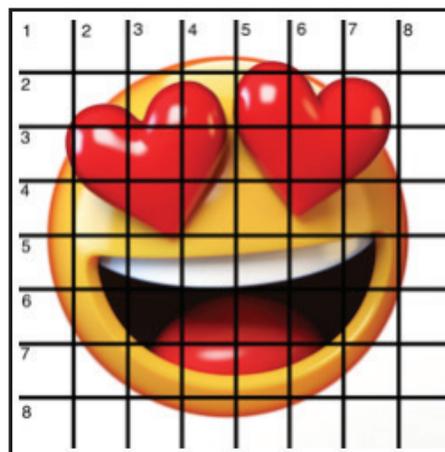
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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 pigmentated 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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