

THE ART SHERPA™

HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



DRAW AND PAINT COSMOS FLOWERS


BY: THE ART SHERPA

STEPS: 10 | 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 Green = PG
- Burnt Sienna = BS
- Mars Black = MB
- Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES:

- Small Synthetic Round

TOOLS:

- 2B Pencil
- T-Square Ruler
- Kneaded Eraser
- 9x12 Fabriano 1264 Mixed Media Pad, White
- Optional: Sta-Wet Palette

SYMBOL GUIDE:

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

TECHNIQUES YOU WILL USE IN THIS PAINTING:

- Color Theory
- Implying Foliage
- Finding Value
- Dry Brushing
- 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.

STEPS:	TIME:	DESCRIPTION:
INTRO	00:00	INTRO
STEP 1	05:30	BEGINNING THE SKETCH
STEP 2	10:40	SKETCHING PETALS
STEP 3	18:50	FINISHING THE SKETCH
STEP 4	21:00	PAINTING THE STEMS
STEP 5	25:15	STEMS, CENTERS AND PETALS
STEP 6	32:10	FLOWER PETALS
STEP 7	42:30	LIGHTEN THE FLOWERS
STEP 8	48:20	GREENERY
STEP 9	56:15	HIGHLIGHTS AND SHADOWS
STEP 10	1:03:30	FINISHING TOUCHES
	1:08:10	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.

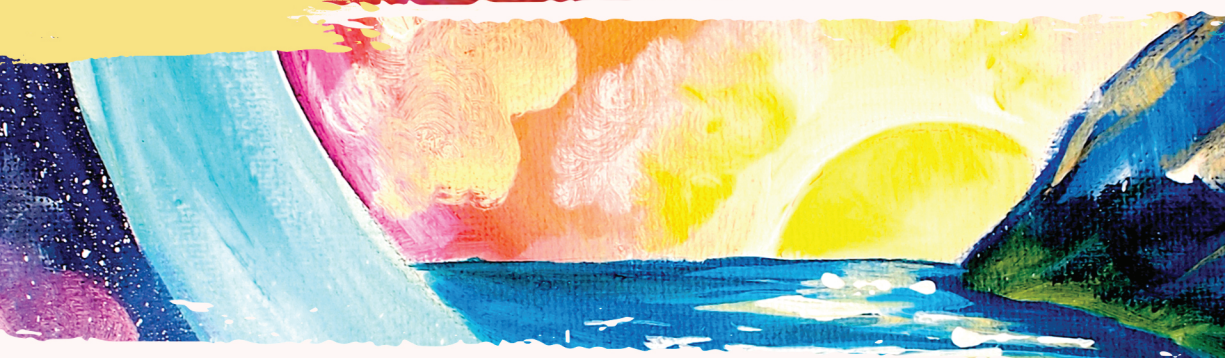


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STEP 1 – BEGINNING THE SKETCH

Timestamp 5:30

“DETERMINING SIZE AND COMPOSITION”

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2B Pencil

COLOR MIXES:

Warm Grey = TW + YO + MB

Light Cream = TW > YO

STEP DISCUSSION:

- You can follow the directions to sketch these flowers in yourself or you can refer to the traceable at the end of this step.
- Lightly sketch the center of the flower on the left. Place this small oval about 3 inches from the top left, and about 3 inches from the left side. Angle this center button with the top towards the right, and the bottom towards the left. Draw an ellipse to represent the outer rim of these petals. Because this flower faces slightly left, draw the ellipse so the center of the flower is very close to the right edge of the ellipse. Add a stem line that curves down from the center button and continues down the page, just left of center. Join the ellipse to the stem with lines that represent the bottom of the petals, and show how deep a cup shape the bloom creates.
- At about the midway point of this stem, branch off a secondary stem at a

45 degree angle to the left. Represent a flower bud with a small circle at the end of this stem, just above the 6 inch mark on the page.

- The flower on the right will be a little bit taller, and faces slightly upward and to the right. Draw the center button about 2 inches from the top, and 2 inches in from the right side. The outer rim of these petals form an ellipse that faces upward and to the right. Because this bloom faces the viewer a bit more, the button will be more centrally located in the ellipse. Add a stem line that curves from the center button and continues down the page, just right of center.
- Then, draw a secondary stem branching off to the right at a steeper angle up than the one on the other stem, and with the end of the stem drooping down from the weight of the bud. This secondary stem branches off a bit higher on its main stem than the first, and the bud is a bit higher than the first bud on the left.

Sherpa Tip: These sketch lines should be very light on the page. Practice drawing lighter lines with your pencil to get the feel of how much weight to put on the pencil in order to get the lightest of lines. Holding your pencil closer to the end, rather than in your normal grip, may also help you get lighter lines.



STEP 2 – SKETCHING PETALS

Timestamp 10:42

“FILLING IN RADIAL SEGMENTS”

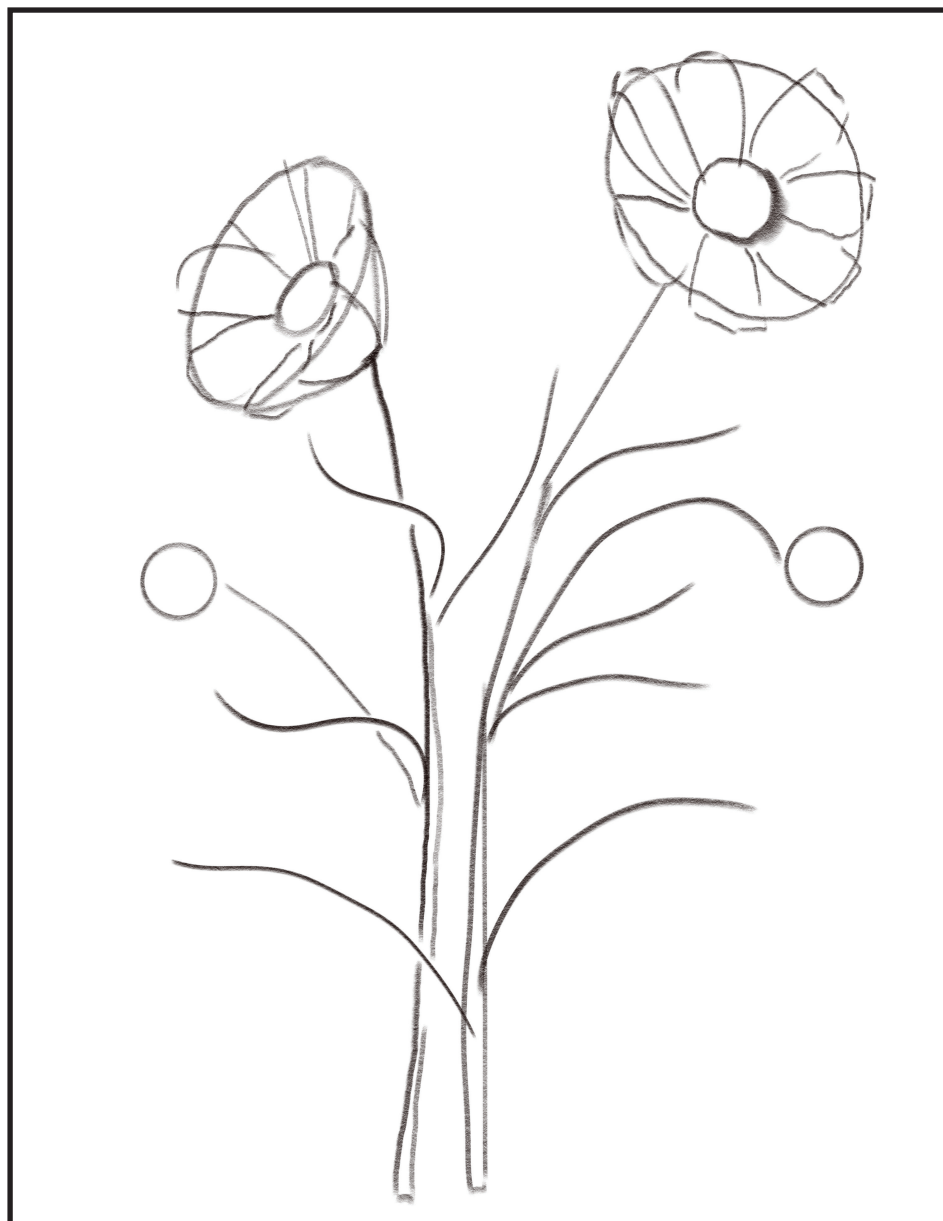
BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2B Pencil

Kneaded Eraser

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Start to draw the petals on the left flower. Begin at the top left of the ellipse, adding elongated petals that start thinner in the center, then radiate and thicken as they come outward. Frill the end edge a little.. Use the ellipse as a guide for the length and position of these petals. Give the petals character by making some a little bit longer. The forward petals are drawn below the ellipse, and are shorter to show the cupped shape. They are slightly triangular, with their pointed ends meeting at the stem. The top ridge of these petals are also slightly frilled.
- Segment the petals on the right flower in a similar way. Using the ellipse to guide the shape of the petals actually helps to face the flower in the desired direction. Again, the petals are slightly thinner at the center button, widen out near the end, and have frilled tips.
- Use the kneaded eraser to clean up unwanted pencil marks. You can also blot dark pencil marks with the eraser to lighten them a bit.



STEP 3 - FINISHING THE SKETCH

Timestamp 18:50

“LAYING OUT GUIDELINES FOR THE LEAVES”

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

2B Pencil

STEP DISCUSSION:

- At this stage, work out the placement of more secondary stems with leaves. Stagger and curve the stem branches and the leaves for a more natural look, rather than making them symmetrical and stiff looking. Determining the placement of the secondary leaf stems and leaves now in pencil is much easier than painting them in and being stuck with a layout that does not make you happy. Continue adding these guidelines using the sketch at the end of this step as a reference.



STEP 4 - PAINTING THE STEMS

Timestamp 21:00

"FIRST LAYER ON MULTI COLORED STEMS"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Orange Brown =

CRM + CYM + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Orange Brown** mix on the toe of the brush to begin painting the two main stems. Adding water to the brush will improve the flow of paint. Continue painting the secondary stems following your sketch as a guide. Then, paint the buttons in the center of the two main flowers with this same color. Rinse the brush.

Sherpa Tip: The acrylic paint will not under-bind on paper even when using a wash, because the paper pulls in the pigment and "locks it in place".



STEP 5 – STEMS, CENTERS AND PETALS

Timestamp 25:15

“PIGMENTATION OF THE PLANT”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Dark Brown = BS + MB

Medium Green =

CYM + PG + BS

Yellow Green =

CYM + PG + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- On the left flower, use the **Dark Brown mix** to start painting the right side of the center button. Tap the brush up and down along the outer edge to create a rough, textured shadow. For the flower on the right, take the shadow all the way around the center of the button, making it thinner on the right edge.
- Darken the bottoms of the two main stems with the **Dark Brown mix**, then blend in more of the Burnt Sienna to lighten the mix as you move up the stem. Continue up the stems adding in the **Medium Green mix**. Sometimes vary the mix by adding more of any color that is within it. Paint the secondary stems a bit lighter than the stem with

the **Medium Green mix**. Make a continuous line when you want to imply that a stem is in front. To imply the stem is behind, start and stop it on either side of the line in front of it. Rinse the brush.

- On the petals of the right flower, use the **Yellow Green mix**, flicking little outward strokes from the center button. Vary the mix slightly in a few places. Then, use this color on the two flower buds, as well. Curve the stroke towards the left on the left side of the bud, and towards the right on the right side of the bud. Finally, add some of this color to the inside of the petals of the flower on the left. Leave the forward facing petals unpainted for the moment.
- Flick a bit of Titanium White outwards from the yellow. Rinse the brush.

Sherpa Tip: The important thing to practice is seeing where there is light and shadow on the flowers and stems in your references. Just observe where these lights and darks are at this point, and not where the light source is coming from since the photographer could have used multiple light sources.



STEP 6 – FLOWER PETALS

Timestamp 32:10

“MAKE THE PETALS BLUSH”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Quinacridone Magenta = QM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Warm Pink =

QM + CRM > CYM

Dark Pink =

QM + CRM > CYM > MB

Med Green = CYM + PG + BS

Peach =

QM + CRM > CYM + TW

Yellow Green =

CYM > PG + TW

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the **Warm Pink mix** onto the tip of the brush, adding a little water to improve flow. Delicately, using very light pressure, create a fine, broken line around the outer edges of the petals of the two main flowers. Add short strokes of this color down from the tips of the two closed buds.
- The shadows of the petals are painted with the **Dark Pink mix**. Paint shadows on any underside of folded petals, and under some of the ruffled edges where the underside of the petal would be seen.

- Paint the shadows on the forward petals of the left flower. Use the **Medium Green mix** to paint from the stem up into the Dark Pink, blending it in a bit. Touch those petals up with more of the **Warm Pink mix**, if needed. Rinse the brush.
- On the right flower, use the **Peach mix** on the toe of the brush to apply long, thin strokes from the frilled tips towards the middle of the petal. Follow the direction that the petals grow when curving the strokes, and vary the length of these lines to keep them irregular. Add a little darkness with more Quinacridone Magenta where the petals wrinkle and fold on themselves.
- Use the **Peach mix** with more Titanium White on the forward petals of the left flower to create highlight lines down from the tips of the petals. Then, make the lines of the tips of the remaining petals of this flower like you did on the right. Keep in mind that to create the curl of the lines creates the directionality of the petal curl.
- Pick up some of the **Yellow Green mix** on the brush dirty with the **Peach mix**. Use this blend to transition the colors between the outer and inner areas of each petal. Also use this color in the same transition area of the buds. Refine as needed. Rinse the brush.



STEP 7 - LIGHTEN THE FLOWERS

Timestamp 42:30

"LIGHTING IT UP"

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Orange Brown =

CRM + CYM + BS

Dark Brown = BS + MB

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Tap some of the **Orange Brown mix** around the centers of the flowers. While that is drying, load some Titanium White onto the brush and lightly brush another light layer onto the middle transition area of the petals and buds. Rinse the brush.
- Tap in some of the **Dark Brown mix** around the dark edges of the center buttons. Then, combine some of this color with the **Orange Brown mix**, and tap in this halftone onto the flower centers. Rinse the brush.



WATERCOLOR WEDNESDAYS

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7:00PM EST

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page each week.

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

RELAX &
CHILL OUT
TOGETHER



STEP 8 – GREENERY

Timestamp 48:20

“WHIMSY AND MOTION MAKE LEAVES LOOK NATURAL”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Medium Green =

CYM + PG + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

- At this point, use the **Medium Green mix** to create a small stem out of the secondary stem, and add the basic leaf shape. Create the leaf strokes by pressing down on the brush to make the mark thick, pulling forward and releasing the pressure to thin the mark to a fine tip. As you release the pressure on the brush, try to make the leaf look a little whimsical with a little wiggle or an “S” curve. Some leaves are made with two press and release strokes that curve into each other, creating a slightly thicker leaf. In a few places, make a leaf that overlaps a stem.
- Next, add the sepals (tiny leaf-like structures) at the base of the two buds where they connect to the stems.
- Continue adding leaves, keeping in mind that they

are never just straight. There is an “S” curve, or some type of curve or motion in all of them. Rinse the brush.

Sherpa Tips:

The shape of the Round brush, and the press and release stroke, do a lot of the work to create the leaf shapes.

To load the tip of the brush after swirling around in paint to mix a color, roll the brush to remove the paint, then grab paint with just the tip.



STEP 9 – HIGHLIGHTS AND SHADOWS

Timestamp 56:15

“MULTI TONAL LEAVES TWIST AND BEND”

PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Mars Black = MB

Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Ochre = CRM + BS + TW

Dark Brown = BS + MB

Olive Green = CYM > PG > BS

Light Green =

CYM + TW > PG > BS

Medium Green =

CYM + PG + BS

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Tap the **Ochre mix** up and down on the flower centers to create a bit of a highlight along the upper edges. Also use this color to add highlights to some areas of the stems. Do not highlight everywhere, but there are some places that you would see it.
- Without rinsing the brush, load on the **Dark Brown mix**. Deepen and add shadows along some areas of the stems and leaves. The heads of the flowers cast a shadow onto the stems, the leaves would be darker at the base of their stems, the center veins and the undersides of twisted leaves are darker. Rinse the brush.

- Highlight some of the leaves using the **Olive Green mix**. Add it to the tips and the highest areas of the leaves. Some leaves will overlap the stems, and others will twist and bend depending on where the highlights and shadows are placed.
- Add a brighter level of highlight with touches of the **Light Green mix**.
- Using the **Medium Green mix**, fold some of the leaves by adding a darker underside rounding up over the leaf edge. Rinse the brush.



STEP 10 – FINISHING TOUCHES

Timestamp 1:03:30

“ATTENTION TO DETAIL, VALUE AND CONTRAST”

PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM
Quinacridone Magenta = QM
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM
Titanium White = TW

BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Small Synthetic Round

COLOR MIXES:

Peach =
QM + CRM > CYM + TW
Light Yellow = CYM + TW
Viva Magenta = CRM + QM

STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Peach mix** to refine and touch up the petals of the flowers and the buds. Vary this mix, where needed, by adding more of any of the colors within it. Adjust the petals, shading or highlighting them if needed. Rinse the brush.
- Use the **Light Yellow mix** to touch up the base of the petals and buds. Then, blend in Titanium White as you come outward on the petals. Play with the colors on your palette until you feel you have a nice botanical rendering illustration.
- Deepen the petals edges, if needed, with the **Viva Magenta mix**. Rinse the brush. Tap a sparkling highlight to the center buttons with Titanium White. Rinse the brush.

Sherpa Tips:

By doing this kind of practice you should get a better understanding of how to orient and face flowers in different directions, how to draw and paint curly petals, how to overlap leaves and stems, how to wind and twist leaves, how to control the darkness of your pencil lines, and more.

To keep pages painted with acrylic paint from sticking together in your art journal, you can use a product called Dorlands Wax. Rubbing on a light layer of the wax over the page will solve the sticky problem.



THE TRACING METHOD

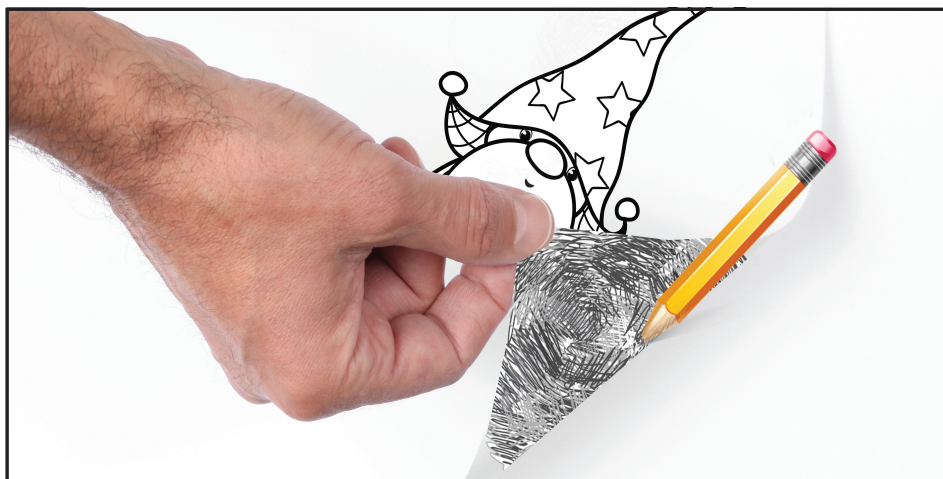
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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.

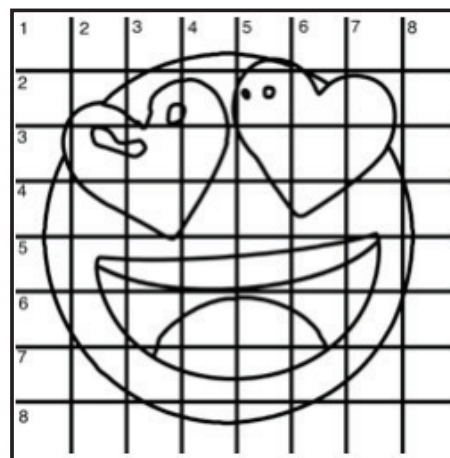
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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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