

THE ART SHERPA™

# HOW TO PAINT

IN ACRYLIC



## IRISES VAN GOGH

BY: THE ART SHERPA

STEPS: 13 | DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING | 3 HOOTS



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# SHERPA FORWARD:

I am resolved to do more to help teach art than demonstrate how to paint art and this document is a step by step written description of brushes, colors and mixes, techniques and explanations taken directly from the tutorial. It is provided to you as a resource to assist you in your art journey. It is best viewed in outline format to allow for ease in navigation between sections. We hope to prepare a printed version of all of those documents that you will be able to purchase which will include technical resources not available to you at this time about color mixes, techniques, brushes, materials, and all things art.

Traceables and grid resources for this tutorial can be found at [theartsherpa.com](http://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 landscape painting, which is a depiction of natural scenery such as mountains, valleys, trees, rivers and forests, usually in a wide view of elements arranged in a coherent composition. Sky is usually included in the view and weather is often an element of the composition.

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](mailto:support@theartsherpa.com) if you require assistance.

You can join the The Art Sherpa Official group at and please post your paintings there: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TheArtSherpa>

**Grab your paint, get your brushes and let's go!**



# PAINT AND TOOL GUIDE:

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

## PAINT:

- Cadmium Red Medium = CRM
- 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 Synthetic Bright
- Medium Synthetic Filbert
- Medium Hog Bright
- Medium Synthetic Round
- Medium Hog Round
- 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
- 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	04:48	COLORED GROUND
STEP 2	09:55	BLOCK IN BACKGROUND
STEP 3	28:17	FIRST GREENERY
STEP 4	40:35	ORANGE FLOWERS
STEP 5	47:38	MAIN WHITE FLOWER
STEP 6	55:55	LONG IRIS LEAVES
STEP 7	1:05:27	MORE DEFINED LEAVES
STEP 8	1:19:06	SOME BLUE FLOWERS
STEP 9	1:29:16	BREAK
STEP 10	1:41:16	DEFINE IRISES
STEP 11	1:54:22	FORWARD FLOWERS
STEP 12	2:09:30	FINISH THE FLOWERS
STEP 13	2:16:55	FINAL DETAILS
	2:22:20	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.



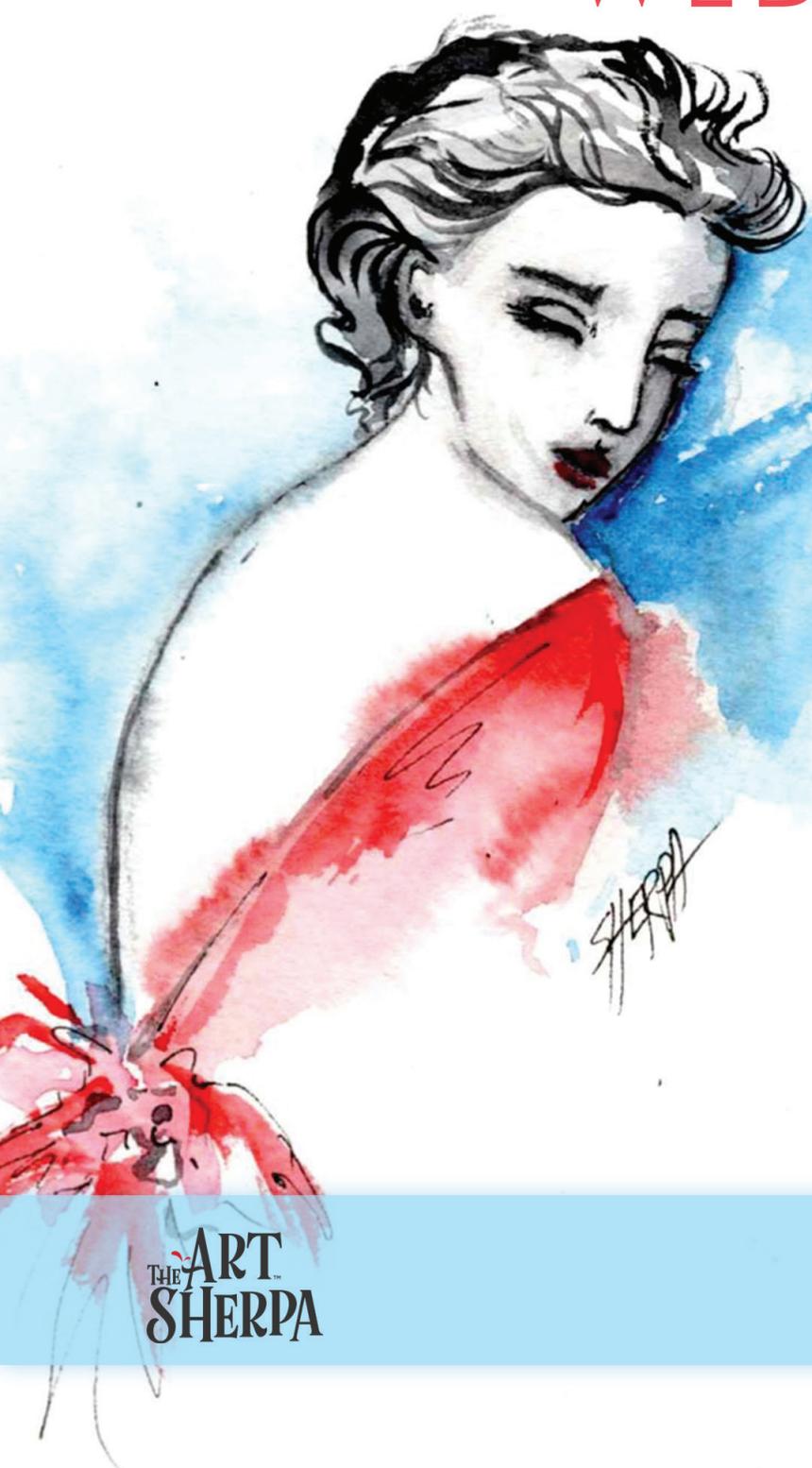
# WATERCOLOR WEDNESDAYS

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

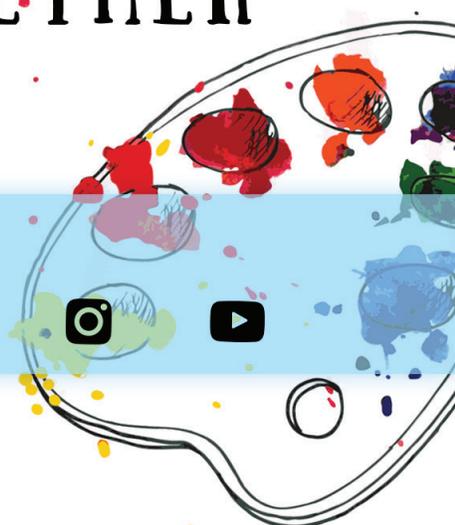
Watch directly from  
TAS Facebook  
page each week.

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

**RELAX &  
CHILL OUT  
TOGETHER**



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# STEP 1 - COLORED GROUND Timestamp 4:48

## “JUST FOR THE “HUE” OF IT”

### PAINT:

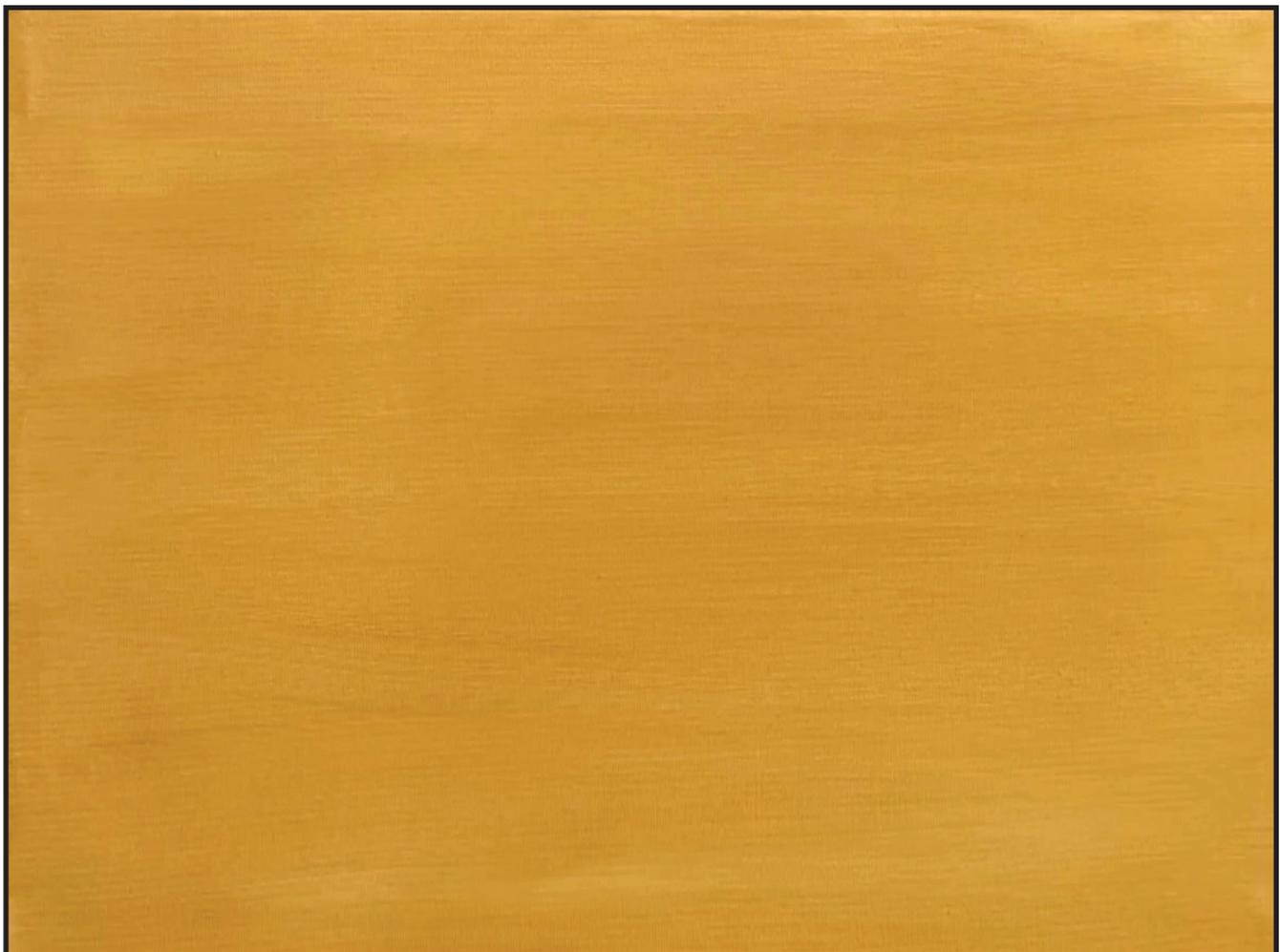
Yellow Ochre = YO

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

X- Large Synthetic Bright

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Load the brush with Yellow Ochre, and then roughly paint the entire canvas. We are just ensuring that all the white of the canvas is loosely covered. Smooth the paint by applying long strokes, vertically and horizontally. Rinse.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# STEP 2 - BLOCK IN BACKGROUND

Timestamp 9:55

## “A LOOSELY INTERWOVEN BACKGROUND”

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert  
Medium Hog Bright

### COLOR MIXES:

Bright Ochre = CYM + YO  
Cream = CYM + YO + TW  
Muted Green = YO + PG + BS  
Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- For the bare earth at the borrow of the canvas, start at the bottom 1/3 of the canvas on the left side. Using Burnt Sienna, loosely paint short, slightly diagonal brush strokes, using the edge of the Filbert brush. Allow some of the canvas below to peek through. Continue to paint these marks until about the middle of the canvas, then angle the marks down, leaving the last 4 inches on the right side unpainted. There is going to be a bunch of flowers covering this part of the canvas, so no need to paint the ground here.
- Add Titanium White to the Burnt Sienna, and start loosely painting it through this area, weaving it through the brown.

Without rinsing, weave in the **Bright Ochre mix**, allowing it to blend naturally on the canvas. Start adding the **Cream mix** closer to the right edge. Use different brush strokes through some of this area, some curved and some elongated “S” strokes, to build up texture. Paint the **Muted Green mix**, interlacing it with the previous colors. Vary this mix by adding more Yellow Ochre, then tint it with Titanium White, for another color value through here. Deepen a few areas with the Burnt Sienna. Rinse the brush.

- Switch to the Bright Brush and the **Mint mix**. Begin painting vertical brush strokes on the top of the canvas. Start applying horizontal strokes as well, in a criss cross fashion. Tint the mix with Titanium White to lighten some of the areas and Yellow Ochre to vary other areas. Add a bit of water, as needed, to improve flow. Continue adding the criss cross technique throughout the remainder of the canvas, varying the mix slightly as you go. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# STEP 3 – FIRST GREENERY

Timestamp 28:17

“SQUIGGLY BUNCHES OF LINES IMPLY GREENERY AND EARTH”

## PAINT:

Cad Yellow Medium = CYM

Phthalo Blue = PB

Phthalo Green = PG

Burnt Sienna = BS

Titanium White = TW

## BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Round

## COLOR MIXES:

Dark Green = PG + BS

Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW

Light Green = CYM + PG + TW

Light Yellow = CYM + TW

Teal = PB + PG

## STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Dark Green mix** to fill the upper, left quadrant of the canvas with thin, dispersed, short “S” strokes that represent leaves.
- Begin painting horizontal strokes using the **Mint mix** below the dark green you just painted and the top of the earth. Tint the mix with more Titanium White to weave that in this area, as well.
- Moving back to the top of the canvas, paint in more vertical strokes using the **Light Green mix**. Weave in some **Light Yellow mix** as you move to the right. Vary the mix occasionally by adding Titanium White.
- Apply a few vertical strokes of the **Teal mix** through the dark upper left corner. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# STEP 4 - ORANGE FLOWERS

Timestamp 40:35

## “BLURRY FLOWER SUGGESTIONS”

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Orange = CYM + CRM  
Light Yellow = CYM + TW  
Dark Teal = PB + PG + BS

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Orange mix** to create small orange flowers in the upper left quadrant. This very loosely mixed color will allow value variation to occur naturally on the canvas as you create flowers, using short strokes clustered together. Add more Cadmium Red Medium to deepen the base of the flowers. Rinse the brush.
- Tap the **Light Yellow mix** in flower-like clusters through the center of the canvas. Add Titanium White on the dirty brush, and dash in some lighter flowers along the top right. Tap in more Cadmium Yellow Medium through the distant field. Rinse the brush.
- Paint a dark color around the edges of the orange flowers using the **Dark Teal mix** to make them pop out. Then, add a bit of this color through the stems and grasses in this same area. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# STEP 5 – MAIN WHITE FLOWER

Timestamp 47:38

## “ONE OF THESE THINGS IS NOT LIKE THE OTHER”

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Hog Round  
Medium Synthetic Filbert

### COLOR MIXES:

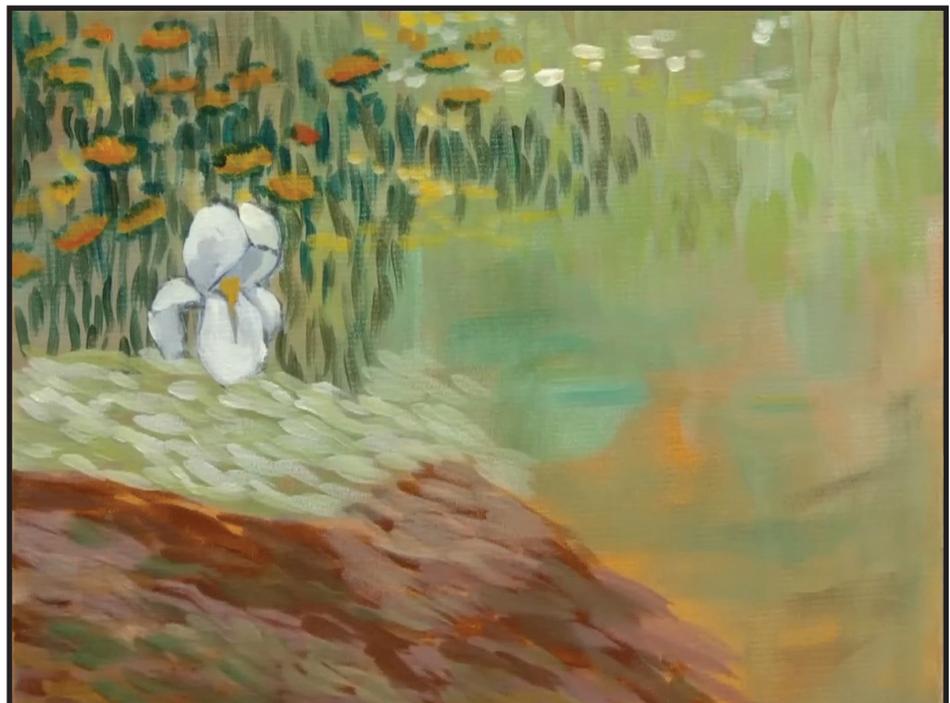
Misty Grey = TW > UB > BS  
Dark Grey = UB + BS > TW  
Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW  
Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM

### 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, but this is the point where you would transfer if you are using that method.
- Use the Round brush to sketch the contour shape of the focal white flower on the upper left side of the canvas, and fill it in with the **Misty Grey mix**. The upper petals are folded to form almost a heart shape, followed by the lower downward petal, and two smaller

petals that come from either side of the flower, bending down. Rinse the brush. Dry the surface before continuing.

- Line the edges of the flower with the **Dark Grey mix** to define and separate the petal shapes. Add Titanium White to the dirty brush. Blend it in to create shadow on the petals in the crevices of the folds, and the underside of the bent petals. Rinse the brush.
- Load Titanium White onto the brush, and barely tint it with a tiny amount of the **Mint Green mix**. Use this color to apply highlights onto the petals where the sun would be hitting them. Soften the shadows by adding a bit of the **Misty Grey mix** to the dirty brush and blending them in. Rinse the brush.
- Exaggerate the shadows on the lower petal with the **Dark Grey mix**, and rinse the brush.
- Add bright pops of highlight on the petals with Titanium White. Rinse the brush.
- Tap in a bit of the **Yellow Orange mix** in the center of the iris. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# STEP 6 - LONG IRIS LEAVES

Timestamp 55:55

## “LET THE BRUSH STROKES SHOW”

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

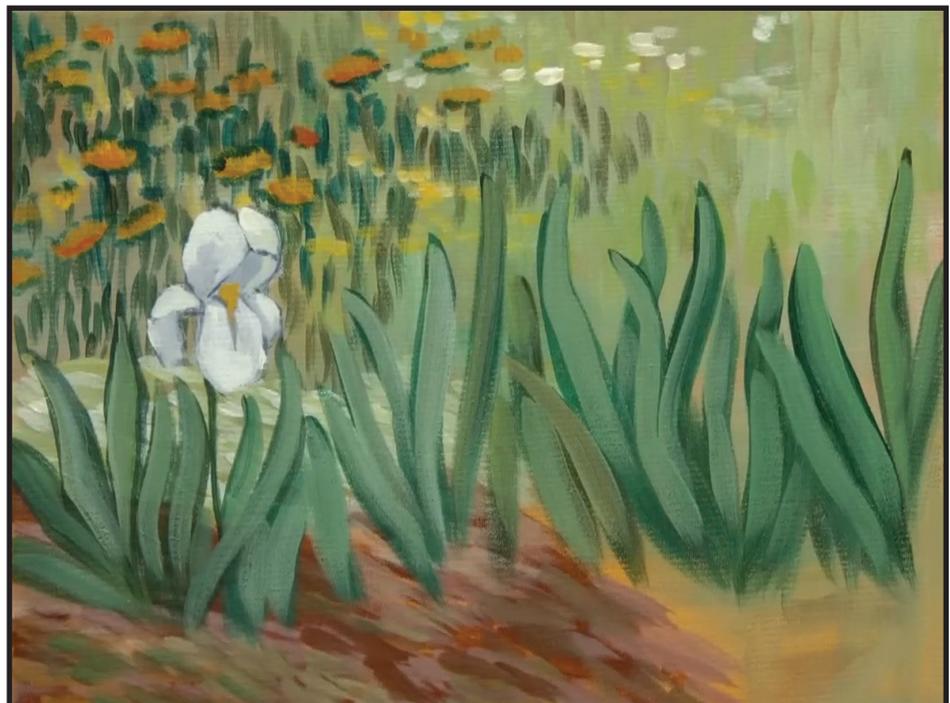
Dark Green = PG + BS  
Mint = PG > BS > CYM + TW  
Dark Blue = PB + BS

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the **Dark Green mix** to give the white focal flower a stem. On the toe of the brush, bring the stem from under the flower head down and to the right, ending about 3 inches above the bottom of the canvas.
- Starting on the left side, use the **Mint mix** to begin adding the long iris leaves through the middle third of the canvas, occasionally adding a bit of Yellow Ochre to the mix. After you paint a few leaves in, outline them with the **Dark Blue mix** to separate them and make sense of their direction. Some bend, some curve, so weave them in various directions amongst each other. Then, add Titanium White to the mix and layer that color on top of the

leaves. This color will loosely blend with the still wet paint below creating color variations to occur naturally on the canvas.

- Use the **Dark Green mix** as the bottom layer of the leaves, and roughly blend the **Mint mix** as the top layer, while leaving a dark outer edge. Continue painting leaves in this manner while working from left to right. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.





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# STEP 7 – MORE DEFINED LEAVES

Timestamp 1:05:27

## “LAYERS OF LEAVES CREATE DEPTH”

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Round  
Medium Synthetic Filbert

### COLOR MIXES:

Dark Green = PG + BS  
Blue = UB + PB + CRM  
Dark Blue = PB + BS  
Light Yellow = CYM + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Use the Round brush to begin adding more leaves layered on top of the previous leaves. Start about 3 inches from the left side, and work towards the right. Use the **Dark Green mix** to create their shapes, sizes and directions. Then, paint the lower right corner of the canvas more solidly with this same color.
- Paint the **Mint mix** as the top layer on the leaves, retaining a dark outer edge to define the shape and direction of the leaf. Allow the mix to vary, a bit darker in some places and lighter in others. Let the brush strokes show. Rinse the brush.
- Switch to the Filbert brush to combine the

**Dark Green mix** with the **Dark Blue mix**. Exaggerate the dark edges, and deepen the shadows where the leaves enter the soil. Without rinsing the brush, add the **Light Yellow mix** to highlight parts of the leaves. Rinse the brush.

- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

*Sherpa Tip: To layer the leaves, remember when painting along their edges, a continuous line tells us the leaf is in front. Breaking or stopping the outline where it bumps into a more forward leaf indicates it is behind, or in the background.*



# STEP 8 – SOME BLUE FLOWERS

Timestamp 1:19:06

## “THE DARK UNDER LAYER”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM

Ultramarine Blue = UB

Phthalo Blue = PB

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

### COLOR MIXES:

Blue = UB + PB + CRM

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Block in the iris shapes using **Blue mix**. Start on the upper right side of the canvas just capturing the basic contour of the flowers. Face the irises in various directions through the middle third of the canvas. Some of the blooms are more closed, while others are more unfurled. Use the reference photo that follows for exact placement of these irises. Rinse the brush.



# STEP 9 - BREAK Timestamp 1:29:16

“COFFEE BREAK - AVAILABLE WHILE SUPPLIES LAST”

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# STEP 10 – DEFINE IRISES

Timestamp 1:41:16

## “SHADING DEFINES PETAL SHAPE AND ORIENTATION”

### PAINT:

Cad Red Medium = CRM  
Cad Yellow Medium = CYM  
Phthalo Blue = PB  
Ultramarine Blue = UB  
Titanium White = TW

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

### COLOR MIXES:

Bright Blue = UB + PB + TW  
Yellow Orange = CYM > CRM  
Light Yellow = CYM + TW  
Blue = UB + PB + CRM  
Light Blue = TW > UB > PB

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Working right to left, use the **Bright Blue mix** to shape the upright petals which are folded to form almost a heart shape. Follow with the lower downward petal and two smaller petals come from the either side of the flower, bending down. Leave the darker color outline along the outer edges of the petals to define and separate the shapes. Some of them are more closed, and others are more unfurled. Some are almond shaped buds. Add more Ultramarine Blue to the mix to shade in the crevices of the folds, and the underside of the bent petals. Rinse the brush.
- Highlight the flowers where the light would be

shining on them by grabbing the **Light Blue mix** and tapping it on. Rinse the brush. Dry the surface before continuing.

- Load Titanium white onto the edge of the brush and tap it into the flower centers. Then, add touches of the **Yellow Orange mix** on top. Pop a bit of the **Light Yellow mix** to the center of the White Iris, and to glow up some of the orange flowers in the background. Rinse the brush.
- Paint stripes on a few of the blue irises with the Blue mix using the edge of the brush. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.

*Sherpa Tip: Paint a layer of color on all the blooms. By the time you are finished painting that layer on the last flower, your first flower is dry. You can now start with the next layer of definition on that first iris.*



# STEP 11 – FORWARD FLOWERS

Timestamp 1:54:22

## “ADD A FEW MORE, SAME AS BEFORE”

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert  
Small Synthetic Round

### COLOR MIXES:

Dark Green = PG + BS  
Blue = UB + PB + CRM  
Light Green = CYM + PG + TW  
Bright Blue = UB + PB + TW  
Light Blue = TW > UB > PB

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint the stems of the back layer of irises with the **Dark Green mix** and the Round brush. Add some Titanium White to the mix to give them a second value. Rinse the brush.
- In the bottom right corner, use the **Blue mix** to paint the basic contour shapes of the forward flowers using the same technique as in Step 10. A long stem angles to the left from the bottom right of the canvas. Place a cluster of flowers attached to this stem. Paint a few more individual blooms to the right of this cluster. Look at the reference photo for

this step for exact placement of irises. Rinse the brush.

- Switch to the Round brush and the **Blue mix** to redefine the outline of the back layer of flowers. Rinse the brush.
- Highlight the stems in the bottom right corner using the **Light Green mix** sometimes adding Yellow Ochre. Rinse the brush.
- Switch to the Filbert brush and use the **Bright Blue mix** to shape the petals using the same method as in the previous step. Retain the darker color edges of the petals to define and separate the shapes.
- Highlight the flowers where the light would be shining on them by adding the **Light Blue mix** and roughly blending it in. Add in some of the **Blue mix** to add shadows in the folds and bends of the petals. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# STEP 12 – FINISH THE FLOWERS

Timestamp 2:09:30

## “A HAPPY LITTLE PAINTING ON A HAPPY LITTLE DAY”

### 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:

Bright Blue = UB + PB + TW  
Light Blue = TW > UB > PB  
Blue = UB + PB + CRM  
Light Ochre = YO + TW  
Orange = CYM + CRM  
Light Yellow = CYM + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- As in the previous step, use the **Bright Blue mix** as a mid value on the foreground flowers. Apply the **Light Blue mix** for the highlight. Then, repaint the dark outline, and add a few darker stripes and some shadows with the **Blue mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Use Titanium White to paint white wiggly lines that separate the dark blue veins of the petals. Rinse the brush.
- Paint touches of the **Light Ochre mix** onto the stems that you see to imply they are beginning to dry out a bit. Rinse the brush.

- Paint the centers of the irises with a little of the **Orange mix**, and add touches to some of the petals radiating from the center. Rinse the brush.
- Layer a highlight onto the center of the flowers using the **Light Yellow mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Dry the surface before continuing to the next step.



# STEP 13 – FINAL DETAILS

Timestamp 2:16:55

## “LAST LITTLE TOUCHES”

### PAINT:

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

### BRUSHES & TOOLS:

Medium Synthetic Filbert

### COLOR MIXES:

Beige = YO + TW > BS  
Mid Green = PG + YO  
Orange = CYM + CRM  
Light Green = CYM + PG + TW

### STEP DISCUSSION:

- Paint a lighter value onto the ground with the **Beige mix** using short, dashed strokes. Vary the mix in a few spots by adding more Burnt Sienna.
- Add some Mars Black onto the ground, here and there, using the same dashed brush strokes. Paint some pure Yellow Ochre in, allowing it to blend slightly on the canvas.
- Follow with the **Mid Green mix** dashed on a few spots in the foreground. Add Titanium White to the mix for a lighter version of that color, and add it onto the ground as well. Paint in a bit of the Burnt Sienna followed by some Orange mix. Use up some of the remaining paint on your palette by adding colors around the scene for dynamic continuity. Rinse the brush.
- Light some of the leaves with variations of the **Light Green mix**. Rinse the brush.
- Sign.

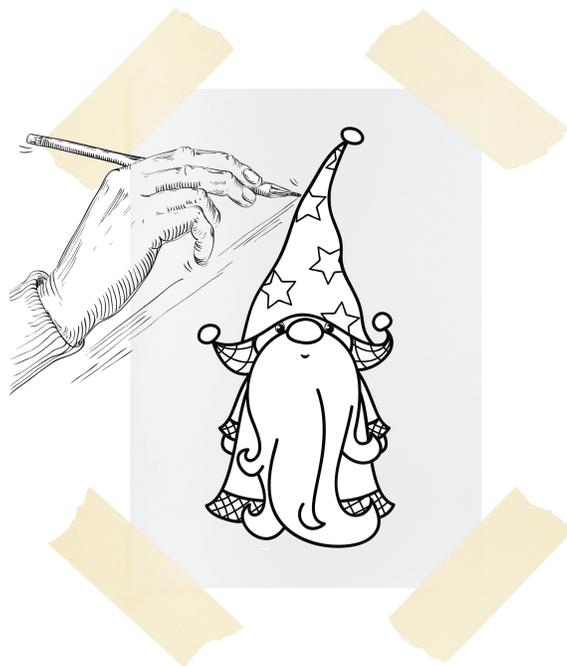


## THE TRACING METHOD

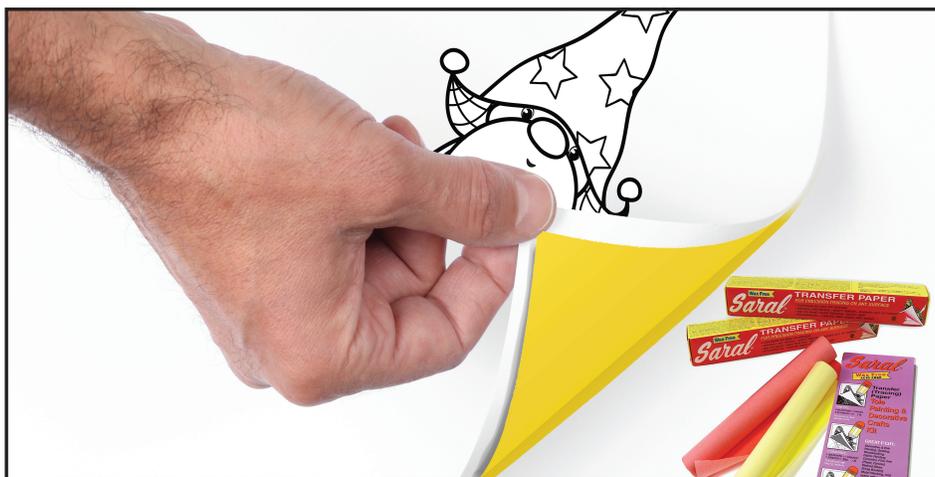
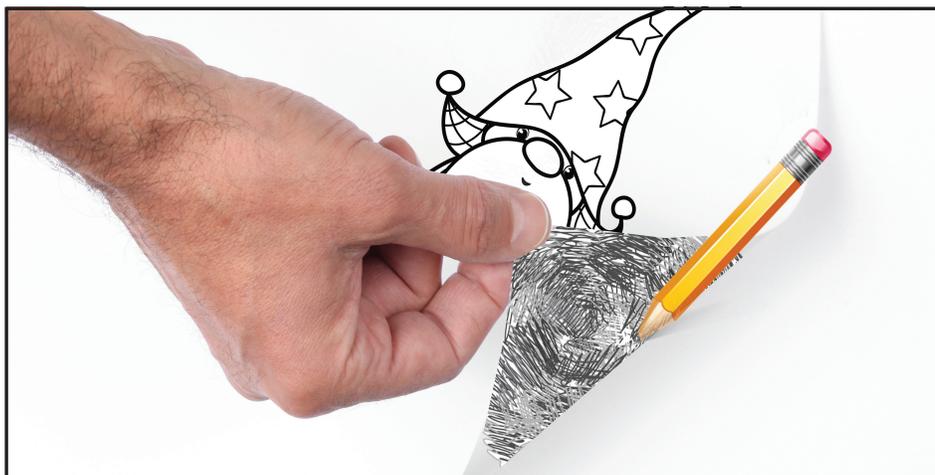
- Adjust the size to fit your surface and be sure to check your printer settings to see if the final size reflects the size you need.



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.

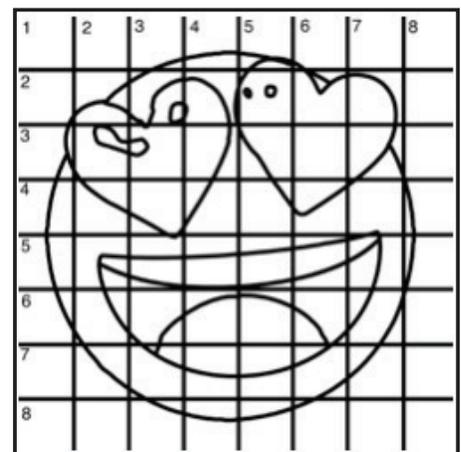
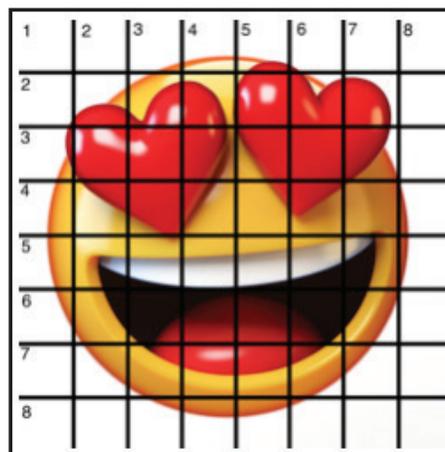
Number your columns 1 - 8, left to right, and your rows 1 - 8 from the top to the bottom.

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 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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