

Getting Started with Acrylic Paint

General Information regarding the supplies:

Acrylic paints can be thinned and cleaned with water so they are easy and convenient for artists and the environment. The paint is very versatile and is quick drying with many vibrant colors. Mediums can be used to extend drying time and it can be mixed to make impasto textures. Acrylic paint comes in various types: “Heavy Body” which is thick and textured, “Soft or Fluid” which is a cream consistency and creates washes or details & “High Flow” for airbrushing. It also comes in different levels of pigmentation, with professional brands having more pigment and durability and Student grade being more economical. Popular brands include Golden, Liquitex Heavy Body, Holbein and Utrecht at the Professional level. Student/Mid-Range lines include Liquitex Basics, Winsor & Newton Galeria. Daler-Rowney and Pebeo. Craft and beginner line paints include Artists Loft, Folk Art, Apple Barrel and DecoArt. *The level of pigment and quality will affect the final result of your paintings.*

It is recommended to generally use **synthetic brushes** that stand up to soap and water cleaning better than natural bristle.

Palette options can vary from disposable paper plates to glass, plastic, disposable or even “wet” palettes which include a sponge and a lid to keep paints wet for days. Paint can be cleaned with soap & water while it is still wet. Wood palettes are not ideal for acrylics as the paint will stick to the wood and is hard to clean.

About painting with Acrylic Paint:

Start with a water-thinned underpainting to sketch in your design on the canvas, then block in the darker base colors, layer in the mid-tones, then add details and highlights. You can use water or special acrylic mediums to assist with paint consistency to create washes, glazes and impasto techniques. Many surfaces can be used as the paint is very versatile such as stretched canvas or panels, primed wood panels (seal with Golden GAC100 before Gesso), specialty papers and even fabric. Surfaces should be primed with Gesso, which creates a texture for the paint to stick to. Note, acrylic paint will not stick to an extremely glossy, greasy or oily surface and cannot be used over oil paints. Brushes are cleaned with soap & water, no solvents are used. Once completely dry, paintings can be varnished.

Setting up the Palette:

There are many colors available! Golden brand Fluid paint is known for strong pigments and a good color range if you want to invest in professional level paint. Liquitex Basic is a modest-priced student-level quality brand that is a great choice to start out with.

I have listed a range of colors with links to both brands to provide a palette with a limited color scheme able to produce a variety of colors, both cool & warm mixtures. If you have some paint on hand, bring whatever you have to get started, you can always add new colors later!

Golden Paint Fluid Acrylics ~ start with the 1 ounce size!

link: <https://www.dickblick.com/products/golden-fluid-acrylics>

Hansa Yellow Opaque

Yellow Ochre

Pyrrole Red

Alizarin Crimson Hue

Ultramarine Blue

Phthalo Blue (Green Shade)

Raw Umber

Burnt Sienna

Viridian Green or Phthalo Green (Blue Shade)

Titanium White or use White Gesso

Ivory or Carbon Black

Payne's Gray

Optional but nice to have: Cadmium Orange

Teal

Diarylide Yellow or Cadmium Yellow

Dioxazine Purple

Sap Green

Green Gold

Liquitex Basics ~ a great starter brand

Link: <https://www.dickblick.com/products/liquitex-basics-acrylic-colors/>

Primary Yellow

Yellow Oxide

Primary Red

Alizarin Crimson Hue

Ultramarine Blue

Phthalo Blue

Raw Umber

Burnt Sienna

Titanium White or use White Gesso

Ivory Black

Payne's Gray

Optional but nice to have:

Cadmium Orange Hue

Dioxazine Purple

(for the Twilight Pines painting I added Bright Aqua, Turquoise Blue, Hookers Green Hue Permanent, Bright Olive Green)

Slow Drying Medium to keep paints wet:

Liquitex or Golden Glazing Liquid for thinning paint or creating a transparent wash:

<https://www.dickblick.com/products/winsor-newton-artists-acrylic-slow-drying-medium/?fromSearch=%2Fsearch%2F%3Fsearchword%3DAcrylic%20Slow%20Drying%20Medium>

Clear Weathertight Tote to store paints and palettes in use in:

https://www.containerstore.com/s/storage/storage-bags-totes/clear-weathertight-totes/12d?productid=10026213&country=US¤cy=USD&skuld=10060956&adpos=&cid=cse|SSC|Google|TCSP_X_US_EN_Storage-LIA_PMAX_X_23036005645___en&g_acctid=801-592-2151&g_adgroupid=&g_adid=&g_adtype=none&g_campaign=TCSP_X_US_EN_Storage_PMAX_X&g_campaignid=23036005645&g_keyword=&g_keywordid=&g_network=x&sc_intid=10060956&scid=scplp10060956&utm_campaign=pla&utm_source=google&gclid=Cj0KCQiA6Y7KBhCkARIsAOxhqtMTgwHTUDT8LJrn_HCBgpZ6RWF18-L3WgcBPpEe9GjGfDX98N612wsaAtlZEALw_wcB

Brushes: Wipe the paint out, wash with Dawn dish soap & water, leave to air dry flat, (shaping the bristles while wet)

To get started: #4, 6, 8 Flats , small round brush for details

All Varieties are helpful (bring what you have)!

Flats for long strokes, large areas (use side edge for drawing lines)

Brights for short strokes

Filberts are good for soft brush strokes, foliage, flower petals

Round brushes/liner brushes for details, drawing in areas

Mop brush for clouds, blending edges near finishing stage of painting (also fan brush)

Variety of Palette knife for paint mixing and textures

Varnish/Finish: Use Golden Isolation Coat and an acrylic Gloss Varnish

First seal with the Isolation coat to seal the painting, dry overnight, then lightly coat with the varnish, let dry overnight

<https://www.dickblick.com/products/golden-isolation-coat/>

<https://www.dickblick.com/products/liquidex-acrylic-polymer-varnishes/>

Miscellaneous Supplies

Water spray bottle, misting type

Painting Apron or shirt to protect clothes

Small sketch pad and pencils(2B-6B) for value sketching & notes~ I like the toned tan or toned grey pads

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B008D2TU2G/ref=twister_B0CKWNVSD4?encoding=UTF8&th=1

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B008D2TUUI/ref=twister_B0BFWQC7F2?encoding=UTF8&th=1

Roll of Paper towels (Viva original or shop towels work well)

Baby or makeup wipes for hands, palette knife clean up, etc

Gloves: if you wish to paint with gloves on, here is a link to reuseable ones:

https://www.amazon.com/Segbeauty-Reusable-Professional-Accessories-Highlighting/dp/B08KFWMDWX/ref=asc_df_B08KFWMDWX?mcid=712e8324e92e31af9eb5160b350855f9&tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=695727575753&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=4916141279997802826&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9003301&hvtargid=pla-1309615235264&th=1

You will Need a small bucket or large plastic cup for water ~ have two containers, one larger for cleaning and one small one for dipping the clean brush into while you paint

A Color Wheel:

https://www.dickblick.com/items/creative-color-wheel-9-1-4-diameter-peggable/?clicktracking=true&wmcp=pla&wmcid=items&wmckw=04947-9938&country=us¤cy=usd&gad_source=4&gad_campaignid=23226077171&gbraid=0AAAAAD_wX_HRete2X7_y8O6qLWutlo9Rj&gclid=Cj0KCQiA6Y7KBhCkARIsAOxhqtORftDnXVrYGc1xHH3CZ74rC3JpFyyAjuFuCkuhMwKG-u5PmQ8BsNGaAt2eEALw_wcB

A Value Scale:

https://www.dickblick.com/items/gray-scale-value-finder-4-x-6/?clicktracking=true&wmcp=pla&wmcid=items&wmckw=04947-2500&country=us¤cy=usd&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=PLA_Group%201&utm_id=16552470447&gad_source=4&gad_campaignid=16552470447&gbraid=0AAAAAD_wX_F1gVdv1lvhwNRYNbl7LPuZl&gclid=Cj0KCQiA6Y7KBhCkARIsAOxhqtMBghzMwl7mVZXaQogX9uNK83SQ543v28uiGXMhXLkrYrEg4-Ht_FAAAlzAEAALw_wcB

Brands of brushes:

Simply Simmons Synthetic, Princeton Aspen & Dakota, Seneca, Royal Langnickel White Taklon, etc

Synthetic hold their shape, better with water-based paints