

## Basic Acrylic Painting

### Supplies



Basic Supplies	
Acrylic Paints	Multi-Purpose Sealer
Sanding Sponges	Tracing Paper
1" Tilford Phylbert	Soft lead Pencil
Blue Painters Tape	Transfer Paper
Black Sharpie (Extra Fine) Marker	Acrylic Varnish
Glazing Medium	Paste Wax

### Prepare the Surface

Prepare your surface according to its type. Go to <http://www.we-r-art.com/Backgrounds-roller,spong,glaze.pdf> to choose the proper preparation and suitable backgrounds for your surface.

### Transferring the Pattern

Choose a good quality Tracing Paper and Graphite Transfer paper.

- ✚ First, trace the design using a soft lead pencil on a translucent tracing paper then place the tracing on the lid and align it where you wish it to be located. You may want to trim away the excess paper from around the design to make it easier to see the placement of the design in relation to the surface. Use a small piece of blue low-tack painters tape (found at any home center store) to secure the tracing to the lid.
- ✚ Slide the graphite tracing paper under the tracing making certain that the correct side of the transfer paper is facing down to the surface. If necessary test by making a small mark with your pencil on the transfer paper to see which side needs to be against the lid to make the transfer. Use a stylus, dry ballpoint pen or a "Sharpie **Extra Fine** Marker" (**not** the "Ultra Fine") and retrace over the lines of the pattern.
- ✚ Gently lift the edge of the tracing and graphite paper to see if the transfer has been successful.
- ✚ Remove the tracing and transfer paper carefully so you do not smear the surface. Lift the tape off slowly so it will not cause a lifting and tearing of your box lid. If the tape seems to be sticking...use your hair dryer to heat the tape and then lift gently while the tape is still hot.
- ✚ If the lines of the transfer are very dark, you will want to use a kneaded eraser to remove some of the excess graphite to lighten the lines. Please do not skip this step as it is very hard to get good coverage of a too dark transfer and you may regret the extra work needed to cover those dark lines.

## Glossary of Decorative Art Terms

**Adhesion** - How well paint sticks to a surface.

**Angular Brush** - A flat brush with bristle tips cut at an angle.

**Back-to-Back Float** - Method of placing two floats side by side so that the paint from each float touches the paint from the other and the water or extender sides face out. Also called "reverse float" or "ribbon float."

**Basecoat** - The first layer of paint applied after sealing.

**Binder** - A compound used to suspend color pigments in paint.

**Blending** - A soft, gradual transition from one color or tone to another.

**Blocking In** - The initial painting stage over a preliminary drawing whereby the colors are applied as broad areas of flat color (remember Paint-by-Number?). Also known as "laying in."

**Brights** - Short Haired flats also called chisel blenders.

**Chisel Blender** - Also called a "bright." This is a square-ended brush with short bristles used for shading and blending.

**Chisel Edge** - The "tips" of the bristles on a flat or angle brush. This is the part of the brush that would touch a surface first if held in a vertical position.

**Consistency** - The thinness or thickness of a paint.

**Contrast** - Lights and Darks that create a sense of depth in your painting

**Crackle** - A method of antiquing used to create an aged, cracked appearance

**Curing Time** - The length of time it takes for paint or varnish to "set" or reach its ultimate, stable state

**Double Loading** - Applying two colors to a brush, one each on opposite sides of the bristles

**Dressing a Brush** - Filling brush bristles with paint or medium.

**Dry Brush Technique** - Using a dry brush almost free of paint to stroke in highlights and shading.

**Extender** - Also called "retarder," a product added to paint to slow its drying time, vary its transparency or to allow for more even strokes.

**Fan Brush** - A brush with bristles shaped like a fan. Often used for painting grasses, fur, etc.

**Faux Finish** - Decorative painting that imitates the look of marble, wood, etc. "Faux" means false.

**Ferrule** - The metal portion of the brush that holds the bristles

**Filbert Brush** - A flat brush with oval shaped bristles.

**Flat Brush** - A brush with squared-off bristles with a sharp chisel edge, the hairs are longer than those in a "bright" brush

**Floating or Float** - Technique used for applying shading or highlighting. Also known as "sideloading." A flat or angular brush is usually used with one side loaded with paint and the other side loaded with water or extender.

**Flow Medium** - Mixed with acrylic paints to improve "flowability" when doing line work. Also works well with floats.

**Gesso** - A creamy acrylic primer which can be used on almost any surface without a "shine" to it, i.e., can be used on wood, clay pots, etc.

**Glaze** - Applying a transparent layer of paint over all or part of a painting.

**Graded Wash** - A wash in which the colors move gradually from light to dark or from dark to light.

**Graphite Paper** - Transfer paper with a light to dark gray color.

**Graphite Pencil** - S#2 lead pencil.

**Heel of Brush** - The part of the brush where the bristles enter the ferrule.

**Highlight** - Lightening areas of your painting, which gives the illusion that these areas are receiving the most light

**Intensity** - The brilliance or dullness of a color. Also called "chroma"

**Layering** - A method of giving depth to a painting with several applications of paint, applied in layers, allowing for drying time in between.

**Liner** - A thin longhaired brush, finely pointed, often used in scrollwork and outlining

**Mop Brush** - A large, full-bodied brush with very soft bristles, often used for dry blending.

**Multi-Load Technique** - Loading a brush with multiple colors to achieve color variations in one brush stroke

**Opaque Color** - Opposite of transparent. Background cannot be seen through an opaque color.

**Open Time** - The amount of time it takes for paint to dry to the touch.

**Pigment** - Solid colored particles that form the basic component in all types of paint.

**Priming** - The preliminary coating, color or preparation that is applied to the surface prior to painting. Provides the surface with the right absorbency and color before painting

**Retarder** - Added to acrylic paint to delay the drying process. Also used in place of water to achieve more even strokes

**Round Brush** - A type of brush with round, full bristles forming a fine point at the tip.

**Script Liner** - A liner brush with longer bristles than a regular liner

**Sealer** - Protective coating applied to surface before and after painting which prevents chemical reactions between the paints and the surfaces they are applied on

**Shading** - The areas of shadow or deeper color in an element of our painting

**Stippling** - Giving a textured appearance by lightly loading a small amount of paint onto an old scruffy brush, sponge or stippler brush and "pouncing" up and down on the painting surface, allowing some background color to show through

**Stippler Brush** - A full, round bristled brush available with either soft or stiff bristles

**Stylus** - A tool used to transfer a pattern onto a surface and useful for making dip dots

**Tipping** - Fully loading a brush with one color and then just touching the tip of the bristles in another color this creates color variation in a single brush stroke

**Toe of Brush** - The tip of the bristles

**Tooth** - Refers to the "roughness" of a surface. A surface with tooth is one that has enough roughness or texture that paint will easily adhere to it

**Translucent** - Able to see through the paint, but not clearly

**Transparent** - Able to see through the paint clearly

**Underpainting or Undercoating** - Preliminary painting, over which other colors are applied

**Varnish** - Protective surface over a finished painting

**Wet-on-Wet** - Applying wet paint onto wet paint

**Wet-on-Dry** - Applying wet paint onto a dry surface

**Wet Palette** - Used to store our acrylic paints on your palette and keep them from drying out while working; commercial wet palettes are available but you can make your own using a shallow covered container with a thin wet sponge and specially treated (wet palette) paper or a sheet of deli wrap paper

**Here are some sites with wonderful glossaries of common painting terms**

<http://www.artezan.com/artezan/resources/glossary.html>

<http://www.creative-holidays-spain.com/glossary.html>

<http://www.banyanstudios.net/Glossary.htm>

## Let's learn how to do the Basic Painting Techniques

### Basecoating



The word “Basecoating” describes two very important parts of the Decorative Art process. First, it is what we do to prepare the project surface. It is also, what we need to do to begin painting the separate elements of the design. You may hear this step called “blocking in.”



I prefer to use a flat or filbert shaped brush for basecoating. Many times I will end up using both. The flat brush gives nice sharp chisel edge for elements that have long straight edges or sharp corners. The filbert brush is wonderful when filling in design elements that have curves and rounded edges.

### Basic “Tole” Strokes

Basic Tole Strokes will improve your painting skills and make working on projects so much easier. The **trick** is to **master these strokes** then consider how to apply them to the pattern you have chosen to paint.

### Comma

The Comma Stroke is one that teaches us so much about paint consistency and brush control. To achieve a successful comma stroke we must first use a good quality round brush that has been made to automatically return to its original shape when pressure on the hairs is released. I prefer the round brushes in the Bette Byrd brand. Be sure to



look for a round brush that comes to a nice point in the middle of the hairs. Trust me when I tell you that you will never make a good comma stroke with a cheap blunt end round brush. It just will not happen for you.

The next most important part to getting the best comma stroke that you can is to understand the proper consistency of the paint. Even though our acrylic paints appear thin because they will squeeze or pour from a bottle, they are not thin enough to get a proper load in our round brush to be able to pull a good comma stroke. Our paint must be thinned with water or an acrylic medium to the point where it resembles the consistency of canned cream. I prefer to use Fini Glazing Medium to thin my acrylic paint as it does not weaken the binder in the paint like water.

Pour a small puddle of paint onto a dry palette and have a small amount of your thinning medium in a shallow container (such as a medicine bottle lid).

First, you must condition your brush by dipping it into clean water and blotting it on a clean paper towel. Repeat this step several times before proceeding.

Next, dip your brush into the thinning medium and allow it to soak up enough medium to saturate the hairs of the brush.

Tip the brush into the edge of your puddle of paint and pull out some of the paint (about an inch long) onto the palette. Work the brush by pressing down on the palette with the hairs of the brush, lift, rotate the handle slightly and press down again as you pull the brush through the “loading zone” you have built. Re-tip the brush into paint if needed in order to work the color into the correct consistency. Re-tip into the thinning medium if needed.

Always press and pull the brush so that the hairs have not become deformed in any way. You are trying to maintain the original shape of the brush while pulling paint and medium into the hairs. You do want this thinned paint to fill the hairs of the brush all the way up to the metal ferrule but you need to avoid having any thick blobs or gobs of paint laying on the outside of the brush hairs. Remember, “load paint into the brush not on the brush.”



You will not hold the brush as you would a pencil. The trick is to have control of the brush while still leaving your wrist and arm free to make the movement needed to pull the stroke. Hold the brush handle sides between the thumb and index finger while the handle rests on top of the middle finger. Try to move this hold back on the handle so that you are not cramping down too close to the ferrule. A good measure is to use the pinkie finger of the same hand. Place this finger down on the surface and see if your brush hairs touch the surface. Move your grip up or down along the handle as needed until you can rest your pinkie finger on the surface and the hairs of the brush make contact with the surface comfortably.

Begin to make your comma stroke by pressing the tip of the brush to the surface, increase the pressure to cause the hairs of the brush spread to form the head of the comma stroke. Now start to pull the brush toward your body as you gradually lift the pressure on the hairs. Guide the hairs in the direction you wish the tail of your comma stroke to end.

Remember, the secret is slow steady pull and gradual lifting of pressure. Do not try to win a race to see if you can pull the fastest stroke as this will invariably leave you with a misshapen stroke and a feathery tail on the end of the stroke.

If the stroke is not pulling and leaving smooth sides and a nice clean tail, try thinning your paint a little more. Too thick paint is one of the most common problems to a good stroke.



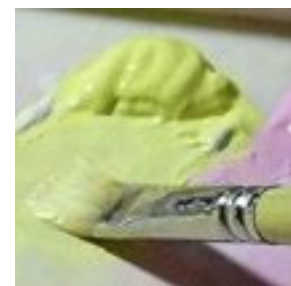
Combining Comma Strokes to form simple flowers like daisies is fun and easy. Multiple comma strokes make wonderful borders and embellishments to simple designs.

## C-Stroke

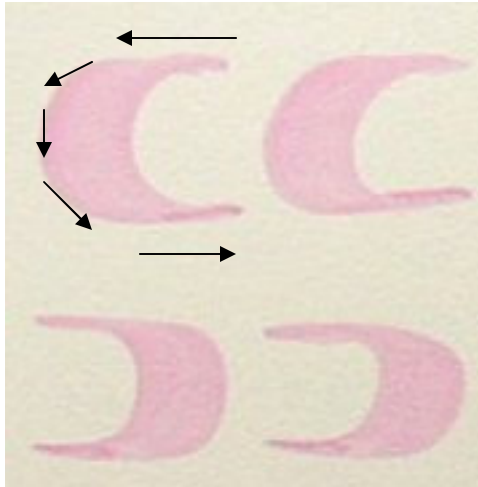
The C-Stroke is necessary skill since it teaches us how to use the “face” and “chisel edge” of our flat and filbert brushes. Most often in practical use the C-Stroke is altered somewhat to fit within the area of the design we are painting.

I prefer to use my flat brush to practice C-Strokes. Keep in mind that C-Strokes may be made with any brush in your arsenal. The important thing is to master the position, direction and amount of pressure you apply to the brush.

You will load your brush with paint in the consistency of canned cream. If your paint is too thick, thin it with water or flow medium or glazing medium. I prefer to use Fini Glazing medium when thinning my paint, as it does not weaken the binder in the paint like water. Pull a small amount of paint from the edge of your paint puddle. Tip the brush into a small amount of the thinning medium then begin to work the face of the brush into the loading zone you made when you pulled out from the main puddle of paint. Be sure to use pressure and pulling to mix the medium into the paint. Do not try to stir the paint with the hairs of your brush. This will cause severe damage to the brush hairs and not mix the medium and paint well.



To begin the stroke hold the brush with the handle pointed toward the ceiling. Barely touch the hairs of the brush to the surface (chisel edge). Do not apply downward pressure on the brush handle. Just allow the tips of the hairs to touch the surface as you move the handle to the left.



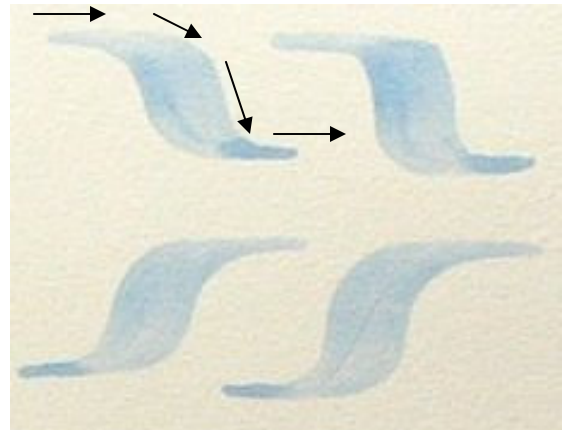
Do not twist the brush but redirect the motion of your hand so that now the full width of the brush hairs is moving in a downward direction. (See chart to the left). At this point, you may be applying a small amount of pressure on the handle; do not over do it.

As you reach the bottom of the stroke, bring the handle straight up so that again only the tips of the hairs of the chisel edge are touching the surface. Complete the stroke by moving the hairs to the right in an equal distance as the top edge of the stroke.

## S-Stroke

Like the C-Stroke the S-Stroke is the mastery of face and chisel edge of the brush. Again, the S-stroke is rarely formed exactly like an S. Think of it more as the stroke that helps us to hold our brush and pull it in the direction and manner that best suits our needs.

The S-Stroke is made almost exactly as the C-Stroke only changing the direction of the final chisel edge pull. (See chart to the right) Notice that the final pull goes off to the right just like the beginning of the stroke.





## **Liner Work**

Liner work is accomplished with a Liner brush. The difference between a liner brush and a round brush is that the ferrule is much smaller in diameter and the hairs are much longer and have been manufactured to make a sharp point.

It is imperative that the paint consistency be very thin when using a liner brush. Again, I prefer to thin my paint with Fini Glazing Medium. To do fine line work the paint must be almost as thin as ink.

Look at the samples to the left and you can see how varied the line work can be.

The difference is the amount of pressure you apply to the hairs of the brush. The more you push down the wider the hairs will spread and thus the wider the line work will appear.

When trying to do very fine lines it's imperative that the paint be inky thin and that you load the brush fully with the thinned paint. To begin your liner work, "Tip Off" the brush just before going to the surface. This simply means that you will gently touch just the tip of the brush on a clean spot of the wet palette to remove excess paint and allow the tip of the brush to form a perfect point.

You must keep the handle of the brush at a perfect 90° angle to the surface. This means that if the project surface is laying flat on the table, the handle of the brush must be straight up and pointing to the ceiling.

**Your assignment is to practice all of the strokes and techniques shown in this lesson.  
Hugs, Brenda**