



Nancy Breiman – Joyful Art

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Oil Tips for Beginners

I'm so excited you have decided to embrace painting with oil! I started my oil painting journey about 3 years ago, and although I don't consider myself an expert, hopefully this doc will help you set up a safe and enjoyable painting environment where you can truly explore your creativity. Painting is a continuous learning process. Don't be afraid to try new things you learn from others to find what best works for you!! Feel free to reach out to me if you have questions. **NOTE:** this document covers in studio painting only, as Plein Air, or outdoor painting, is a different animal.

In this document I will cover the following areas. My Favorites are highlighted in **Purple**

Painting Supplies

- ♥ Paint, Palettes and Brushes
- ♥ Mediums, Solvents and Varnish
- ♥ Painting Surfaces
- ♥ Easels
- ♥ Miscellaneous Supplies

A List of My Favorite Paint Colors and Brands

Note, these are my personal recommendations after lots of trial and error, hours on YouTube and workshops with great master painters. It is my goal to help make your early endeavors into oils affordable and fun. Let's get started!!

Painting Supplies

Oil Paint – while it is tempting to buy the student grade oil paint, I have found that spending just a few dollars more for artist grade will yield better results, less frustration and last you longer, because the main ingredient is the **pigment**, not the fillers. You will be able to mix better colors and get the desired results you are looking for. Keep in mind, most brands have the same colors but may be called different names and they may not be exactly the same. Initially this won't matter but over time, you will find the brand and colors that work best for you. You can find out exactly what the pigment is by reading the label.

- PY = Pigment Yellow
- PO = Pigment Orange
- PR = Pigment Red
- PV = Pigment Violet
- PB = Pigment Blue
- PG = Pigment Green
- PBr = Pigment Brown
- PBk = Pigment Black
- PW = Pigment White
- PM = Pigment Metal



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Here is a valuable resource for you. http://www.artiscreation.com/Color_index_names.html#.XklEMC3MxR0

In addition to the pigment, you should also know whether the paint is TRANSPARENT, SEMI-OPAQUE, or OPAQUE. You can generally find this in the description of the paint as well as on the tube. On most tubes you will find a little square box on the back. Transparent is a box with just outlines, Semi-Opaque is a box with half of it filled in and Opaque is a box completely filled in. I use a combination of the 3 as I like to do my first layer of painting in all transparent paint. This is how I get my most vibrant colors. Transparent paint can also help you mix color variations with opaque paint to make minor color adjustments and save overall paint use. Starting out, I would recommend the following brands: Gamblin, Winsor & Newton and Rembrandt. I have a few favorites from other brands I will share at the end of this doc and why.

Palettes

There are 3 basic palettes you can use, wood, glass and disposable paper. You will see many painters on YouTube using a wood palette they hold in their hand. They now come in other, easier to clean surfaces. You will also see painters using glass as this is inexpensive and can be reused over and over. Both of these require you to keep them clean. You would need a blade scraper and solvent to do this. I started using glass and found it was a lot of work to keep clean and I could not easily store my leftover paint. The third option, and my favorite is **Richeson Gray Matters Palette Paper**. It comes in multiple sizes to suit your needs. You can buy it at www.dickblick.com or www.jerrysartarama.com I like the gray tone as it gives you a much more accurate color when mixing your paint and can be thrown away when done. I frequently transfer my leftover paint to a new sheet for mixing room and continue using the same paint for days. If you use this, **DO NOT THROW AWAY** your oil paint at the end of a painting session. You can cover it lightly with plastic wrap and use for days. You can also store it flat in your freezer for weeks on a cookie tray.

Brushes

Buying brushes can be overwhelming! There are so many to choose from. Over time you will find what you like based on your style and desired brush stroke you want. Starting out you don't need to invest in expensive brushes. Just make sure you are buying brushes designed for use with oil paints and if you also paint in acrylics, keep your brushes separate. Your brush should be appropriate for the size of canvas or surface you



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are working on. Bigger canvas, bigger brush. If you want to paint loose, I suggest using a ¾" brush for surfaces that are 11" or greater. You may want a few smaller brushes when you get to the detail step in your painting. I buy these two brands in bulk as they are inexpensive. I can throw the away when they are worn.

I buy the **Royal Langnickel SableTek Brushes** from www.dickblick.com



Royal Langnickel SableTek Brushes

★★★★☆ 4.3 52 Reviews | Write A Review

SAVE up to 30% off List!

\$3.50 - \$19.70

Twenty years in the making, Langnickel Royal SableTek Brushes boast a proprietary blend of fine filaments that provide incredible control and precision, as well as exceptional durability. The original and world-renowned Royal Sable Brush was a natural hair alternative to pure Red Sable wi...

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I buy the **SG700 brushes** from www.royalbrushstore.com



SG700-3/4" - SOFT GRIP GOLD
TAKLON GLAZE WA

#SG700-3/4" - Item is available.

USD\$ 3.69

Qty:

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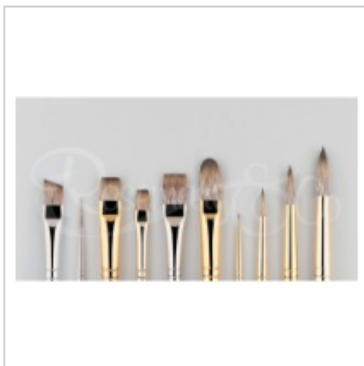


Description

SOFT GRIP GOLD TAKLON GLAZE WA

SOFT GRIP GOLD TAKLON GLAZE WASH 3/4"---

If you are an experienced painter in another medium you may want to try the more expensive brushes from www.rosemaryandco.com These brushes are now my preferred brushes. NOTE: They come from the UK. They take time to deliver. If cared for properly they will last a very long time. I personally like the Eclipse, their COMBERS and their MOP brushes (they don't shed).



ECLIPSE SYNTHETICS

"Synthetic Mongoose" an exciting new range designed to closely mimic the real thing at a lower price. Has much more spring than Sable and yet softer than Bristle. Easy to clean. Will control your oil or acrylic paint a treat!



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Mediums and Solvents

Mediums

Let me save you a lot of trouble on this one....there are a million to choose from. I was blessed early on with an instructor who introduced me to my favorite medium, **Chroma Archival Lean medium**. I use it because it is odorless, makes my paint glide easily on the surfaces and is fast drying. This allows me to paint my underpainting and continue to paint my next layer while it cures.



Chroma Archival Oils Lean Medium

★★★★★ 4.7 36 Reviews | Write A Review

SAVE up to 30% off List!

\$4.99 - \$17.79

This is a very fluid, general-purpose alkyd resin medium that can be used to increase the flow and transparency of Chroma Archival Oils, as well as for glazing and other thin applications. Its fast-drying properties allow a variety of techniques beyond what is normally possible with traditional ...

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Item Specs

Always remember when oil painting to paint your layers **FAT over Lean**. What does this mean? Oil paint doesn't dry, it oxidizes and cures. Here is the simple explanation from Wikipedia:

Fat over lean. **Fat over lean** refers to the principle in **oil painting** of applying paint with a higher **oil** to pigment ratio ('**fat**') **over** paint with a lower **oil** to pigment ratio ('**lean**') to ensure a stable paint film, since it is believed that the paint with the higher **oil** content remains more flexible.

When you use a medium in the early stage of your painting you are making it leaner, using less oil. One of the major ingredients of oil paint is oil. Different paints use different kinds of oil. This is a topic all by itself. As paint cures, if you don't follow this rule, your painting will crack over time.

Solvents

Assuming you want a safe environment, you will want to use an odorless solvent. I have found that most artists use **Gamblin Gamsol Odorless Mineral Spirits**. I really like it and in addition to using it to clean my brushes I often use it to thin my paint when painting. It is very versatile. If you attend workshops, most instructors will insist you use this. The old turpentine is no longer acceptable. An alternative is Weber's Odorless Turpenoid. Turpenoid is less expensive but should not be used as a paint thinner. You can buy both of these from www.dickblick.com

Gamblin Gamsol Odorless Mineral Spirits

★★★★★ 4.9 113 Reviews | Write A Review

SAVE 40% off List!

\$5.10 - \$37.80

Gamsol is an excellent solvent for thinning Gamblin mediums and for general painting. It evaporates 100% and leaves no residue in paint layers. Gamsol is less toxic than other brands of OMS (Odorless Mineral Spirits), mineral spirits, or turpentine because the harmful aromatic solvent component h...

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Weber Odorless Turpenoid

★★★★★ 4.9 | 118 Reviews | Write A Review

SAVE 34-44% off List!

\$4.88 - \$31.88

Weber Odorless Turpenoid is THE premium turpentine substitute. Very volatile, thin, and colorless, it possesses the same painting properties and drying time as turpentine — without the strong odor. Use Weber Odorless Turpenoid as a medium with artists' oil colors and varnishes. It...

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Varnish

Again, lots of choices. I prefer to use spray to avoid brush marks. My go to brand is **Grumbacher**. There are three versions I use depending on the application need. If the painting is finished and cured, usually takes a month or two, I like the Damar Gloss or Matte finish spray varnish. If I have put a painting aside for a time, or I have glossy and dull spots due to the use of my medium, I will use the Grumbacher Retouch Spray Varnish to even out the surface. You can paint over this varnish. Be sure to read the directions for proper drying times.



Grumbacher Damar Spray Varnish

★★★★★ 4.6 | 93 Reviews | Write A Review

SAVE 42% off List!

\$9.74 - \$10.54

This colorless, genuine Damar varnish is for use as a final protective coating on thoroughly dry oil paintings. It brings out the beauty of oil colors with an soft, even, matte finish, while protecting paintings from dirt, moisture, and scuffs. Designed to provide a uniformly fine mist, it quickly dries to a matte or gloss finish that is transparent, permanent, and will not "bloom" or cloud with age. Apply when painting is completely dry, normally within six to 12 months. One coat covers; allow five minutes between coats if a heavier application is desired. Damar Varnish contains Damar gum, turpentine, and isopropyl alcohol. Aerosol can.

Grumbacher Damar Retouch Varnish

★★★★★ 4.6 | 93 Reviews | Write A Review

SAVE 42% off List!

\$10.54

Grumbacher Damar Retouch Varnish is a spray damar varnish for use during intermediate stages of development in an oil painting to even out the gloss of unfinished works, or to revive sunken in or dry areas to aid in accurate color comparison for further painting. Grumbacher Damar Retouch Varnish ...

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[Item Specs](#)



Painting Surfaces

This is a very individual preference category and will depend on the look you are trying to achieve. Also, a category where going cheap will give you disappointing results.



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Stretched Canvas

I suggest for practice you use Artist's Loft Level 1 or 2 stretched canvas from Michaels. Watch for sales and use your coupons. When you're ready, upgrade to **Artist's Loft Level 3**. The stretching, corners and backing are better. In all cases regardless of Level you will need to put an additional 2 coats of gesso on before painting so the canvas doesn't suck up all your pigment. Art Alternatives has been the best performing gesso for me. It's also sold at Michael's in store and online. Apply 2 coats letting each dry a few hours in between. No sanding needed.



Ampersand Gesso Boards

Ampersand Gesso Board is by far my favorite surface. It is smooth but still has tooth. It's easy to transport and easy to frame and comes in huge variety of sizes and shapes. It's basically Masonite board with a prepared surface. No additional gesso needed. You can get it with a cradled wood side. It doesn't need to be framed if you want a more modern look. The wood sides can be stained, painted or left bare wood but they must be sealed the same as your actual painting (another good reason to use spray varnish). Best to use painter's tape to cover the cradled sides before you start painting. I buy them at both www.dickblick.com and www.jerrysartarama.com

Ampersand Gessobord

★★★★☆ (4.8) 563 Reviews | [Write A Review](#)

SAVE 35-42% off List!

\$5.29 - \$145.30



Ampersand Gessobord - 4" x 4", 1/8" Flat,
Pkg of 4

Made with Ampersand's own True Artist Hardbord substrate, Gessobord is perfect for all studio and plein air painting applications. Its fine tooth finish is delicate enough for glazing, fluid brush strokes, and tight detail, yet tough enough to hold up to the most rigorous palette knife painting, collage, and masking techniques. This premium archival surface is ready to use — no priming or prepping is required! Pre-primed with a professional-quality, acid-free Titanium White acrylic gesso ground for enhanced clarity of color, Gessobord is an ideal surface for traditional and water-based oils, alkyds, acrylics, collage, and mixed media. Flat panels can be framed or mounted. Cradled panels can be hung on a wall with no additional framing. The edges are sanded, so you can apply your favorite ground to create an extra dimensional painting. Made from sustainable forest products that ensure the protection of wildlife, plants, soil, and water, Gessobord is formaldehyde-free and contains no harmful volatile organic compounds.

Gessobord is made in the USA.



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Your Painting Workspace

Easels

You may already have one. If so, use what you have. I prefer to stand when I paint, and I have upgraded my easel 3 times over the last 3 years. If you have the space, this is my favorite. Very versatile as it adjusts many ways, lays flat and comes with casters so you can move it around. I'll warn you, it takes up space and does not fit easily through door openings, so best to buy only if you have a dedicated space. I purchased the **U.S. Art Supply Extra Large Double Mast Wooden H-Frame Studio Easel** with Artist Storage Tray from www.amazon.com for under \$250



Miscellaneous Supplies

Container for Solvent and Medium

I clean and re-use a Talenti Gelato container and put a plastic scrubby in the bottom when I studio paint.

When I am traveling, I use a **Tosnail stainless steel leak-proof washer**. You can find this on www.amazon.com

For my Medium, I use a small plastic container the size of an old film container that seals tightly.



Viva Soft Cloth Paper Towels

Lightweight Non-Latex Gloves

Palette Knives for Mixing



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My Favorite Oil Painting Colors and Brands

Transparent Paint Brand	Color
Rembrandt	Transparent Yellow Oxide
Rembrandt	Transparent Orange Oxide
Rembrandt	Transparent Red Oxide
Rembrandt	Transparent Red Medium
Gamblin	Transparent Orange
Gamblin	Dioxazine Winsor Violet
Gamblin	Quinacridone Violet
Rembrandt or Gamblin	Sap Green
Rembrandt	Viridian
Rembrandt	Ultramarine Blue Deep
Rembrandt	Cobalt Blue Light
Winsor & Newton	Indian Yellow
Winsor & Newton	Permanent Rose
Winsor & Newton	Magenta
Winsor & Newton	Alizarin Crimson
Any Brand	Payne's Gray

Semi-Opaque/Opaque Paint Brand	Color
Rembrandt	Cad Red Medium
Rembrandt	Cad Yellow Light
Rembrandt	Titanium White
Richeson Shiva Series	Brilliant Yellow Light
Richeson Shiva Series	Ice Blue
Old Holland	Caribbean Blue