



INSTRUCTOR: Costa Vavagiakis

Portrait Painting

Most of the following supplies may be purchased at the League's art supply store, located in the lobby. It is advisable to speak with the instructor before buying supplies.

Oil Colors

If you are an experienced painter, bring your favorite palette and colors. All artists' grade brands of oil paints are good. I use a variety of oil colors from different companies.

Minimum Palette

- Titanium White (Gamblin Flake Replacement White, Gamblin Fast Matt White, Graham Alkyd White, or any other quick drying white)
- Yellow Ochre
- Cadmium Lemon Yellow
- Cadmium Red Light
- Burnt Sienna
- Alizarin Crimson Permanent
- Cobalt Blue
- Ultramarine Blue
- Viridian
- Raw Umber

- Mars Black

Optional Additional Colors

- Naples Yellow Light
- Cadmium Orange
- Mars Orange
- Venetian Red
- Indian Red
- Cerulean Blue
- Terre Verte
- Burnt Umber

[**Note:** Do not buy paints that are called Hues. For example, buy Cadmium Red Light, not Cadmium Red Light Hue; buy Cobalt Blue, not Cobalt Blue Hue; Cerulean Blue, not Cerulean Blue Hue. Hues are dye colors made to emulate the other colors, but do not have the same properties.]

Brushes

- 1 each of Blick Masterstroke Filbert Bristle sizes: 2, 4, 6, 8 |
- 1 each of Blick Masterstroke Flat Bristle size: 10 |
- 1 each of W&N Lexington Filbert Bristle sizes 2, 3 |
- 1 each of Silver Renaissance Sable Cat's Tongue sizes 1, 2 |

Or order from Wind River Arts:

- 1 each of Ivory brights sizes 1, 2
- 1 each of Ivory Filberts sizes 1, 2, 4, 6 |
- 1 each of Ivory Flats sizes 8, 10

Mediums

- Old Holland Bleached Linseed Oil
- W&N Liquine Fine Detail 75 ml |
- Sennelier Gel'N Dry |
- Weber Odorless Mineral Spirits (Turpenoid) |

Painting Supports

Options are:

- Canvas Pads |
- Oil Painting Papers |
- Stretched Canvas |
- Primed Panels |

Necessary Accessories

- Two Unattached Single Palette Cups, medium size |
- Italian Painting Knife Style 1 |
- Italian Painting Knife Style 61 |
- Cotton Rags |

- Paper Towels (Viva or blue shop towels are the best) |
- Artist Tape (white) |
- Knitting Needle
or Straight Skewer |
- View-finder: Make one of cardboard. Make two “L” shapes, about 7”-8” on the leg and 1½” wide. Hold together with binder clips.

—or —

- View Catcher |

Choosing Sizes and Shapes to Paint On

Here are some recommended sizes for canvases and panels:

- 12x9,” 14x11,” 16x12,” 18x14,” 20x16,” 24x20,”
30x24;” I suggest you don’t work larger than 40x30”.

If you choose two shapes—one elongated and one more square—you will have compositional options.

To Tone or Not to Tone

What I find after many years of painting is that you don’t get locked into one way of doing something. One moment a white ground is best. Another moment a toned ground works better. If you choose to tone your painting surface, I will choose some- thing close to a mid-tone/hue (i.e., raw umber mixed with cerulean blue or burnt sienna mixed with ultramarine blue). The tone that I prefer landscape painting is yellow ochre.

Or you could tone your painting surface in a neutral warm gray (i.e., Golden Acrylic #6 Neutral Gray)

Techniques of Toning Painting Surfaces (wood board, Masonite, paper, or canvas): Transparent Oil Imprimatura (on oil or acrylic surfaces) Mix up a batch of neutral color. The amount of paint mixed will depend on the size of your canvas or the quantity of canvas you are planning to prepare. Taking your palette knife, scoop up some of the mixed paint and gently smear it across the canvas. Then taking a clean rag, pour some odorless turpenoid onto the rag and gently push the rag over the surface of the canvas making sure not to push too hard on the canvas. If the paint is not thinned out enough, add a little bit of the turpenoid directly to the canvas surface.

The paint should thin out quickly and become very fluid. Continue to gently sweep across the canvas with your rag in circular motions paying mind to cover the white of the canvas with the tone. The final product will be a canvas that is “stained” with a wash of color. Allow it to dry and use as needed. | [watch video](#)

Opaque Ground (on acrylic surfaces)

Apply one to two coats of Golden Acrylic #6 Neutral Gray paint diluted with water to the surface with a brush. The mixture ratio

is approximately two-parts water to one-part paint. To apply the tone, first cover the entire surface of the canvas with the mixture using a 2- or 3-inch-wide brush. When the surface is completely covered, make sure the paint surface is smooth by lightly dragging the brush through the paint from one edge to the other, across the entire surface. The finished canvas should have a uniformly smooth gray finish.

If the first coat did not cover sufficiently then a second coat of the diluted #6 Neutral Gray toning mixture should be applied. Be careful not to apply the paint too thickly because.

it reduces the absorbency of the canvas, and it makes it harder to apply the paint evenly. I recommend starting with closer to half water, half paint and see how it spreads.