

Oil Painting Materials

Paint

- When starting out in Oils, it is useful to use a limited palette. Get to know a few basic colours first and how they blend. Then add or try one new colour one at a time to develop your own personal colour palette. Most colours can be mixed from a palette that consists of the three primary colours and white. Even black can be made using these colours.
- Buy the best quality paint you can afford, but for experimenting and practicing a technique Student quality will give good results.

I recommend using Traditional or Alkyd paints, the latter dry much faster than traditional oils. They still do not dry as fast as Acrylics but as long as the paint is not too thick will dry overnight.

Here are a couple of starter palettes:-

Cadmium Red- A cheaper version will be called Cadmium red Hue
Cadmium yellow
Ultramarine blue or Cobalt Blue
Titanium white

An alternative slight cheaper palette could be.

Alizarin Crimson
Lemon yellow
Ultramarine Blue or Cobalt Blue
Titanium white

This palette will take slightly longer to dry.

Hue after a colour indicates that the colour is made using cheaper perhaps synthetic pigments.

Thinners

- Oils are used working dark to light and generally thin to thick.
- Traditional oil paints are thinned with spirit-based thinners like Turpentine or White Spirit (cheaper). Caution must be used with these thinners as they can cause skin reactions and aggravate lung disorders such as asthma.
- Odourless versions are available. The most readily available are Sansidor, Shellsol or Zestit.

WE ONLY ALLOW ODOURLESS THINNERS IN THE STUDIO.

Mediums

- When building up the layers of an oil painting to stop the paint cracking over time, refined oils are added in increasing amounts, to each layer. This is called working

“Fat over Lean”. It is not essential to have this oil when first starting out, but see the examples below

Linseed Oil

Liquine (this is a combination of oil thinner and varnish)

Stand Oil

Support

- Oils can be used on many different painting surfaces. The most common are primed canvas panel or boards. However, oil paints can be used on anything provided it is prepared with a sealant to prevent absorption of the paint into the support.
- Oil painting pads are available, similar to watercolour pads however the cheaper versions of these can be quite porous. Therefore, ideally the surface should be prepared using gesso or simple household emulsion paint. If the surface is prepared in this way anything can be used including wallpaper lining paper, hardboard and even cardboard.

Brushes

- Don't buy large sets of brushes. One large brush and one smaller for detail will be sufficient. Fine detail can be done if required using a small synthetic watercolour brush. Traditionally Hog hair brushes are used for oil but synthetic oil brushes are a cheaper alternative. They are more hard wearing than hog hair, nowadays they have a good spring and hold their shape fairly well. They come in three shapes. Which you choose is a personal choice.

Round

Flat

Filbert

- For the beginner The Filbert shape preferably long handled would be a good all-round brush to start with. It enables you to do finer lines but also can be used flat to block in a large area.
- One palette knife would be useful for colour mixing and applying paint. The one I use the most is one of the diamond shaped with a bent shaft, and a long knife shaped with a straight blade.

Palettes

- Any flat non-porous surface can be used as a palette.
- Traditionally they are made of wood, or nowadays cheaper ones of MDF.
- Cheap plastic palettes are adequate to begin with: White or grey tear off palettes are also available.

- It is also useful for the class to have a flat tupperware type sealable box to keep paints in the freezer between use, this prevents them drying or developing a skin.

Rags

- for cleaning brushes and wiping back.