

Stephanie Fisher
ARTY FISH



A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO PAINTING
WITH ACRYLICS AT HOME.....



Hello! My name is Steph, or otherwise known as 'Artyfish'.

I am a full-time artist, and teach 'Therapeutic Art Classes' both in person and online. I believe everyone has an ability to be creative in some way, and my mission is to help you discover yours and help you onto the road of your own artistic journey.

I passionately believe in the power of creativity, and am a huge advocate for the transformative power of art.

I am often asked by people at my art sessions what equipment and tools they need to start painting at home, so I have put together this step by step guide of materials and equipment that I use myself and in my art classes, all of which work well for all my students, regardless of experience.

So...to get you started on your painting journey, firstly you will need some basic materials these can normally be found around the house; a HB pencil and rubber, a water pot to clean your brushes and palette knife, an old cloth, tea towel or kitchen paper for drying and cleaning your brush and for any spillages!

In addition, I have provided details of other items you will need, all of which can be found at plenty of stores that provide good quality art supplies at an affordable price, such as* The Range, The Works and Hobby Craft. Individual art shops tend to be slightly more expensive. You will need a budget of around about £30 - £40 to purchase the items I have suggested..

* I am not affiliated in any way to the company's/brands that I recommend, these are just brands that I have used and have experience of.

1. TABLE TOP EASEL



Some people like to work flat, or even on the floor, this depends on the size and material that you are working with. I generally like to have my work upright in front of me on an easel, especially if working on something that may take some time.

There are many types of table top easel, and vary greatly in price. This particular style is great for carrying around – it is very light and also has a handy little draw underneath where you can store your brushes/pencils etc. They are suitable for small works up to A3 size, but nothing too heavy.

This particular style was purchased from The Works, and cost about £10.

2.

DRAWING BOARD & MASKING TAPE



If working with an easel and paper you will need a simple backboard, this can be either a piece of MDF wood, a thick piece of card or mount-board, slightly bigger than A3 size.

To prevent your paper from moving and curling up I use masking tape to secure the paper to the board along all four edges to create a 10mm border. This creates a nice white frame once removed, and adds a real finishing touch to your piece of work.

You can find these items in any DIY store, you can also ask for MDF offcuts which won't cost you a penny.

TOP TIP!

Make sure the masking tape is low tack, or it will tear the paper when you take it off, especially if it's been on there for a while. In my experience even some low tack masking tapes can still tear your paper. To prevent this I always apply the tape to the board on its own first, then peel it off and apply it. That way, it is less tacky when you apply it to the paper, and hopefully won't tear it when you peel it off!

3.

SURFACES



There are all sorts of surfaces that you can paint on with acrylics. I generally use box canvas, canvas boards or acrylic paper. Box canvas is always a good option – these generally come primed and ready to use and come in all shapes and sizes. I like using the deep edge ones for larger works, as they don't need to be framed. However, to start with I recommend using a simple acrylic or canvas paper which are both nice to work on.

When you become more experienced you can push your creative boundaries further by working with a wide variety of surface choices including, wood, plastic, glass, metal and even leather.

All surfaces shown in the picture can be purchased from as little as £3 depending on the size you like.

4.

BRUSHES AND PALETTE KNIFE



Most synthetic brushes are reasonable quality. I have a whole range of brushes, but my go to is always a flat brush! As you develop your technique and style you will find your own preference, so it is good to have different types to try. You can get a set for about £6.

The Palette knife is an essential piece of kit for mixing paint together. It can also be used to create different marks and effects on your artwork. There are all sorts of different types - but I tend to use the same flat edge style - use whatever suits you best. You can pick up an individual knife up for about £4.

TYPES OF BRUSH

Round – pointed tip, good for detail.

Flat – spreads paint evenly and quickly over a surface.

Filbert – flat with a dome shape end.

Fan – a flat 'fan' shape ideal for blending.

Rigger – A long thin bristles, used for fine lines (great for whiskers!)

5.

MIXING SURFACE & PALETTE

An artist palette is an essential tool in painting with acrylics. This can be something as simple as an old plate, or a plastic lid. You also buy Tear Off Palette pads which usually have about 25 sheets of a non-porous palette paper that you can mix paint on and then throw away.

If you become hooked and start painting a lot I recommend a Stay-Wet Palette, which is a simple but effective idea that keeps your acrylic paints moist and usable for weeks. You simply soak the sheet of reservoir paper at the bottom of the palette with clean water, and then lay the greaseproof paper on top. As a daily painter I wouldn't be without mine – in fact I usually have about three on the go!



TOP TIP!

You can make your own version with a Ferrero Rocher case, or any flat plastic container with a lid. I use a jay cloth in the bottom, and then cut some thick gauge greaseproof paper to size. A good excuse to treat yourself to some choccies :-)

6.

THE PAINT

and finally...

There are so many different brands of paint out there offering you so much choice depending on your preference and of course your budget. To start with I would recommend a basic starter kit with smaller tubes which will include the majority of colours you will need, you can pick a set up from around £8.00.

Once you start to progress you may find yourself being drawn to a particular colour palette so can buy individual colours, you'll even learn to mix your own paints which will save you buying all the colours in one go!

The staple colours I have in my collection are:

1. Mars Black
2. Titanium White
3. Burnt Umber
4. Yellow Ochre
5. Cadmium Orange, Red & Yellow
6. Cerulean Blue
7. Phyllo Blue/Ultramarine Blue
8. Purple

In the picture I have shown some of the brands that I use which are good quality yet affordable.

The Pebo Studio acrylics are entry level and have a thinner consistency compared to the others, but are equally usable. I like using them for background washes and layering. My favourite is the Sennelier Abstract pouches, as there is no waste whatsoever. Sometimes with tubes the paint goes off and therefore you end up wasting money.



So now that you are ready to go....scan or click on the QR code below for details of my online classes and please join me for a relaxing 'no pressure' painting session in the comfort of your own home....



ARTY FISH

Useful links for instore or online purchases.

www.hobbycraft.co.uk
www.theworks.co.uk
www.therange.co.uk

More specialist art stores online only:
www.cassart.co.uk
www.jacksonsart.com

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