



Utrecht Art Supplies

Product Profile: Oil Shed from Tube Colors

"Why Does Oil Drip Out of My Paint Tube?"



It's called "oil shed" and it occurs when pigment settles in the container. The oil helps displace air in the tube and is a sign the paint is in good condition and free of fillers. Lean pigments sometimes tend to give up oil more readily than "fat" ones, so you'll see oil shed with flake white once in a while.

You might notice that cheaper "student grade" paints seldom develop oil shed. This is because large amounts of alumina stearate filler (used as a stiffener to replace more costly pigment) tend to blot up any free oil. As a result, the paint looks dry and waxy straight from the tube compared to the lustrous, wet appearance of better artist's colors.

Some manufacturers hold their paints in bulk containers before tubing to allow oil shed to occur before the product is packaged. This is a costly extra step, however, which affects the consumer price so not many companies do this. Utrecht uses tubes with a cold wax seal added to retain oil. This helps keep paint in perfect condition and reduces visible drips on the packages and display racks.



Particularly oily paints can be dispensed onto an old telephone book (cover torn off) before use. This helps avoid introducing large amounts of oil to the palette.

Questions? [Ask the Expert](#)

Intended for reference only. Observe all package instructions. Dick Blick Holdings/Utrecht Art Supplies is not responsible for any damage to personal property that may result from use of the information presented herein. © Copyright 2013 Dick Blick Holdings Inc. All rights reserved.