

HANDCRAFTED
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1949
BROOKLYN·NY

Utrecht

ASK THE EXPERTS

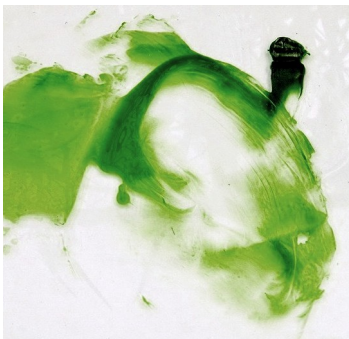
Product Profiles: Using Tube Colors for Wet-In-Wet



Alpine landscape, unknown artist, 19th c.

Ask the Experts: "My favorite TV painter uses wet-in-wet oil paint on acrylic gessoed canvas. His paint must be different from what I have, because I can't get the same effects. Do I have to buy the TV brand, or can I make do with what I have?"

A: No, you don't have to buy any specific brand of supplies to do wet-in-wet oil painting, but there is a distinct difference between TV instructional "wet in wet" paints and Utrecht brand tube colors. Because Utrecht paints are more heavily pigmented, they will have stronger color, and will be stiffer than ones factory-formulated for wet-in-wet. In order to impart the loose, fluid body of TV instructional supplies, safflower oil can be added at the palette and mixed in with a palette knife. Add a couple of drops at a time until a loose, brushable consistency is achieved. The goal should be a paint that is still strong enough to leave distinct marks without overwhelming the liquid base layer of white.



Most wet-in-wet painting systems start with the application of a base coat of oil paint that is either clear or white. The white

base coat is a low viscosity, liquid oil paint, which lubricates brush strokes while providing white pigment for mixing (as opposed to mixing colors on the palette). The clear base is primarily made of a neutral-colored oil, with some undisclosed proprietary ingredients.



Unverified, DIY recipes for these products have circulated for years. One of the more popular recipes recommends titanium white oil paint diluted with stand oil and odorless mineral spirits for the liquid white base coat, and stand oil mixed with mineral spirits for a liquid clear base. We think Stand Oil might be too viscous for this application; instead, we suggest Titanium White mixed with safflower oil as a better choice for the white base. And, while working directly into a thick layer of unmixed, clear oil is not generally a good practice, lightly "oiling out" the canvas with a small amount of painting medium should provide the smooth brush movement desired for wet-in-wet oil painting without making resulting paint layers too oil-rich.

It's important to remember that wet-in-wet techniques have been part of the oil painting tradition for a very long time. There's every reason to expect good results using basic oils, paints and thinners for this method. Packaged, ready-to-use TV painting supplies are conveniently formulated for this method, but you could save some money and use better quality paint if you are willing to devote the time to preparing your own supplies.