



Utrecht Art Supplies Habits of Successful Artists



(Image: Julian E. Levi in his studio, 1940)

Ask the Expert: “I work very hard at my art, and I’m proud of what I do, but I don’t seem to be getting very far in my career, or making enough art. Is there something that more successful artists are doing that I’m not?”

A: It takes discipline, time and hard work to launch and sustain a career as a studio artist. Sometimes it seems like there just aren’t enough hours in the day to handle all the tasks necessary to run a studio, let alone actually paint, draw and sculpt. Experienced professional artists are organized and disciplined in a way that ensures everything gets done, with enough time to make art.

Finish a piece and move on

When you overwork one single piece, productivity suffers and the results may not look fresh and resolved. In order to boost

your output and keep things looking crisp, learn to identify when a piece is finished and move on to the next.

Keep a Sketchbook

One habit that professionals tend to adopt is keeping a sketchbook with them at all times, to record ideas and concepts while they’re fresh. A sketchbook can serve as a deep well of inspiration when it’s time to work in the studio!

Work in series

If a subject or theme inspires one successful painting, consider whether that subject can generate a series. Working up a number of paintings at once provides the opportunity to move from one canvas to the next when a surface becomes too saturated or wet to accept more medium. Working in series is a great way to create a suite of paintings that relate to one another visually and thematically, especially when preparing for a solo exhibition.

Schedule studio time

Artists who live by their art don’t always have the luxury of waiting for inspiration to strike. If you schedule time to work and adhere to the schedule, your work will be more prolific and developed.

Store Art Carefully

Dog-eared drawings and prints, chipped sculptures and scuffed paintings are considerably less attractive to collectors

than works kept in perfect condition. Invest in some good shelving, flat files, racks and archival-quality storage boxes to keep art in ready-to-show condition all the time!

Framing is not an afterthought

Student artists seldom consider framing or presentation until a piece is finished.

Professionals understand that how a piece is presented has a huge influence on the viewer's experience, and start thinking about display technique very early in the process.

Don't neglect photography

Never, ever release work from the studio without getting a good photograph.

Successful professionals understand the value of retaining high-quality images of their work for self-promotion and licensing for reproduction. Keep backups of image files in cloud storage to protect against data loss.

Network and publicize

Sometimes it's tempting to just cocoon in the studio and shut the whole world out, but if that's all you do, the world tends to forget about you. Make time to attend art openings and events. Stay active on social media to promote your work, but just as any other career professional, be mindful of what you post online.

Participate

Successful artists participate in group shows, join arts organizations and give to charity. Charity auctions can provide great opportunities to reach a wider audience, but most importantly, it's a great feeling when your work helps a worthy cause!

Questions? [Ask the Expert](#)

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