



Utrecht Art Supplies

Studio Craft: Finishing Frames with Artist's Colors



Artists' colors can be used for many more applications than just easel painting. Decorative finishes can be applied to interior surfaces, furniture and, particularly useful to artists, picture frames. By combining grounds, mediums and colors it's possible to achieve a wide range of effects.



Wooden frames can be treated with a combination of Utrecht painting supplies to look very convincingly like gold leaf over gesso. Paint can also be used to create the look of just about any other material, limited only by the artist's skill and imagination.



Making the Frame

Elegant frames can be made from common stock from any home improvement store. Try stacking flat, concave, convex and other profiles to create interesting profiles. For best results, start with a simple inner frame of rectangular dimensions, then build on with other molding using wood glue and wire brad nails. Make sure to create a rabbet (inner channel) with the depth and dimensions for your canvases.



Filling and priming:

Utrecht Modeling Paste and Extender fills surface irregularities and grain.



Use Acrylic Gesso to build up a surface with the texture or smoothness desired.



Application with a palette knife helps drive the material into cracks and joints.



Use a brush to reach areas where the knife can't.



Allow each layer to dry, then sand before reapplication.



Depending on the desired effect, paint can be applied directly to gesso or, for more complexity, cover the entire surface of the frame with a tint composed of gesso and artist's acrylic colors. To tint gesso without streaks and lumps, mix desired color with a small amount of water first to make it more fluid. Stir diluted color into gesso until a homogeneous color is achieved. Dilute mixture with water to a thick cream consistency.



Metallic Finish:

The Utrecht Acrylic assortment includes several rich, convincing metallic colors. **Permanent Gold** is an excellent choice for decorative surface finishes.



For an authentic touch, leave a small amount of undercoat visible in crevices to mimic the clay bole used in genuine gilding. Use gold all over or as an accent with other colors.



Deep Glaze:

To give a richer, more complex appearance to the metallic finish, an earth color can be rubbed in thinly to emphasize texture and deepen color. Utrecht Artist's Oil Colors can be applied over dry acrylic paint to achieve a convincing antique gold appearance or to deepen solid colors.



Raw Umber is a good choice for emphasizing texture. Select **Burnt Sienna** if a warmer gold color is desired. Mix a small amount of oil paint with **Utrecht Alkyd Glazing Medium**, enough to liquefy paint without diluting the color. Wearing gloves, using a cotton rag rub the resulting glaze over the frame, rubbing thin without wiping away

too much color. Leave some areas of tinted undercoat visibly uncovered by the glaze. Alkyd Glazing Medium will promote fast drying of oil colors; in most cases, a thin coat will dry overnight.



Once the paint is dry, a final clear topcoat can be applied. **Utrecht Gloss Picture Varnish Spray** can be applied over the entire finished surface of the frame to seal, protect and enhance the finish. If a less shiny finish is desired, rub in paste wax instead of varnish.

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