



Utrecht Art Supplies

Studio Craft: Making Extra-smooth Primed Panels



Rigid supports are particularly well suited to small, detailed work.

Hardboard is an excellent support for smooth priming with Utrecht Acrylic Gesso (acrylic dispersion painting ground).



Good results depend on advance preparation of the panel. Edges should be cleanly cut and corners should be crisp and square. To prevent chipping, use a sanding block or fine wood file to slightly bevel edges.



Lightly sand panel face to remove irregularities and provide subtle texture.



Remove all dust; clean with denatured alcohol before sizing.



Apply Utrecht Acrylic Canvas Sizing according to package directions. Acrylic sizing isolates the support, preventing loss of oil paint vehicle into the board while reducing absorbency, minimizing distortion from moisture during priming. Diluted gloss acrylic medium can be used as a substitute. Do not use animal-based sizings like Rabbit Skin Glue with acrylic primers.



Apply sizing evenly, taking care to avoid runs.



Coat edges of panel to harden and protect corners.



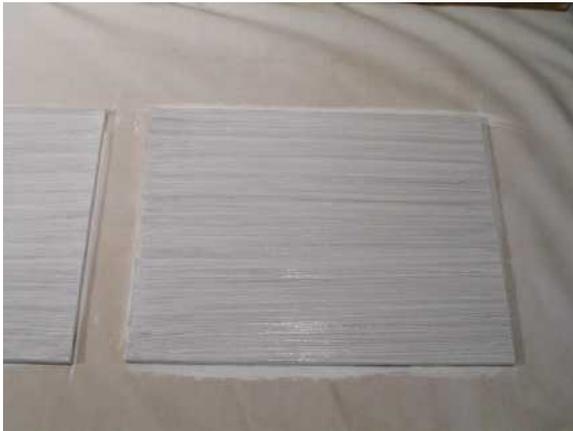
Allow to dry completely.



To save time, prime multiple small panels simultaneously.



Apply Utrecht Acrylic Gesso according to package directions. (Brush parallel to long dimension of panel.) If desired, gesso may be diluted to a thinner consistency; when doing so, apply more layers to ensure full coverage.



Allow to dry thoroughly between layers.



Lightly sand to reduce ridges and irregularities. Re-coat according to package directions, sanding lightly between layers.



Dispense undiluted gesso on a palette. Use a single-edged razor blade or mat knife blade to gather a small amount of primer.



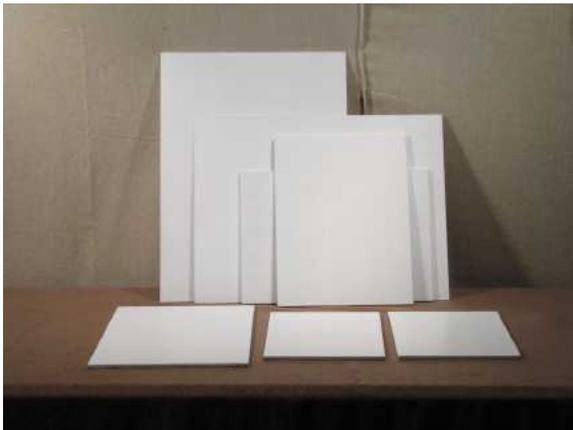
In a squeegee motion parallel with the long dimension of the panel, apply a thin coat of full-strength gesso, scraping thin as you go. Work quickly, overlapping slightly to minimize ridges. This step fills ridges and low spots, leaving a smooth finish.



Carefully scrape excess from edges with a palette knife. Allow to dry. Re-apply another layer as in previous step.



Use a clean blade to shave ridges and irregularities, leaving a smooth, near-featureless surface.



Once dry to the touch, panels may be used with acrylic paints; allow to dry overnight for use with oils.



Extra-smooth priming provides a "fast" ground for oils with minimal "break" in brush strokes. Smooth priming facilitates clean lifting to the white ground color. For durable paint adhesion avoid heavy impasto when using extra-smooth priming.



Use a natural bristle brush to apply a light imprimatura for toned grounds.

Questions? [Ask the Expert](#)

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