

Equipment Class

Tools & Tips

1. A set work area is a good thing to have, if possible.
2. Lighting is very important, both in how colors look and with your eye fatigue.
 - (a) daylight bulbs will give true color representation.
 - (b) bulborama.com has bulbs
 - (c) ott-lite is quite popular, and can be affordable with 40-50% off coupons and such.
 - (d) They make a battery-powered LED unit.
3. Places to get supplies:
 - Michael's
 - Jo-Ann's
 - A.C. Moore
 - cheapjoes.com
 - jerrysartarama.com
 - Rochester fine art (fineartstore.com)
4. Palettes:
 - (a) Compartmentalized Ceramic (porcelain) palettes are very handy, especially for very wet things (like washes) (\$5-\$15)
 - (b) Wet palettes are very handy for keeping paints from drying out and keeping them overnight (or even for up to a week). (\$15)
 - i. Rectangular sandwich container
 - ii. Thin sponge
 - iii. Parchment paper
 - iv. Boil parchment (or pour boiling water over it) first
 - v. wet the sponge
 - vi. The seal is not as good, and it won't last as long, but it works.

- (c) To buy one, you want a Sta-Wet Handy Palette. It's the right size for gaming.
5. A palette knife is worthwhile. They're cheap, metal, and the paint comes right off, so you don't mess up brushes mixing.
6. Brushes:
- (a) Many of these brushes are watercolor brushes, which have a longer handle. Shortening the handle is not a bad idea if it's getting in your way).
 - (b) Real Kolinsky Sable, natural bristle brushes.
 - (c) They last longer and work better.
 - (d) Synthetics will hook over time, no matter what you do.
 - (e) Suggested brushes:
 - i. Rhapsody Creative Mark Series
 - ii. Windsor Newton Series 7 Miniature brush.
 - A. Good for eyes, especially in small sizes
 - B. These don't hold as much paint, which some people don't like.
 - iii. Rafael 8404
 - (f) Most important thing is the tip, it must come to a point.
 - (g) The size designations are the size of the ferrule, not the size of the tip.
 - (h) Very small brushes have a problem with the paint drying on the brush before you can put in on the figure.
 - (i) Brush shapes:
 - i. Liners have a longer bristle, so they hold a lot of paint, for long smooth lines.
 - (j) Synthetic to natural will be an adjustment - natural holds a lot more paint, and you need to get used to this.
 - (k) Cleaning:
 - i. Paint, wipe off paint, swish in water
 - ii. Windsor Newton brush cleaning is very aggressive, but works. However, it tends to dry brushes out and so they need to be conditioned afterward.
 - iii. The Master's brush cleaner & conditioner (because they're made of hair!)
 - iv. A brush case is a good investment, as it will keep your brushes from getting squished. Rochester fine art carries a nice wooden one with a flip top. It gives a nice portable workstation.
 - v. Cleaning process:
 - A. Wipe paint off
 - B. Rinse
 - C. Wipe across the soap

D. Pull brush across back or palm of hand while twisting to work the soap in and pull paint out.

- (l) If you only have two brushes, buy a 0 and either a 000 or 00.
- (m) The smaller brush is for eyes.
- (n) If you get a third, make that one a 2.

7. Paint:

- (a) Paint consists of pigment and binder.
- (b) Inks are dye and binder
- (c) Pigment is always a solid.
- (d) There may be other stuff (fillers, etc.)
- (e) There are differences in quality, specifically:
 - i. Pigment sources (quality, location, etc.)
 - ii. Grind size
- (f) The finer the grind, the more pigment is needed and the more grinding is required. Both of these mean more expense.
- (g) Purpose build miniature paint will have very small grind size.
- (h) Top Tier:
 - i. Reaper Master Series
 - ii. Vallejo Model Color and Game Color lines
- (i) Both Reaper and Vallejo add a flow aid. Reaper adds a drying retarder as well.
- (j) Reaper sells in triads - base, shadow, highlight.
- (k) The flesh triads work well.
- (l) **Note:** There will be a learning curve when changing paints - thinning, etc.
- (m) Buy a color wheel, especially for historical. This will show you complementary colors and such.
- (n) **Super Tip:** Base the mini in white, then paint it with thinned Vallejo Smoky Ink to pop the details and let you see what you're trying to paint.
- (o) You pretty much always need to thin your paint.
 - i. How much? Up to you.
 - ii. Better to go too thin and then build up.
- (p) When trying to do a light on top of darks, especially red and yellow, paint white first (or try not to get the dark in there). It will cover better.

8. Priming:

- (a) Color matters
- (b) If you prime with white, you'll have less of a problem covering over it, and the end result will be truer to the reference color in the bottle.
- (c) If priming with Gesso, you must let it dry for 24 hours.
- (d) Gesso is very solid and hard.
- (e) Half Gesso (primer) and half glass and tile medium (makes it stick to the model).

9. Washes:

- (a) Flow aid - helps paint and washes flow. Suggested: Windsor Newton Galleria Matte, not gloss.
- (b) Thinner - 25% flow aid, 25% extender/retarder, 50% distilled water
- (c) Use distilled water because the minerals can cause issues with the paint.

10. Sealing and Protecting:

- (a) Jo Sonja matte varnish (brush on). (Could theoretically yellow, but instructor has never had a problem with it).
- (b) Testor's DullCote is a crowd favorite, but instructor has had it yellow on her.