

Painting Terms

Dry Brush - This technique is used when you load your brush with very little paint and you lightly skim the surface of the canvas to add color, blend a color or soften a color. You use a very light touch for this technique.

Scumbling - This technique is when you use a series of unorganized overlapping strokes in different directions to create things like clumps of foliage, clouds, hair, grasses, etc. The direction of the stroke is not important.

Glazing (Wash) - A glaze or a wash is a very thin layer of paint applied on top of a dry area of the painting to create mist, fog, haze, sun rays, or to soften an area that is too bright. This mixture is made up of water a small amount of color. It may be applied layer on top of layer to achieve the desired effect. Each layer must be dry before applying the next.

Wet On Wet - This is a painting technique where you blend colors together while the first application of paint is still wet. This techniques is mostly used when we use our large hake brush to blend large areas, such as, skies and water.

Wet On Dry - We use this technique most often in acrylic painting. Where you background color is dry and you apply the topcoat over it by using one of the blending techniques, such as, dry brushing, scumbling, or glazing.

Underpainting or Blocking In - These two terms mean the same thing. The first step in all paintings is to block in or underpaint the darker values of the entire painting. Then you begin applying the next values of color to create form and depth of each object.

Highlighting or Accenting - This is one of the final stages of your painting. You use pure color or brighter values of colors to give your painting its final glow. You usually apply these highlights carefully on the sun lit edges of the most prominent objects in the painting.

Dabbing - This is a technique mostly used for creating leaves, ground cover, flowers, etc. You use a bristle brush and dab it on you table or palette to spread out the end of the bristles like a fan. Then load the brush with the appropriate color and gently dab on the color to create the desired effect.

Gesso - Gesso is a white paint generally used for sealing your canvas before you begin painting. However, because of its creamy consistency I often use it instead of white paint because it blends so much easier. I often refer to using gesso in mixing colors. Keep in mind when I use the word gesso I am referring to the color white. You don't have to use gesso for white but I prefer it to titanium white. Titanium white is the standard white that is on the supply list. Please feel free to use it if you prefer.

Feathering - Feathering is a technique for blending to create very soft edges. You achieve this affect by using a very light touch and barely skimming the surface of the canvas with your brush. Works great for highlighting and glazing.