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[Home](#) > [Choosing colours for oil painting](#)

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[Return to article list](#) [1]

# Choosing colours for oil painting

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[Art Material](#) [5]

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Made up of pigments agglutinated in oil, colours come in tin or plastic tubes closed with a screw cap. On each tube, you will find the name of the colour, the capacity, the code used for the pigment, the type of oil and other characteristics such as the resistance, transparency and permanency of the paint.

With hundreds of oil colours available, do you feel lost in a world of choice? Here are a few helpful hints!

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## Beginners: Start with study paints

- **Say what?** Study paints are made from imitations of precious pigments (such as cadmium or cobalt).
- **What are the advantages?** Get started without breaking the bank, and enjoy quality that rivals professional paints (which you can graduate to as time goes by).

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# Basic assortment: How do you create one?

## Why you should not go overboard...

- Too many colours can mean that some will remain unused. Result: The oil ends up oozing from the tube and the paint becomes unusable.
- It is better to make your own colours by experimenting with mixtures. With time, you'll establish your own colour chart!

## Suggestion for an assortment

Ready-to-use kits are available with 6 to 10 colours: the perfect solution for budding artists! Here is a basic assortment of 12 colours which, when mixed, will allow you to obtain a wide range of colours:

- **White:** Zinc white
- **Black:** Ivory black
- **Yellows:** Cadmium lemon yellow, cadmium yellow light, cadmium yellow dark
- **Reds:** Rose madder lake
- **Blues:** Cobalt blue light, cerulean blue, ultramarine blue dark
- **Browns:** Yellow ochre, burnt Sienna, burnt umber

## See also

### Selecting knives and paintbrushes for painting with oils

Choisir couteaux et pinceaux pour peindre à l'huile

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Sizes, bristle types and shapes? Palette or painting knife? How do you decide?

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## **Oil: Selecting your material: media, thinners and varnishes**

Choisir diluants, médiums et vernis

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**Oil paint needs to be diluted and, conversely, thickened. Become familiar with the various accessories!**

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[DISCOVER](#) [7]

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