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# Acrylic paint

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Versatility! Much appreciated by pros and neophytes alike, this one word summarizes the distinctive characteristic of acrylic paint. But where did this property come from? Background.

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## 1. It's all in the binder!

The uniqueness of acrylic paint resides in the binder: a synthetic acrylate emulsion. There is a synthetic resin with highly adhesive, water resistant properties behind this barbaric name. This is what binds pigments together.

It is also where the main features of acrylic paint come from:

- Fast drying.
- Solid (once dry, it forms an elastic film, less brittle than oil paint).
- Transparency (when diluted with water, it is close to watercolors).

Another advantage of the acrylic binder: it is odorless!

## 2. Three techniques in one

Acrylic paint has amazing properties: it is a chameleon! The look of watercolor, gouache or oil is yours for the choosing!

- You can dilute it with water or an acrylic medium: this will yield a texture very close to watercolors or gouache.
- When straight out of the tube, acrylics have the consistency of oils. When you add a retarder, it dries just as slowly.

**Note:** watercolors, gouache, oils or? acrylics: the pigments are all the same!

## Acrylique - la peinture tout terrain

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### 3. All-terrain paint

Paper, cardboard, canvas, cloth, wood, piece of wall, glass, metal, plastic? acrylic paint works on all media because it is very adhesive.

There's just one condition: the painting surface must be clean.

Even a tiny trace of a greasy or oily substance will keep it from sticking.

**Did you know?** Acrylic paint is the new kid on the block!

It came into being at the start of the Twentieth Century, during the Mexican Revolution. First used by the Mexican muralists, acrylic paint only came on the market in the 1950's. Andy Warhol started using it in the 1960's and it no doubt owes its stunning success to him!

### See also

#### Selecting a medium for painting with acrylics

Choisir son support pour peindre à l'acrylique

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A clear advantage of acrylic paint: you can use it on many media? that don't need priming.

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## Choosing your acrylic colors

### Choisir ses couleurs acryliques

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What are acrylics? Pigments (identical to the ones used in watercolors and oil paints) agglutinated to a synthetic resin.

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