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# Gouache: Preparing and maintaining your materials

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Give Gouache: Preparir ?  
and maintaining your  
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Although there is no time limit for adding a series of layers of gouache, you'll be better off giving your imagination free rein while you have all your materials available, within easy reach!

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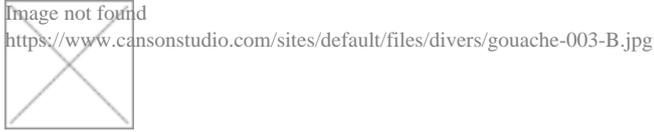
## 1. Before starting to work

### Stretching the paper

This step is necessary if you are using loose sheets of paper with grammage under 300g/m<sup>2</sup>. Moisten both sides of the sponge. Next, attach the edges onto a drawing board with strips of gummed (or adhesive) paper. You can also staple or tack the sheet of paper to the back of a frame.

## Hoisting the colors

Spend a few minutes selecting the shades you plan on using. Try to plan the amounts you'll need, including for blending, because trying to recreate a shade later on is always risky.



## Preparing your ideal palette

There is no single way to arrange your gouaches. With a little practice, you will intuitively adopt the method that works best for you:

- by sequence of use,
- by separating warm shades (yellow, orange, red?) from cool ones (green, blue?),
- by placing the colors you are planning on combining side by side.

### Practical advice: Dare to think ahead!

Nothing prevents you from preparing your colors before starting to work.

And when using your paints:

- Stir vigorously with a paintbrush to restore blends that tend to separate
- To loosen up overly dry gouache, spray it with a little water, to which you can add some gum arabic.

### Have you thought of everything?

Check one last time before getting started so you don't have to run a lot of extra errands! Plan on:

- extra sheets for tests (a spiral pad with the same grammage as your paper, for example),
- your paintbrushes and all your favorite tools (toothbrush, palette knife, sponge, rags?),
- one or two cups for water.

## 2. When you've finished working

Since gouache is done with water, cleaning up afterwards is a lot easier. However, you should never neglect

this step ? Your paintbrushes, in particular, could make you pay dearly for it!

## Your palette

Rinse with clear water and rub a sponge over any dry residue; use a little household soap, if needed, because some very strong pigments will leave traces. Wipe with a rag or absorbent paper.

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## *?Your paintbrushes*

- Rinse the bristles thoroughly in a container of warm or hot water. Shake them out over a sheet of absorbent paper to make sure there's no color left in the brush. If necessary, gently shampoo the brush with paint brush cleaner.
- Next, shake the paintbrush vigorously to remove as much water as possible. Wipe the metal ferrule to keep it from rusting.
- Smooth the bristles with your fingers to return it to its original shape.
- Lay down flat and leave to dry in the open air.

**Keep in mind:** Store your paintbrushes in a jar, bristle end up.

## Your paints

Make sure to always firmly cap your tubes. Keep your gouaches in their original packaging or in an airtight container (wood or metal carrying case...)

## Tip

If you don't have a dedicated place to work: Store your materials together in a large crate or, for a really practical solution, a wheeled cart with shelving!

## Preserving your work

Because gouache is permeable, it can be reworked indefinitely? even several years later. However, when you believe you've finished your piece, store it flat, never rolled: it can easily crack!

you can varnish it to protect it from humidity. Under glass, it can outlast you? even if certain unstable pigments will change over the years.

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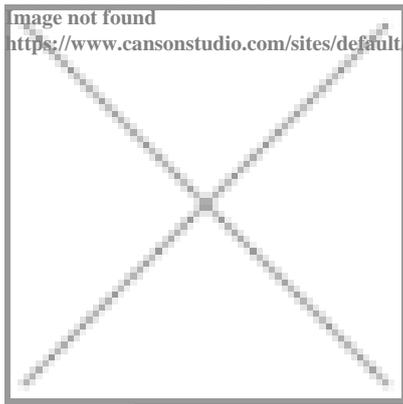


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Gouache paints can be used at will on a wide range of supports? Gouache is easy to manage and undemanding, and only requires? a little fresh water to display its full richness!

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### Gouache: Basic concepts

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Dare anything and do anything with gouache. Gouache is also the easiest technique to master? once you get the hang of it!

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