



Published on *L'atelier Canson* (<https://www.cansonstudio.com>)

[Home](#) > Basic concepts for painting with oils

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

Basic concepts for painting with oils



[Basic Knowledge](#) [5]

Rate this article

Give Basic concepts for painting with oils 4/5 ?

Rate

What is glazing? Painting "thick on thin"? The *alla prima* technique? What effects do they produce? An overview of basic concepts to help you use them.

Memo: painting thick on thin--this is THE golden rule!

This is the basic rule of oil painting if you don't want to have your painting flake over time! It involves applying thicker and thicker paint, that is, richer in oil, with each coat. The first layers are done with a highly diluted medium; the final ones are used just as they come out of the tube.



1. Applying glazing

Glazing is a thin, transparent layer of color superimposed over a dry layer.

- This technique, highly prized by painters, will be useful to you for livening up and brightening the underlying color. Glazing adds much brighter and deeper shades than if you mixed colors on your palette.

Practical advice: Preparing and applying a glaze

- Dilute the paint in a large amount of medium (a mixture of spirits of turpentine and linseed oil): to do this, pour some medium into a container, add a little color to it, just enough to color it while retaining its transparency. The added color can be a color blend.
- Allow each layer to dry before applying the next one.
- Increase the proportion of linseed oil for each new layer.

2. The "*alla prima*" technique

This is a fast painting method, which is done in a single session. It makes use of the wet on wet technique, allowing new layers of color to be applied over previous, still fresh ones.

- It is difficult to master and requires training. *Alla prima*, useful for working outdoors or from a model, will allow you to produce spontaneity of gesture and capture the essential aspects of the subject, in the form of light and color snapshots. It adds freshness to colors and puts life into the texture.



3. Blending

This is a process that makes colors more alike, to avoid overly sharp contours.

- A very useful technique for representing the gradations of a sky or the subtle interplay of shadows on a face. Your fingers are your best tools for creating a blend!

4. Creating impastos

These involve applying paint thick enough for it to retain the trace of the brush or palette knife. Paint is sometimes squeezed straight from the tube onto the canvas.

- Impastos are difficult to master because they require confident strokes, but nonetheless create the most attractive effects in oil painting! This technique allows you to create almost sculptural reliefs, with heavy contours and veined patterns.

5. Scraping paints (sgraffito)

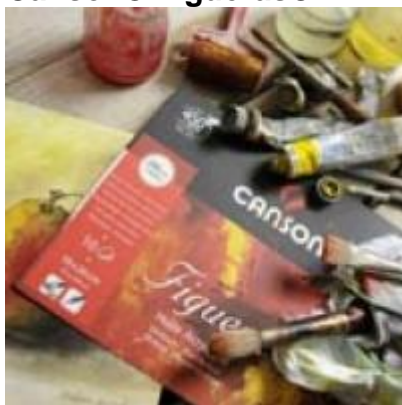
This method involves removing some of the paint by scraping the canvas (with the handle of a

paintbrush, the tip of a knife, etc.) so the under layers of paint show through.

- Paint scraping is very useful for touch ups, and is also a technique in its own right that produces some very attractive material effects.

Suggested products

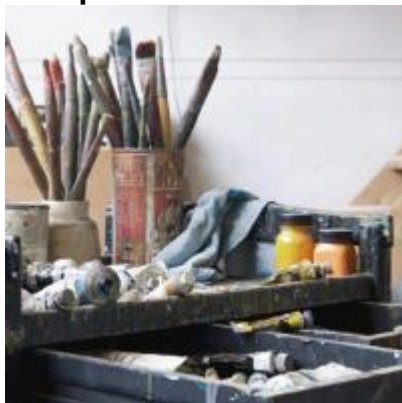
Canson® Figueras®



[VIEW THIS PRODUCT](#) [6]

See also

6 steps to learn how to do oil painting



Transparency, luminosity, material effects, meticulous detail work? With oils, your options are endless ? Six key steps to guide you in creating an oil painting.

[DISCOVER](#) [7]

Oil painting: preparing colors



Due to the thick, greasy consistency of oils, and to its very long drying time, oil painting requires greater mastery than water-based techniques.

 DISCOVER [8]

Links

[1] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/technique/oil>

[2] [//twitter.com/share?url=https://www.cansonstudio.com/printpdf/591&text=Basic concepts for painting with oils](https://twitter.com/share?url=https://www.cansonstudio.com/printpdf/591&text=Basic%20concepts%20for%20painting%20with%20oils) <https://www.cansonstudio.com/printpdf/591> via @CansonPaper

[3] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/printpdf/591>

[4] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/print/591>

[5] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/typology/basic-knowledge>

[6] <http://en.canson.com/oil-acrylic/canson-figueras>

[7] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/6-steps-learn-how-do-oil-painting>

[8] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/oil-painting-preparing-colors>