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Selecting the right accessories for working with pastels



Art Material ^[5]

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You need just a few accessories to work with pastels under the right conditions. Guided tour of the pastellist's survival kit!



1. Thinners and fixatives

- White spirit and turpentine (oil pastels): for blending or correcting colors. Save used paintbrushes and rags just for this use.
- spray fixatives (dry pastels): to reinforce the adhesion of pigments between each layer of color, keep them from mixing, and for when you've finished your piece.

Trick of the trade: hair spray makes a good substitute for fixatives!

2. Basic tools

For mixing, cutting, stumping, correcting?

2.1. Les incontournables



Mixing and stumping tools: cotton, cotton

swabs, rags, blotters, blender brushes, stumps (pointed sticks made from rolled paper)? and, of course, your hands!

- Kneaded eraser (or, failing that, some crustless bread).
- Utility knife or exacto knife (metal handle for interchangeable blades): for sharpening your sticks or reducing them to powder; for scraping off a superficial layer of color.
- Adhesive tape or drawing clips.
- Blotters and masking tape, for protecting areas where you aren't working and for defining margins.
- Tracing paper if you plan to create stencils.
- Other media: dry (charcoal for sketching) or wet (watercolor or ink for coloring the paper, gouache or acrylic for composing mixed pieces?).
- An acrylic primer for texturing the support medium or making it compatible for use with pastels. Essential for working on non-absorbent surfaces: wood, art board, high grammage papers (over 300g/m²), or linen canvas, for example
- .A fine rag collection?

2.2 For pros

- A sharpener, made with wide stripes of sandpaper attached to a base for reducing your pastels to powder.
- Maulstick: this wood stick with a ball at one end is for working without resting your palm on your work.

Zoom: Your workspace

Because pastels are a pulverizing medium, you should work on them on an inclined or even vertical plane: standing easel, table top easel, or multi-directional drawing table.

- Attach your work to a separate drawing board that you can turn as needed.

Suggested products

Canson® Mi-Teintes® Touch




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See also

Pastel & Colour: Preparing your material



Because pastels are a dirty technique, they require some methodical organizing. Here are a few suggestions for preparing your material so you can draw cleanly, with peace of mind!

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Pastel & Colour: Cleaning, maintaining and preserving your material



You don't need to be a cleaning fanatic to keep your pastels in shape? But watch out, they're fragile and messy, so you need to take some precautions! Overview.

 DISCOVER [8]

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