

What is a medium?

Mediums are made with acrylic resin for adjusting how the paint works, feels and looks. They can be used to add texture, adjust flow and alter the working properties of the colour. Because they include acrylic resin, mediums maintain or add to the stability of the paint film, and can be used in any amount desired.

What is an additive?

Additives are used to adjust the chemistry of acrylic paints and they don't include a significant proportion of acrylic resin. Because of this they should be used only in the amount needed to achieve the desired effect; adding too much can affect the stability of the paint film. They can be used to adjust the flow, or drying time of the colour. As with all products, the directions should be read before use.

What do mediums and additives do?

Mediums and additives help you do an almost infinite variety of different things with acrylics. From traditional painting applications on canvas and panel to water colour on paper, to high-peak impasto, to glazing, to unique textural effects, acrylics can do it all. And there are mediums and additives to enhance usage on fabric, on leather, as a dye, and silkscreen. There's no better colour for contemporary techniques (such as image transfer), for structural applications, and collage. And that's just for starters.

What you need to know about using mediums and additives.

- For best results, always test before use.
- Mix into acrylic paint to add flexibility, adhesion, and long-term stability.
- Mix gloss mediums into acrylic paints to enhance depth of colour intensity, increase transparency, gloss, ease of flow of paint and add flexibility and adhesion to paint film.
- Mix matte mediums into acrylic paints to achieve matte sheen of dried paint film.
- Mediums extend the volume, while increasing the transparency of the colours. The exception is the Matte Opaque Extender Medium, which maintains the opacity of the colour while extending the volume.
- A thin film may take between ½ hour to 24 hours to initially dry, while a thicker film may take between 2-5 days to initially dry.
- The use of a hair dryer will speed up the drying time of all mediums. Avoid force drying paintings constructed of heavily imposed layers of colours as the surface layers of paint will dry off, permanently trapping moisture underneath. Subsequently the painting could crack and the canvas shrink or distort.

- The use of an air mister will slow the drying time of all mediums.
- Some mediums can be pressure sensitive in hot humid weather and may stick to another surface if pressure is applied. To prevent this use a turps-base varnish as a final protection.
- Avoid all oily, oil painted, greasy or waxy surfaces.
- When painting on hard (impervious), slick (shiny) surfaces such as glass, Formica™, metal, enamel or hardboard, sand surfaces prior to applying any medium.
- Vigorous brushwork over textured areas may cause bubbles to form within the paint film.
- Do not overwork during application. If the medium is brushed heavily during drying, it can cause clouding. Once the film is clouded and dry, it cannot be clarified or removed. If an area is missed, allow surface to dry and then cover with another coat of medium.
- Use matte mediums to prime surfaces and prepare supports i.e. outdoor murals.