



Guided Painting 1

A step-by-step painting guide by Richard Robinson

Watch the full lesson at <https://mypaintingclub.com/lessons/177-Guided-Painting-1>

MY PAINTING CLUB

Introduction

In this chapter, I invite you to embark on a transformative journey into the world of oil painting, a medium I've cherished and taught for the past 15 years. My own adventure began in my early 20s with a commission from a schoolmate, leading me to create a large canvas that sparked my passion for painting. Over a decade ago, I developed this program for a summer school, and this lesson marks the very first step in that journey. Here, we'll focus on mastering the art of color blending, a crucial skill to prevent the common pitfall of muddy colors. Many students struggle with this, but together we'll explore techniques to maintain vibrancy and clarity in your work. We'll start with a limited palette of five colors—titanium white, permanent magenta, rose madder, cerulean blue, and chrome orange hue—providing a versatile foundation for your creativity. This scene is a rewarding subject, offering both challenge and inspiration, as you learn to listen to your inner muse and let your spirit soar across the canvas.



"Guided Painting 1" Oil on Canvas 20x20" by Nemesh

Materials

Gather these materials before you start. If you don't have the exact same supplies, use what you have and substitute freely.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Daler Rowney Georgian Oil Paints
- Titanium White
- Primary Magenta
- Rose Madder
- Cerulean Blue
- Chrome Orange Hue
- Rubber Blender Tools
- Large Synthetic house painting brush
- Palette Knife
- 20x20" Acrylic primed canvas

1 Materials and Tools



Select Your Colors

Use only five colors to begin: titanium white, permanent magenta, rose madder, cerulean blue, and chrome orange hue. These will provide a versatile palette for your painting.

PRO TIP

Each artist has their own way of painting, so choose techniques and materials that work best for you.

2 Canvas Preparation



Select Your Tools

Use a palette knife and an angle chisel blender, also known as a color shaper. Additionally, have flat shapers in one-inch, one-and-a-half-inch, and two-inch sizes ready. Choose a large brush from a hardware store, opting for a higher-quality one rather than a cheap \$5 option.

Choose Your Canvas

Select a 20 by 20-inch exhibition canvas with chunky 1 1/2-inch stretcher bars. This size is ideal for class exercises and manageable for practice.

Prepare the Canvas

Decide whether to use the canvas as is or apply additional priming with gesso. For primed canvases, consider adding an extra layer or two of gesso. For non-primed canvases, apply at least five layers of gesso for a smooth painting surface.

PRO TIP

Opt for higher-quality brushes from hardware stores for better results.

3 Mediums and Paint Application



Canvas Preparation

Use a linen canvas for a textured surface. Apply five coats of gesso, with the final coat incorporating texture to enhance the abstract quality of your painting.

Medium Choice

Opt for linseed oil as the sole medium if needed. For this lesson, focus on using the paint without any additional mediums to explore its natural properties.

PRO TIP

Incorporate texture in the final gesso coat to add depth and interest to your painting surface.

4 Blending Magenta and White



Prepare Your Palette

Squeeze some white and magenta onto your palette, keeping them in separate areas. Avoid mixing the colors on the palette; instead, mix them directly on the canvas.

Apply Magenta and White

Leave a gap at the bottom and top of your canvas. Begin by applying magenta and white to the canvas, using a scraping motion to spread the paint thinly. Ensure the gap at the bottom remains clear.

Blend the Colors

Clean your palette knife, then use it to blend titanium white into magenta. Create two blocks of color and blend them using small circular movements from the bottom of the canvas. Clean the palette knife frequently with tissue paper.

Achieve a Smooth Gradient

Continue blending with more white to create a gradient from dark to light. Use small circles for blending and clean the palette knife as needed. If blending becomes difficult, adjust the amount of paint on the canvas.

PRO TIP

Use small circular movements and clean the palette knife frequently to achieve a smooth transition between colors.

5 Blending Techniques and Tips



Create a Color Block

Mix white with magenta to create a block of colors on your canvas. Blend the colors together, allowing the mixture to become lighter as you add more white.

Blend with Circular Movements

Use a scraping motion followed by circular movements to blend the colors smoothly. Lift the pink magenta upwards to create a gradient effect.

Use a Palette Knife for Smoothing

If you encounter difficulties, use a palette knife to smooth the paint. Start from the side and move up and down to achieve a nice, smooth blend.

Clean the Palette Knife

Keep the palette knife on the canvas while blending. Clean it each time you lift it to avoid unwanted paint marks.

PRO TIP

Use circular movements to blend colors smoothly and create a gradient effect.

6 Adding Chrome Orange



Apply Chrome Orange

Squeeze chrome orange onto your palette. Use a palette knife to apply the chrome orange over the top of the magenta. Ensure the palette knife is clean during this process to maintain color purity.

Blend the Colors

Blend the chrome orange and magenta together using the palette knife. Push the colors as far as you can to achieve a smooth transition.

Create Additional Lines

Continue by creating another block or line of color. Clean the palette knife by wiping it off before starting each new line.

Smooth Transitions with White

Apply a little more white on top to achieve a smooth transition. Blend from the top down, using overlapping strokes to ensure there are no gaps between the colors.

PRO TIP

Clean the palette knife frequently by wiping it off to maintain color purity and prevent unwanted mixing.

7 Blending Cerulean Blue



Apply Cerulean Blue

Squeeze some cerulean blue onto your palette. Use a palette knife to spread the cerulean blue evenly across the top half of your canvas. Work quickly to cover the area smoothly.

Add White Paint

Apply white paint to the canvas in the same manner as the cerulean blue, but start from the bottom and work upwards. Leave a gap of white between the cerulean blue and the white to prevent muddiness.

Blend the Colors

Blend the cerulean blue and white together by moving side to side, ensuring a smooth transition. Use a gentle touch to maintain the vibrancy of the colors.

Dry Brush for Smoothness

Use a big, soft, fluffy brush to dry brush the blended area. Start from the top and gently move downwards in a crisscross motion, lifting the brush slightly at the end of each stroke to avoid dragging the paint.

PRO TIP

Leave a gap of white between colors to prevent muddiness during blending.

8 Creating Clouds



Apply White Paint

Use a little bit of titanium white and spread it gently across the canvas. Ensure the paint is spread evenly rather than being thickly applied.

Create Fluffy Clouds

Use a dry brush to gently crisscross over the white paint. This technique will help you achieve soft, fluffy clouds.

Adjust Cloud Density

Decide how many clouds you want to create. You can add more clouds for a dense sky or keep it minimal with just a few.

PRO TIP

Use a dry brush to gently crisscross over the paint for soft cloud effects.

9 Color Blocks and Play Area



Apply Cadmium Orange

Start by applying cadmium orange to your canvas. Spread it as thin as possible to create a smooth base layer. This will be the first block of color in your painting.

Add Permanent Rose

Next, apply permanent rose next to the cadmium orange. Think of it as buttering bread, spreading it evenly across the surface. This will create a vibrant contrast with the orange.

Incorporate Magenta

Continue by adding magenta to your canvas. Fill in the area, blending it slightly with the adjacent colors to create a harmonious transition. This will enrich your color palette.

Create a Play Area

Designate a section of your canvas as a 'play area' for experimenting with colors. Add more magenta and permanent rose here, allowing yourself to explore different color interactions.

Experiment with the Angle Chisel Blender

Use the angle chisel blender to remove color and reveal layers underneath. This tool can be used for sketching or creating unique textures. Spend 10-15 minutes experimenting with this technique in your play area.

PRO TIP

Use the angle chisel blender to reveal underlying layers and create interesting textures.

10 Using Shapers



Explore Shapers

Experiment with different shapers, noting their thickness and elasticity. Use a harder shaper to remove more paint, while a softer one will leave more paint on the canvas.

Create Abstract Effects

Use the shapers to transfer paint across the canvas, creating abstract effects. Try using the sharp side of the shaper for more defined lines and shapes.

Play and Experiment

Feel free to play with the shapers and explore their potential. This is just the beginning of what you can achieve with these tools.

PRO TIP

Experiment with both hard and soft shapers to see how they affect paint removal and application.

11 Painting Mountains



Carve the Mountain Shape

Use a shaper to carve the mountain shape on your canvas. Ensure you know where your light source is coming from; in this painting, it's from one side. This will guide your shading and highlight placement.

Transfer Paint

Pick up paint from the bottom of the mountain and transfer it to the top. This technique requires patience to achieve a smooth blend.

Sharpen Edges

Use your tool to sharpen the edges of the mountain, defining its shape more clearly. Remember, distant objects in landscapes are lighter, while closer ones are darker.

Create Texture

Be playful with your shaper to create texture on the mountain. Continue picking up colors from the bottom and transferring them to the top to maintain consistency.

Add Blue Color

Introduce a little bit of blue color to the mountain. This will add depth and enhance the natural look of the landscape.

PRO TIP

Distant objects in landscapes are lighter, while closer ones are darker.

12 Adding Details to Mountains



Blend Dark Colors

Blend dark colors carefully to suggest a sunset or sunrise over the mountains. Add a little bit of blue by dabbing gently to create depth. Be cautious with color mixing to avoid muddying the colors.

Add Distance with Blue and White

Add more blue to the mountain, then mix in white to give the impression of distance. This combination will make the mountain appear further away.

Use Fingers for Detail

Don't hesitate to use your fingers to apply a touch of white, especially in areas needing subtle highlights. Your fingers can provide a delicate touch perfect for this task.

Apply Snow with a Palette Knife

Clean your palette knife and use it to apply a little bit of snow on the mountain tops. This will brighten the mountains and create a sense of depth, making them appear behind the foreground.

PRO TIP

Use your fingers for delicate highlights; they're perfect for subtle touches.

13 Final Touches and Variations



Add Reflections

Dab a little blue to create reflections from the sky. This adds depth and a sense of space to your painting.

Darken Areas

Mix cerulean blue with chrome orange to create a dark color. Dab this mixture around to add contrast and depth.

Remove Excess Paint

Use a clean shaper to remove any excess paint. This allows you to refine details and adjust the painting as needed.

Play with Variations

Feel free to experiment with different elements, like adding a sea scene or turning the painting abstract. Be playful and explore various possibilities.

PRO TIP

Use a clean shaper to remove excess paint and refine details.

14 Textured Canvas and Playtime



Prepare Your Palette

Set up your palette with chrome orange, primary yellow, rose mother, and magenta. Use a textured canvas if available, but a regular canvas will also work.

Apply Yellow Base

Begin with yellow paint, similar to the bottom part of your guided painting. Allow some colors to show through and observe the interesting patterns created on the textured canvas.

Explore with Catalyst Wedges

Use catalyst wedges numbered two, four, five, and six to experiment with the paint. Cover the canvas with paint but leave some areas uncovered for texture. This is your playtime to explore and create unique patterns.

Add Magenta and Experiment

Apply magenta to the canvas. If you're not satisfied with your creation, cover it and start again. Ensure the yellow is underneath as it is transparent and disappears when layered on top.

Use Brushes for Texture

Utilize a large brush to add more texture to the oil paint. Continue brushing until you find a pattern you like. Use the same brush from your guided painting's blue sky section for consistency.

Carve and Refine

Add a thicker layer of yellow and carve into it with your tools. Be cautious when brushing as the paint can easily disappear. Enjoy the process and refine your work until satisfied.

PRO TIP

Ensure the yellow paint is applied underneath other colors as it is transparent and can easily disappear when layered on top.

Summary & Key Takeaways

Embark on your painting journey by selecting a versatile palette of five colors and preparing your canvas with care. Use quality brushes and tools to ensure a smooth and enjoyable painting experience. As you begin to apply paint, focus on the natural properties of your materials, allowing the texture of the canvas to enhance your work.

As you progress, experiment with blending techniques to create smooth transitions and gradients. Use circular movements and keep your tools clean to maintain color purity. Explore the dynamic interplay of colors by layering and blending magenta, chrome orange, and cerulean blue, and use dry brushing to add softness and depth.

Finally, let your creativity flow by adding details and textures to your painting. Use shapers to carve out shapes and create abstract effects, and don't hesitate to use your fingers for delicate highlights. Embrace the freedom to experiment and refine your work, whether you're painting mountains or exploring abstract compositions. Enjoy the process and let your unique artistic voice shine through.

LESSON POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Use only five colors to begin: titanium white, permanent magenta, rose madder, cerulean blue, and chrome orange hue.
- Apply five layers of gesso for a smooth painting surface.
- Incorporate texture in the final gesso coat to add depth.
- Use small circular movements and clean the palette knife frequently for smooth blending.
- Leave a gap of white between colors to prevent muddiness during blending.
- Use a dry brush to gently crisscross over the paint for soft cloud effects.
- Experiment with both hard and soft shapers to see how they affect paint removal and application.
- Distant objects in landscapes are lighter, while closer ones are darker.



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