

HELPFUL TIPS



Color mixing can be a bit daunting when you're new to painting, but the one thing to remember is, as long as you've got paint to spare you can keep mixing and re-mixing until you've got the perfect color. Don't get discouraged if you don't see the color you're expecting when you first start to mix!

When you want to lighten a color just a tiny bit, or make it more pastel, you can try adding a little white. But if you're looking to start with a very pale color in the first place, make sure to start with as much white as you think you need, and then add the base color to that. It takes a LOT of white paint to lighten colors, but very little true color to darken white paint. Always add the base color TO your white, for very light colors.

Black paint is the exact opposite of white paint in just about every way. It will take a LOT of your base color to see any kind of change in black paint, if you start with black- for this reason, we almost never blend black paint first. You'll always start with the color you're trying to darken, add a tiny bit of black paint at a time, and stop when it reaches the darkness you're looking for.

Colors that are next to each other on the color wheel or in the rainbow tend to look good when blended together. For example, fading from purple, to blue, to green, is a really pretty effect, while jumping from purple, to yellow, to red might look a little jarring.

Colors that are opposites on the color wheel almost always create a brown muddy color when mixing them or painting them next to one another, so be careful when blending opposite pairs; red and green, yellow and blue, orange and purple. While these colors are bold and striking when used in the same painting, they can go muddy quickly, so always let one dry completely before trying to add the other.

When mixing paint, always mix in a little mound on your paint plate. If you spread the paint smooth with the brush, you're just painting your plate! Any extra surface area is an excuse for air to get into the paint and start to dry it out. Keep your paint in a puddle and fold it back on itself, instead of spreading it out. You'll find you need to re-mix colors less frequently this way.

Always mix more of each color than you think you'll need. I myself try to conserve paint as much as I can, but I've sometimes mixed a color, started to paint, run out, and been unable to re-mix the same color again. It is very hard to color match! Starting with more paint than you think you'll need is always a good idea, and you'll get a better sense of how much mixed paint covers a certain amount of canvas, as you practice and paint more and more paintings.

Practice makes perfect! If you don't succeed at mixing the color you want, and you're getting frustrated trying to adjust it, sometimes the best thing to do is to start over. Don't be afraid to try and try again until you see what you're looking for!

Paint always dries a shade darker than what you're looking at while wet, but the difference is so minimal that it's best not to worry too much about it while you're mixing. The only exception is if you're trying to color match a color that has already dried—aim for a shade lighter, so when it dries it will darken and blend into what you had.