

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before you begin to paint along with me, you'll want to look for a space that's well-lit and comfortable. A favorite sunny window, an outdoor picnic table, your coziest chair with a folding table in your lap—choose a space that makes you happy to be there and where you can work uninterrupted. If you're watching a live video or painting along with friends, be sure you have access to great WiFi service!

You should also be sure to protect your workspace from any paint damage by putting down newspaper, plastic sheeting/plastic wrap, an old cloth, or whatever you'd like to catch any possible paint spills or drips while you work. I've thought I was safe before and wound up with paint on the walls or the couch. Acrylic paint permanently stains most fabric and porous surfaces, and multi-surface paint will stain just about anything, so always prep before you paint.

Always have access to clean water; muddy water that's full of paint will prevent you from being able to keep your brushes clean, and your colors pure. Don't hesitate to stop and get clean water whenever you feel like you need to. Paper towels, napkins or an old rag are useful for blotting off excess water between rinsing out your brushes. You may also wish to stack up more than one paper plate at your station in case you need to mix colors and run out of space on just your paint plate alone.

If you don't want to create paper waste each time you paint, you can reuse the same plate multiple times; it won't look as pretty, but it'll work just fine. As the paint from each painting session dries completely, it becomes hard acrylic plastic, and won't ruin any new colors that you pour on top. You could also grab a sealed wooden paint board, a plastic palette, a Frisbee, a jar lid, or use really any smooth non-porous surface that you can find for mixing paint.

If you don't have a designated apron for painting, make sure you grab old clothes. I break this rule a lot and as a result I have very small paint drips on most of my clothes, some of which I didn't discover until long after the clothing went through the wash and was permanently ruined.

You may also wish to grab yourself a glass of wine or your favorite beverage- I sometimes find a little liquid courage makes me relax into the activity and not stress as much about my painting coming out perfect on the first try! If you're a snacker, you should also grab anything you'd like to munch on before you get started.

CHECKLIST

- Well-lit painting area
- Work surface protected from paint spills
- Clean water for rinsing brushes
- Paper towels for blotting
- Paper plate for paint, and extra for mixing
- Apron, or old clothes
- Any drinks or snacks you'd like to enjoy