

Acrylic Paints

There are far more brands of acrylic paints than what is covered here. The following are well known and available in most areas within the US. See also the article 'Student Grade Verses Professional Grade Paint'. Depending on the quality, acrylic paints and mediums can be diluted with water while still maintaining adhesion and color intensity. Never dilute a varnish medium with water.



Soft Body - A medium viscosity, creamy smooth, concentrated pigment paint with good coverage power and leveling. Has better color saturation than heavy body paints thinned with water. * Note that this group does not include craft paints (see craft paints in its own category listed below).



Fluid Paint - Is pourable, low viscosity, intense color that has excellent coverage if professional quality. Can even be used for intense coverage when mixed with liquid and gel medium for use as a glaze. Works well when mixed with gesso and paste. However, you may notice a lighter tint in color depending on the brand and quality. Works great when mixed with airbrush medium for airbrush techniques. Available in a bottle. Note: Not to be confused with bottled craft paint.



Heavy Body - A high viscosity paint with a smooth and buttery consistency. Retains brush and palette knife marks, and holds texture for impasto applications. Can apply with a brush or knife. Can be diluted with water, liquid medium, or soft gel. Available in transparent, translucent, and opaque colors. Available in a tub or jar.

Iridescent Medium - Highly reflective metallic with a luster appearance. Can also be mixed with other colors and acrylic mediums.

Interference Paint - Will flip to its complementary color when viewed at a different angle. When painted over white or a light color, the flip appears more noticeable. When painted over black or a dark color, the flip appears less noticeable.



Enamel & Glass Paints - Available in many brands and colors. Some are heat activated and dish washer safe. Used mostly for tole and decorative painting.



Airbrush Paint - A specific blend of flow agent, polymer emulsion, and pigment. This thin consistency paint allows for a light even flow without losing the color's chroma or saturation when sprayed. Comes in transparent and opaque.



Craft Paints & Acrylic Stains - Available in many brands. Inexpensive and with limitations. They are not heavy body paints so creating texture on their own is limited. Also have limited color saturation. Used mostly for tole and decorative painting. Craft paints are also very useful for tinting gesso, experimenting with techniques, and value studies.