

I have covered the basics for photographing and drawing still life tutorials 1 / 2. Now let's look at how I tackle the main painting.

The underpainting is complete and dry so it's time for the oils. In this tutorial I will cover the stages of the painting, reference, mediums, skin tones and glazing.

Medium

This is used to thin the paint. Small quantities help the paint to flow and avoid impasto, Larger quantities thin the paint to a transparent, watercolour type consistency. This is called a glaze.

Glazing

Glazes are thin transparent layers of paint overlaid on dry paint to tint the colour and change the hue. The oils are thinned down with medium to make them thin and transparent. Glazing doesn't work with opaque colours, particularly if they contain white which gives a milky look. This can be done if that is the effect wanted such as on seascapes (waves and foam) and clouds. It can also be used on clothing and still life to lighten an area whilst preserving some of the colour underneath e.g. a subtle highlight. Technically a semi opaque layer of paint is called a velatura not a glaze.

Glazing on a portrait can be particularly useful to add subtle colours such as blues, greens and reds to add warmth. It is also useful on areas such as cheeks.

Shadows are simply a lack of light creating a veil effect that the eye looks into, consequently building up shadow areas with thin dark layers can be very effective when impasto is used on lighter areas. It creates depth in the picture.

Glazing colours

For my shadow areas I tend to use five basic colours: Paynes grey, Ivory black, alizarin crimson / red, burnt umber and raw umber. Often I mix these together to create different densities of tones.



Alizarin / black Alizarin / paynes g. Raw umber / black Burnt umber / black

Flesh tones

I begin mixing my flesh tones by using flesh mix from a tube (Jacksons / Daler Rowney). I do this in order to begin mixing the colour with a consistent colour that I am very familiar with. I never use the flesh mix directly onto the canvas. I always add other colours to make it more realistic. See diagram opposite.

I also always mix a good quantity of the flesh colour, because running out half way through a painting, and having to try and match it again can be a real pain.

Basic flesh mix I always start with. I can't give exact quantities but I am looking for a mid toned, muted colour. This avoids the flesh looking plasticity and unreal.

I then add tinting colours to bits of the basic flesh mix to create a range of warm to cool tones, and white to create lighter tones. These colours can be mixed and matched to create a large range of options.



Glaze to impasto

I always work dark to light and follow the guide opposite for applying my paint.

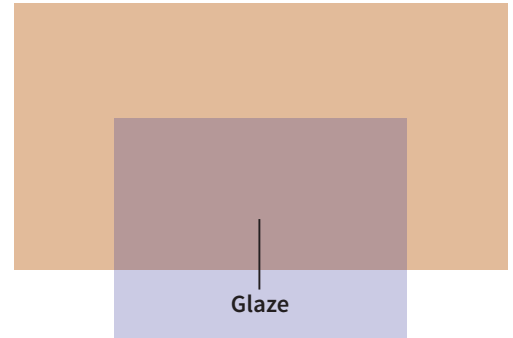
In my next tutorial I will demonstrate how I apply all the information shown on a demonstration portrait.



Impasto paint for highlights

Opaque paint for mid tones

Shadow glaze



For a list of transparent colours go to:

<http://www.winsornewton.com> and follow the links below.

Resources > Composition and permanence tables > Artists oil paints. On the tables you will see a 'T' for transparent colours that are good for glazing.

Tinting colours to add to my basic flesh mix



Paynes grey for cooler tones



Yellow ochre for a more 'tanned' look



Cadmium red for warmth



Alizarin for a more purple hue



Ultramarine for very cool