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Your Art Kit

Fluid Acrylic Paint Pouring

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This free form organic painting style uses a combination of acrylic paint and pouring medium to create abstract paintings rich in colorful swirls, swooshes and lines. The paint is thinner than what you might use with a paint brush, as it is designed to move and flow across the canvas.

The techniques for mixing the paints, layering the colors, pouring the paint and moving it across the canvas are endless. We'll start with a few basics.

Get Ready

First, wear your favorite paint clothes (paint usually doesn't come out), and put on your apron and gloves. Cover your work surface with plastic, and/or stage your workspace inside of a big cardboard box or plastic storage bin (about 1.5 - 2 x's the size of your canvas), with low sides so that you can easily work with the canvas, including lifting and tilting the canvas without going outside of your designated space. If you decide to use a storage bin, please understand, you will absolutely get paint on it.

Your kit includes stir sticks, 4 small cups, 2 larger cups, and 6 bottles of premium quality premixed paint. This paint is just perfect as is and you can get results without doing anything else to your paints. However, as you become experienced in fluid art, you will discover that you can mix other additives for different effects.

It's best to have the canvas level and lifted slightly above your work surface. It is important not to put anything under the canvas, as this will dent your canvas. You can use thumbtacks in the wood sections, or - you can use paper cups, bottle caps, small candles or tea lights (cover with plastic wrap), etc. - always under the wood corners. Doing this allows the paint to drip off the canvas, which is important. Position the canvas on your (protected) table or workspace so that they are level, making sure that whatever is lifting them up (bottle caps, tea lights, etc.) is in the wooded corners and not directly under the stretched canvas. Once situated and level, continue reading below.

The Colors in Your Painting

Your kit contains the following colors: Black, white, red, yellow, green and blue, small cups and stir sticks. Make sure the lid is on tight and shake each color vigorously for about 20 seconds.

Think about the colors you want to see in your painting. You can use the paint as is, or you can mix them together to create different colors or different shades of the existing colors

Using the small cups and stir sticks, you can create new colors using the color mixing ratio guidelines described below. Feel free to adjust anything as you want to be darker, lighter, deeper or pastel. This is YOUR painting!

Shade Variations

A simple trick to shade variations is to always start with the lightest color and add the darker colors in small quantities. It's much harder to make a light or medium hue when you start with a very dark color. You'll end up wasting all of your white.

To create lighter shades	To create darker shades
Using a smaller cup, add more white and a dab of the color you wish to get a lighter shade of. It is always best to start with white or the lightest color and add more of the darker color in small quantities.	Using a smaller cup, add more of the color you wish to get a darker shade of, and a dab of black. When creating darker shades, it is always best to start with the lightest color and add black or another darker color in small quantities.

Here are some colors we mixed up in our art studio using the same colors in your kit:



Color Matrix

Mixing colors to get new colors is a hoot, and you can have lots of fun experimenting! Below is a guide to creating new colors by mixing the paints in your kit. Adjust as needed.

Teal	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ blue	$\frac{1}{2}$ green
Orange	=	$\frac{2}{3}$ yellow	$\frac{1}{3}$ red
Purple	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ blue	$\frac{1}{2}$ red
Deep Green	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ blue	$\frac{1}{2}$ yellow
Gray	=	$\frac{9}{10}$ white	$\frac{1}{10}$ black
Using the new colors you created above, you can also get these new colors			
Red violet	=	$\frac{3}{4}$ red	$\frac{1}{4}$ blue
Red orange	=	$\frac{3}{4}$ orange	$\frac{1}{4}$ red
Yellow orange	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ yellow	$\frac{1}{4}$ orange
Yellow green	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ light green	$\frac{1}{2}$ yellow
Blue violet	=	$\frac{3}{4}$ blue	$\frac{1}{4}$ red
Golden Yellow/Brown	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ yellow	$\frac{1}{4}$ red + $\frac{1}{8}$ green + $\frac{1}{8}$ blue

Pouring Techniques

Your kit is designed to use with multiple pouring techniques. The 5 we will discuss are:

1. The Dirty Pour
2. The Ring Pour/Straight Pour
3. The Swipe
4. The Geode Slice

Pouring paint onto canvas involves mixing your paint colors to your liking, and also layering your paints in the cup and/or on the canvas.

The Dirty Pour and Ring Pour

Same steps for adding paint to the cup

The difference between the dirty pour and the ring pour is in the process of transferring the paint in the cup to the canvas. The initial steps (mixing the colors and filling the paint cup) as well as the final steps (moving the paint around the canvas) are the same. Both techniques start with a basic layering in the larger 5 oz cup. Choose any of the following methods:

1. Start with white, since it is the heaviest color and will sink to the bottom. Add a small amount, enough to completely cover the bottom of the 5 oz cup, about $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ " high.
2. Gently pour your other colors on top of the white paint, one color at a time.
 - a. Pour directly into the middle, or
 - b. Drizzle each paint color on top of the one below, or
 - c. Lean the cup and pour down the inside wall of the cup.
3. Continue pouring your paints until your cup is nearly full. In the example here, we used option C above, leaning the cup slightly as we poured the paint colors, one at a time, down the inside wall of the cup. This is how our cup looked when it was full. It's ok if yours looks different!



4. Next, choose between the Dirty Pour or the Ring Pour (review the steps to see which one appeals to you more).

Proceed with the dirty pour:

Ask a family member or friend to assist you with this step, and practice with an empty cup to get the hang of it.

1. While you have one hand firmly holding the filled cup of paint, place your canvas on top of the cup, with the canvas side touching the cup. Place your other hand firmly against the back of the canvas, so that you are able to maintain the cup/canvas connection.
TIP: Don't press too hard as you don't want to put a dent in the canvas.
2. In one single motion, keeping the cup attached to the canvas top with your hands in place as described in the step above, flip the cup and canvas together so that the cup is upside down on the canvas. When you complete this step, it should look like this.



3. Let the paint in the cup settle to the bottom. It's ok if a little seeps out while it is settling, or if a little came out when you flipped it.
4. While the paint is settling, you can add small amounts of white paint around the canvas that has no paint on it. The reason for this is to prepare the canvas to allow the paint to glide across it. Using your gloved hand, smear the white paint around the cup, about an inch from the edges of the cup, getting the rest of the canvas surface wet. Be sure to get the sides of the canvas wet too.
5. It's time to pull the cup away! Oh boy! You want to gently lift and pull the cup away at an angle - and do it quickly. Once you do this, the paint will pour out, forming a big heap in the middle of the canvas. That's ok, that's what it should be doing. To avoid losing any paint that is still in the cup, set the cup upside down in a corner on the canvas. See

example below.



6. Skip to the section “Final steps for Dirty Pour and Ring Pour” below.

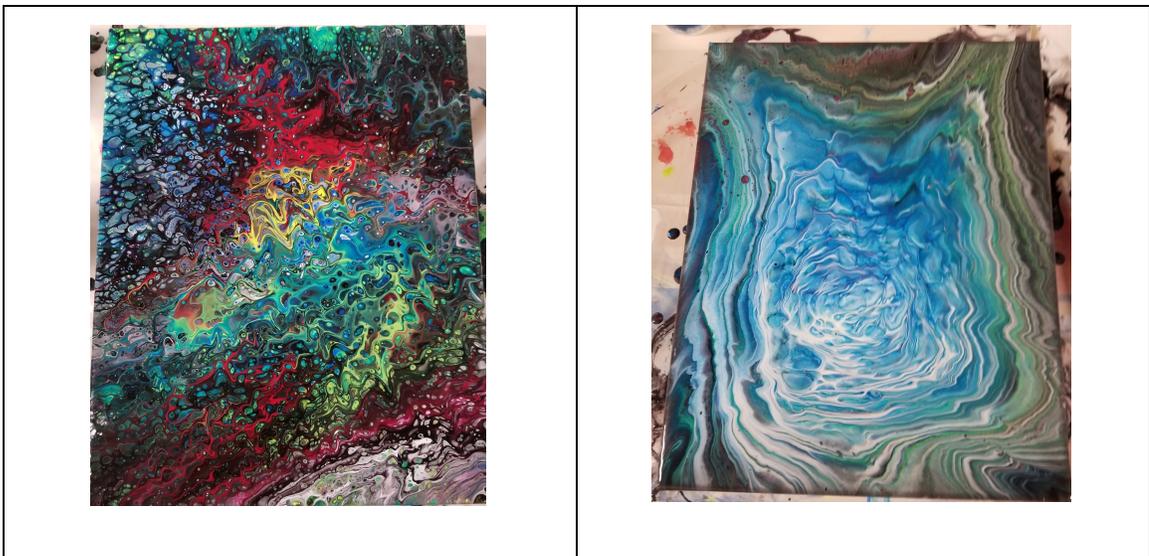
Proceed with the ring pour:

1. Once your larger cup is full, set it aside and LIGHTLY cover your canvas with white paint (or leftover paint if you have it handy). Use sparingly, as the purpose is only to wet the canvas to allow a smooth surface to glide more paint across. Generally you will not see this base coat of paint, because the paint you’re pouring will glide over it, covering it as it moves across the canvas. If you do not add a base coat, then the canvas will suck up the paint in your cup as it goes along, using much more paint and stealing the pour. It can alter your final painting. Sometimes this can be a good thing, other times, not so much. It almost always requires more paint than laying a simple base coat prior to moving the paint around the canvas.
2. The Ring Pour technique:
Have you ever poured pancake batter into a hot pan? You pour it slowly, and as it touches the surface, it pushes the other pancake batter further out. If you pour paint onto a canvas or painting surface in the same way, this technique is called a “straight pour”. You just pour it and it layers automatically. A ring pour is a slight deviation from the straight pour in that you move your wrist in a steady circular motion in the center of the canvas, making circles as big as a dime. As you pour, it creates new rings as the paint reaches the canvas. Continue doing this slowly, until all of the paint has been emptied from the cup.



Final steps for Dirty Pour and Ring Pour

1. Let the paint rest for about 1-3 minutes (not longer). You'll see cells beginning to form. Once the paint appears to have leveled out a bit, it's time to remove the cup in the corner (set aside in your work area), and start tilting!
2. Gently lift the canvas, holding underneath to avoid having your hands interfere with the flow of the paint, though sometimes it will happen anyway. That's ok, it's how this art works sometimes. Tilt the canvas so that the paint goes from the center towards one of the corners. It's ok if a little paint goes off the canvas during this phase. However, you don't want to lose all of your paint in the first corner you tilt towards, so go slowly and intentionally. Once the paint nears or goes over the corner edge, gently tilt the weight of the paint back towards the center. Repeat with each corner until your canvas is covered to your liking. Sometimes you may want to tilt a little more in one or two directions to completely cover the surface, or to get a composition you are happy with.



The Swipe

This is a fun option to do, as it creates a bunch of cells in a single swipe (or multiple swipes). The cells are colorful and vibrant as they pop up from under the swipe color. They can remind you of many types of textures and ideas. It's fun to watch as they develop into the final piece. A good swipe requires a paint medium and/or some type of silicone added to the paint. The paints in this kit were created with the swipe technique in mind, and even without silicone, they will produce some cells. However, having silicone in the paint will allow bigger cells to form.

You can start with the idea that your painting will be a swipe, or you can swipe a painting that is still very wet, as long as you're ok to completely transform it into something new. You can swipe once in one direction, or multiple times in multiple directions. The possibilities are endless! (At least until you swipe all the paint off your canvas, so there's that to consider as well.)

1. To start, you must have a thin base coat of paint. It can be black, white, gray or any other color. Using only a small amount will cover your entire canvas. It's ok if it's not perfect, it just needs to be wet, that's all that is needed for this step. I dripped some gray paint down on this canvas and smeared it with a gloved hand, making sure to keep it relatively even across the board and also getting the sides wet as well.



2. Add the paint colors on top of the base coat using any of the following methods
 - a. If you have an existing painting that is still very wet, you can skip this step
 - b. Add the paint colors by randomly dripping or drizzling them across the canvas directly from the bottles or small cups of colors you mixed in an earlier step.



- c. Fill a cup and pour it across the canvas



3. Next, pour a thick line of paint at the base of the canvas where you will begin swiping. In the two examples below, I used black paint at the base of the canvas on the left, and white paint on the canvas to the right:



Gently place a small portion of a strip of light plastic or a ½ sheet of a slightly damp paper towel (not soaking wet) at the base of the canvas where you poured your line of color to swipe, so that only a small section is touching the swipe color, and not the other colors. You can see the black touching the plastic below. Gently glide the plastic slowly across the top of the canvas, so that there is slight resistance from the paint, until you get to the other side of the canvas. When you remove your swipe material, it might look as though you have a mostly solid color of canvas at first, but it will change right in front of your eyes. Just let it happen!



Here are the final results of the two canvas examples we started with above. Notice the beautiful formation of cells!



This same technique can be applied in other ways too. In the example below, I started by drizzling paint in an X formation. I added a thick line of purple in the center, and swiped it from the center to the top left corner area, giving it a little wiggle for a bit of whimsy interest. Next I added a thick line of teal, and swiped it to the bottom right corner.



I continued adding thick lines to swipe, this time the red orange color, which I swiped on the other sides of the X.



To add more interest, I drizzled paint and added more lines to swipe until I was happy with the final composition:



The Geode Slice

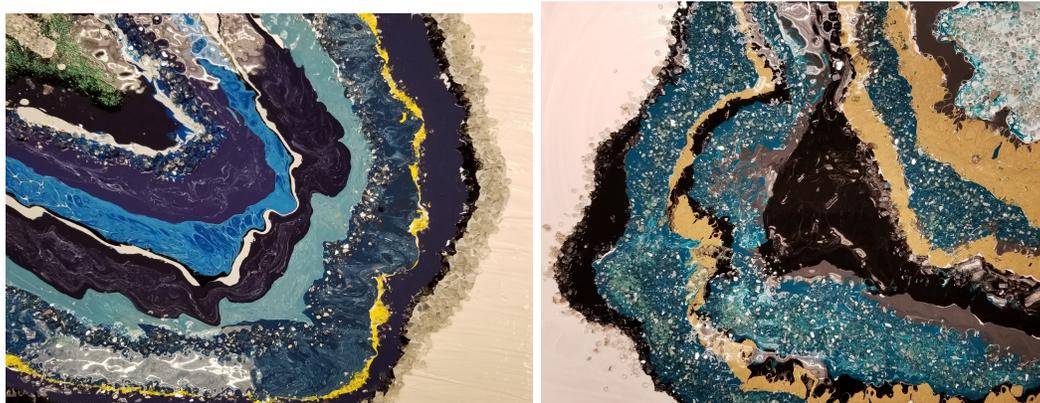
Read through all of the instructions before you start so that you understand how the painting will come together step by step.

These paintings simulate the appearance of crusted crystals using a combination of drizzled paint and crushed glass. The glass is added towards the end of the project, so keep it in a safe, sealed location to avoid getting paint on it. Let's get started!

1. First, determine what colors you want to use. As you can see from the sample geode paintings below, you can use just a few key colors, or you can use several. Most of the paintings in these examples have one primary color, one complimentary color, plus small amounts of black, white and yellow/gold (see recipe above for Golden Yellow/Brown). Choose colors combinations that you enjoy looking at, mix custom colors in separate cups with your stir sticks.
2. Add a very thin layer of paint as your background, and to keep the canvas wet. For this type of painting, white is preferred, as the other colors will be added in layers on top.

This also helps to conceal the unfinished canvas texture and will give your painting a polished look in the end.

3. Determine where your center crust is going to be. It's fun to start in a corner and work your way out, as your layers can gradually take over the canvas. This will give your final composition a good amount of interest and depth.
4. Any color can be used in your center crust. It can be white or black or anything in between. It should start small (about 2" x 2") so that you can add additional layers of color outside of it.
5. The next layers should vary in thickness. You can add each layer by gently pouring a steady line of paint around the outside of the previous layer. It's ok if the layers touch a little. They don't have to be the exact same width each time, it's ok if they're a little different.
6. After three layers of paint, gently tilt your painting away from the crusted center to let the paint move across the canvas and level out a bit. You don't want the paint to run off the sides of the canvas for this type of painting. Continue adding layers until you are satisfied that you have enough layers for your slice. It doesn't have to fill the entire canvas.
7. You can add thin layers using your stir stick to drizzle the paint in between the thicker layers. For more fun, use your straw to gently blow a lighter colored paint into a darker layer (or the opposite), creating interesting tendrils within the geode!
8. Once you have added all of your layers and the paint is still wet, wash and dry your hands.
9. Add some crushed glass to the center to make it sparkle. Select another layer to add more bits of glass. The paint will adhere to the canvas and act as glue for the glass. Do not paint on top of the glass, as it will sparkle when it dries, creating a gorgeous, one of a kind geode slice painting! Below are geodes created by our students.



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