

# Atelier Interactive - take the frustration out of painting with acrylics



**Bob Hughes**

Demonstrates how preparation will let you paint longer without worrying about drying time...

When I am asked to do a demonstration at an art club, preparation beforehand will save me a great deal of time and ensure that I have a successful completion to my demonstration. The demonstrations are usually two hours in length but the actual painting usually take me around ninety minutes to complete. I usually start off by giving a short speech on the materials I will be using plus the techniques I will be using as well. There is also a twenty minute break for tea or coffee half way through the session. This tutorial will show you how I prepare then go through the process of painting a view of the Langdale Valley in Cumbria.

When I was looking for an image on my computer to use for this tutorial I came across some photographs I took in the Lake District last year. It



seemed at the time, that I was stopping every five minutes to take photographs, there was so much to see, the views of the Langdale Valley in particular are spectacular.

I found two photographs which I liked, but they were of the same scene. but at slightly different angles. I opened up Photoshop and stitched the two images together and increased the contrast slightly. For obvious reasons there would not be enough time to draw out the image and paint it in the two hour period of the demonstration, so it is vital to have the drawing done beforehand, usually a day or so beforehand.

When I am happy with the drawing I make a tracing of it and then transfer the drawing onto the surface I will be painting on, for this tutorial it is watercolor paper. The method I use for the transfer is simple...either use a piece of paper the size of the drawing or a couple of sheets of A4 paper, then get a graphite stick and rub it all over the surface of the paper, making sure the whole area is covered. Using masking tape, tape your drawing to a drawing board then place the paper you have just covered in graphite (black side onto the watercolor paper) with a strip of tape across the top, this will act like a hinge. Now tape the tracing of the drawing (face upwards) onto the paper you have just covered in graphite and securely tape it into position with a strip across the top and two small pieces on the bottom (one each side). When you have done all this, draw over the lines of the drawing using a hard pencil or a biro pen. Now this is important...every few minutes, check how your drawing is progressing by lifting the corners of both the tracing paper and the paper with the graphite on to see if the drawing has been transferred to the watercolor paper, if it has

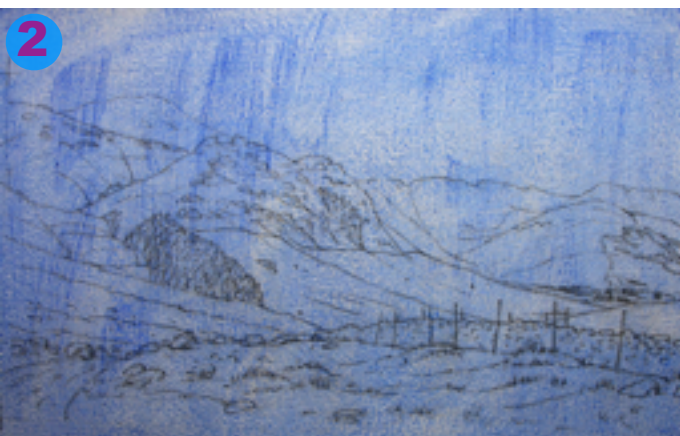
transferred successfully you let the corners drop back into position, tape it down and continue drawing. If the papers were not taped down at the start of this procedure you will most certainly have a misalignment of your drawing and more than likely have to start again. When the drawing has been successfully transferred to the watercolor paper, spray it with fixative, then you are ready to start the painting. The process we have just done sounds complicated but it really is not, and you can also reuse the graphite covered paper time and time again.

**1** I will be using Arches Aquarelle 1/2 imperial Watercolor paper 640gsm Rough for this painting. I think it is an excellent paper and I don't have to worry about cockling. For the preparation (which I do the day before) I use Atelier Interactive Binder Medium to seal the paper, usually around two coats. This process is to stop the absorption of the moisture in the paint. Acrylic paint dries quickly because of two things; absorption plus evaporation, if you can slow these down you will have more time in which to paint.

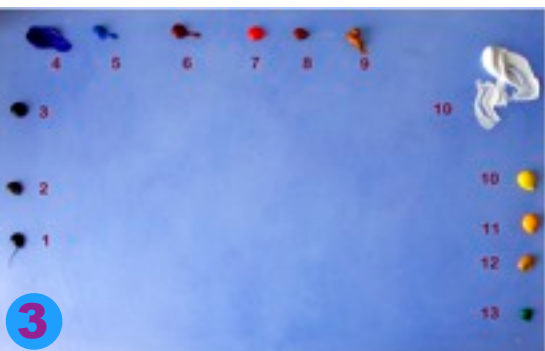


**2** The next process I use is staining the paper (here again it is best to do this a few hours before to make sure it is totally dry), I used Ultramarine Blue for this purpose but sometimes I

use a Raw Sienna, I find it's easier on the eyes rather than having a glaring white surface to look at. I also use the same colour painted onto a sheet of paper for underneath my clear flexible palette, it makes mixing colours more accurate.



**3** For this painting I have thirteen colours plus white on my palette, some of the colours I may only use a little. I put these on my palette to save me time later should I need an additional colour, fiddling around looking for colours would slow me down. The colours I will be using are; 1. Paynes Grey, 2. Raw Umber, 3. Dioxazine Purple, 4. French Ultramarine Blue, 5. Cobalt Blue, 6. Permanent Alizarine, 7. Cadmium Red Light (Scarlet), 8. Burn Sienna, 9. Raw Sienna Dark, 10. Titanium White, 11. Cadmium Yellow Light, 12. Arylamide Yellow Deep, 13. Yellow Ochre and finally 14. Permanent Sap Green. Now that I have everything in place for the painting, there is still one more process to do before painting. Before painting I mix some Atelier Interactive Retarder and some Atelier Interactive Clear Painting Medium together to make up my 'Premix' milky solution, I then brush this solution all over the paper, now I am ready to start painting.



When mixing colours put the predominate colour down first i.e for a cooler bluish green put the blue down first then add the yellow until you get the required colour, for a warmer green put the yellow down first then add very small amounts of blue until you have the colour you want.

**4** Mixing a small amount of White and a little Cobalt Blue and using a number 8 Hog Filbert, I brush this colour into the top middle section of the sky, I then change to a number 10 Hog and brush white in

for the clouds. Because the paper is still wet from the Premix it is easier to blend in other colours, the colours I use for the darker clouds are French Ultramarine Blue plus Raw Umber with a touch of Permanent Alizarine, I also introduce Raw sienna to warm up areas of the clouds. Using a number 12 Stratford and York Rutland brush



(these are synthetic brushes which are ideal for blending) I lightly brush over the clouds to soften them up a little. For the mountains I mix Dioxazine Purple with a little French Ultramarine Blue and using a number 6 flat Stratford and York Rutland brush I paint in the mountains in the background, when this is done I gently blend the tops of the mountains with the same brush which has been wiped clean.

**5** Mixing Dioxazine Purple with a little French Ultramarine Blue and a dab of Permanent Alizarine I start to paint in the rocks and clumps of trees on the middle foreground hillside, using the same colour I paint in the woodland area on the left. For the grassland area to the left and middle areas I mix cadmium Yellow Light with a small amount



of French Ultramarine Blue, I then added a dab of Raw Sienna down the slopes of the hills. For the background hills I added a dab of Raw Umber and a small amount of Cobalt Blue into the mix. By adding a small amount of

White into this mix I painted the hill to the right, then I added a small amount of Dioxazine Purple and blended this colour into the right side of the hill.

Adding white to the green mixture I painted the sunlight on the left side of the hill, I finished off this part of the painting by mixing some Raw sienna and a dab of Permanent Sap Green.

**6** For the dry stone wall on the right I mixed Raw Umber with a little Dioxazine Purple, I painted the wall then added a little white to the mix and painted "into" the left side of the wall. The rust

coloured area on the field to the left was a mixture of Burnt Sienna and a touch of Raw Sienna then a little amount of Permanent Sap Green was added for the darker areas of the grasses. The foreground area of the painting was painted with a mixture of Cadmium Yellow Light and a little amount of Cobalt Blue, Raw Sienna and a little amount of Cobalt Blue. White was added to these colours for the lighter areas of the grass. The darker areas of the grass in the foreground was a mix of French Ultramarine Blue with a little amount of Cadmium Yellow

consistency of oil paint which helps when you want a dry ragged look. Mixing Yellow Ochre with a small amount of Cobalt Blue and a touch of white and using a number 2 hog filbert brush, paint small strokes on the tree areas of the woodland and on the tree area on the hillside. Using the same colour green used in the fields, add a small amount of white and drag the colour lightly over the fields to give the impression of undulation and unevenness on the ground. Using a number 4 filbert hog and a mixture of Permanent Alizarine and Raw sienna drag the brush

the right hand side, add some Permanent Alizarine and a touch of French Ultramarine Blue and roughly paint in the darker areas. Using a mixture of French Ultramarine Blue and dab of Cadmium Yellow Light, use the side of the brush and drag upwards to achieve clumps of grass, again add some of the rustic colour here and there for the ground cover. Using a Rigger brush and a mixture used for the dark areas of the wall (this should be thinned down with a mixture of water or the 'Premix') now paint in the posts both sides of the wall. Using the colour used for the stonework paint the highlighted areas of the poles, this completes the painting, the total time on this painting was 100 minutes.

lightly over the area to the left to give that broken rustic effect. Mix Dioxazine Purple plus Cobalt Blue with a small amount of white and using the same brush make a stone effect, small on the left and getting larger as you get closer to

These acrylic paints are very versatile, you can use them as a watercolor paint an oil paint (using the Unlocking Formula) and even use it for mixed media work. Unfortunately some people using it for the first time either use it too thin i.e like a watercolor and then wonder why they can't blend the paint as they have been informed, or they can't be bothered with all the extras (mediums etc.) that enhance the



Light, Yellow Ochre was added to the mix to warm up some areas. By using the colour I used for the rocks and trees I painted in the wooded areas on the distant hill and some of the shrubs on the hillside. For the stones I mixed Cobalt Blue and white. The road was a mixture of Dioxazine Purple and Cobalt Blue with a small amount of white added for the distance. The final part of the painting was a matter of pulling all the elements together.

Spraying the Atelier Interactive Unlocking Formula onto the paints on the palette gives them the



qualities of the product, incidentally, all the other companies who manufacture artists' quality acrylics also supply extra mediums to enhance their product range.

When the painting was finished I took it into Photoshop and created the frame you see here, the frame is a stock image but the mount and reflection were done in Photoshop, this is a great way of visualizing how your artwork will look when it comes back from the framers

I hope you have enjoyed reading this tutorial and have been inspired by it, by persevering with these acrylics you will be rewarded with many years of enjoyment because you will not have all that frustration of having your paint dry before you had a chance to blend and play around with your painting.

Atelier Interactive acrylics are made by Chroma, they are artists' quality and moreover none toxic. To get the best out of these paints and to use the 'Unlocking' properties of the paints use it thickly, using it as a wash only you will not get the full benefits of this unique and versatile painting medium.

For further details about these paints go to;  
[www.chromaonline.com](http://www.chromaonline.com)



## List of materials used for this tutorial...

### Paints

Paynes Grey  
Raw Umber  
Dioxazine Purple  
French Ultramarine Blue  
Cobalt Blue  
Permanent Alizarine  
Cadmium Red Light (Scarlet)  
Burnt Sienna  
Raw Sienna Dark  
Titanium White  
Cadmium Yellow Light  
Arylamide Yellow Deep  
Yellow Ochre  
Permanent Sap Green.

### Paper

Arches Aquarella 1/2 imperial  
Watercolor paper 640gsm

### Mediums

Atelier Interactive Binder Medium  
Atelier Interactive Unlocking Formula  
Atelier Interactive Retarder  
Atelier Interactive Clear Painting Medium

### Brushes

For acrylics and oil painting I use Winsor & Newton Artists' Hog brushes or Stratford & York Rutland series brushes, the latter are ideal for the blending. Get a good selection of sizes and shapes i.e Filberts, Rounds, Flats, long & short, the short Flats are also known as 'Brights' and a Rigger brush.

Bob who lives on Merseyside in the UK is a traditional and digital artist and adult education tutor, he is available for demonstrations and one day and two days workshops in the Northwest and Central parts of the UK and North Wales. He is also prepared to travel to other parts of the UK. Bob also has contacts in Switzerland for anyone interested in joining him for a one week painting holiday in Crans Montana.

For further information visit his website and blog:  
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